

DRIVERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION RANKINGS: A CASE STUDY OF UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract:

Uzbekistan is strategically focused on enhancing its international academic stature by exploring the determinants influencing higher education institution rankings. This study delves into the myriad factors shaping these rankings through qualitative interviews conducted with university authorities, local expert consultants, and the QS Consulting Team. Key determinants identified include the academic reputation of the university, research output, internationalization efforts, faculty development initiatives, and industrial collaborations. The findings underscore the significance universities place on robust research infrastructure, fostering international relations, and ensuring student success. While there is a shared vision among institutions, disparities exist in resource allocation and engagement in international collaborations. This comprehensive review of higher education in Uzbekistan not only contributes to rankings research but also holds potential to inform policymakers and educational administrators in enhancing the national education landscape. Recommendations stemming from this study include the development of a comprehensive government framework for internationalization, increased financial investment in education, fostering industry-academic partnerships, and promoting acceptance and diversity within universities. This paper offers specific policy and practice recommendations tailored to assist Uzbek institutions in enhancing, sustaining, and attaining global recognition. Its detailed analysis of how rankings influence institutional policies and strategic decisions serves as a valuable resource for stakeholders within and beyond Uzbekistan, facilitating a deeper understanding of how higher education rankings shape global academic benchmarks.

Introduction:

The significance of higher education rankings extends globally, influencing academic and institutional quality perceptions. These rankings guide decisions for students, educators, policymakers, and employers, impacting academic collaborations and investments. Given Uzbekistan's focus on enhancing its



international academic stature, understanding the determinants of higher education rankings is crucial for driving university advancement and local competitiveness.

Research Methodology:

A qualitative research design employing case studies and thematic analysis was used to explore the factors influencing higher education rankings in Uzbekistan. Interviews were conducted with university authorities, local expert consultants, and the QS Consulting Team to gather insights into the determinants affecting rankings.

Results:

The study identifies key determinants of university rankings in Uzbekistan, including academic reputation, research output, internationalization efforts, faculty development, and industry collaborations. Despite a shared vision among institutions, disparities in resource allocation and international collaboration engagement were noted.

Conclusion:

The research contributes to the understanding of higher education rankings in Uzbekistan, providing a basis for policymakers and educational administrators to enhance the national education landscape. Recommendations include developing a comprehensive government framework for internationalization, increasing financial investment in education, fostering industry-academic partnerships, and promoting acceptance and diversity within universities.

