



Rankings and Information on Japanese Universities

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Japan's HE & Rankings

- Long history of high attention to rankings
 - Hierarchical HE system
 - Selection of talented students both at university admission and entrance to the government and prestigious companies → in house training (diploma disease)
 - Selectivity Score (*hensachi*偏差値) has been widely used since 1970s
 - Researchers and universities became more aware of global positioning of their research performance from 1980s
 - Rapid increase of international students since 1980s
- Two different incentives: student choice for education (domestic) & research funding (global)
- Demographic change and globalization: over supply in education, and questioning on sustainability of research performance (from 2000s)

University Rankings and Student Choice

- From one sided selection by universities to a two way mutual choice between universities and students → more attention to educational contents and student life
- Kawaijuku: emergence of universities in open entry by 2000
- *Asahi University Rankings* (1994-) have provided around 80 indicators in order to widen the perspective on the universities on behalf of students and their parents; and to overcome an over reliance of a single selectivity indicator *hensachi* (avoiding comprehensive rankings based on multiple indicators that have strong correlation to the selectivity score)

Indicators and topics appearing in *Asahi University Rankings 2012*

- Information disclosure
- Yield rate in admission
- Dropout rate
- Review by university presidents
- Review by high schools
- Administrative staff
- World university rankings
- Tuition fees
- Learning environments
- Newly established universities
- Local public universities
- Women's universities
- Religious universities
- Small sized universities
- University libraries
- University repository
- **International volunteer**
- Contests
- Study abroad programs
- Rate of proceeding to a graduate program
- Number of doctoral degrees issued
- Share of female students
- **Share and number of international students**
- Universities from which the university presidents graduated
- Newly recruited faculty members
- Average age of faculty members
- Share of alumni of faculty members
- Share of faculties with doctoral degrees
- Share and number of female faculties
- Share and number of international faculties
- Share of adult students
- Participation in parents meetings
- Student life
- **Appearance in fashion magazines**
- Job placement support staff
- Internship
- Pass to examinations for civil servants teachers
- Professional qualifications (lawyers, accountants, etc.)
- **Highly cited articles**
- Citation index
- Articles listed in Scopus
- Articles in Chemical Abstracts
- Articles in *Nature* and *Science*
- Articles in international journals of economics
- Academic awards
- Patents
- Research grants from the national government
- External research funds
- Research grants from foundations
- Governmental subsidies to private universities
- **Salaries of faculty members**
- Appearance in media
- Movies and TV drama shootings on the campuses
- Members of governmental councils
- Alumni recruiters at companies
- Alumni among Diet members
- Alumni among the presidents of enterprises
- Alumni among sport players
- Alumni among novelists
- Alumni among female TV announcers
- Alumni members
- Number of applicants
- Applicants / admitted students
- Transition students
- Returnee students from overseas

- *College Management* by Recruit Ltd. : provide a more in-depth view of various universities to university managers and administrators, and then high school students
 - Student satisfaction surveys with various indicators in 1997, 1999, and 2001
 - Rankings on the universities' competitiveness for developing the **brand image** based on high school student surveys (every two years since 2003)
- Rankings '*Daigaku no Jitsuryoku (The Real Power of Universities)*' by Yomiuri Shinbun (2008-)
 - Focus more on the quality of education provision, teaching improvement, curriculum design, etc.
 - Publish the data and rankings in combination with the articles on various types of universities

Indicators appearing in Yomiuri Shimbun's *Daigaku no Jitsuryoku*

- Students/student quota set by the governments
- Faculty/other academic staff
- Full-time academic staff/part-time academic staff
- Admitted students in various admission processes
- **Dropout rate**
- Graduate rate
- **Remedial education programs**
- Remedial classes on Japanese language
- Remedial classes on English language
- Classes for TOEIC examination
- Compulsory class of mathematics
- Project-based learning
- Group work
- **Classes with debate sessions**
- Class size of first year student seminars
- Class size of language education
- Class size of seminars
- Minor or sub-major system and credits
- **Job placement support by alumni associations**
- Capacity of dormitories
- Notice of academic grades to parents
- Requirement of undergraduate thesis
- **Self-evaluation score**

University Rankings for Research Performance (impact of **world university rankings**)

- World university rankings as a tool for obtaining international recognition
 - Universities directly involved in international competition tend to be limited to (mainly public) research universities based on STEM fields in Japan (recently to some degree in social sciences)
 - Japanese national (public) universities relying heavily on the public budget of the national government both in operational expenditures and basic research project funds, and external research funds from industries based in Japan
- Universities have also strategically utilized world university rankings to attract attention from the government and domestic society

- 47% of national university managers responded that they referred to world university rankings as an indicator when managing their universities (Yonezawa, Akiba, & Hirouchi, 2009)
 - Tohoku University: ambition to be a “world leading” university ranked among the top 30 in the world (2007)
 - Hitotsubashi University: benchmarking exercise with the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE) (2009)
- Private universities: only two (Waseda & Keio) ranked in QS based on strong reputation
- Objections to ranking methodologies:
 - Indicators on reputation by employers in QS rankings (Kobayashi 2005)
 - Collective action by Research University 11 (RU11) towards new ranking methodology by THE & Thompson Reuters (2010-2011)
- Participation to U-map project by University of Tokyo, & stress the value of benchmarking exercises (Kobayashi)

Statement by the RU11 University Association

Request for a revision of the assessment methods used by Thomson Reuters for the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings July 31, 2011

1. The ranking of citations based on either citations per author (or faculty) or citations per paper represent two fundamentally different ways of thinking with regards to academic institutions: are the institutions to be viewed as an aggregation of their researchers, or as an aggregation of the papers they have produced? We believe that the correct approach is to base the citations ranking on citations per faculty, as has been the practice in the past.
2. We request a revision of the method used for regional modification.
3. We request the disclosure of the raw numerical data used to calculate the citation impact score for the various research fields at each university.

Source: website of RU11



Rankings on University Finance

- High attention from university managers, various industries and business professionals (esp. in last 10 years)
 - Bankers: pay attention to the sustainability of less prestigious, private universities in particular, under the oversupply condition of the student market
 - Top universities (public & private) face the necessity of attracting more investment from the industrial and business world in order to strengthen their educational and research profile under fierce global competition (big gap with US top universities)
 - General public (or parents): some private universities lost property after experiencing financial investment failure due to the economic recession of 2008

Indicators utilized by *Toyo Keizai*

- Expenditure for education and research per student
- Property of the library (books, journals, multimedia)
- Research Grant from Japan Society of Promotion of Science
- Student-Faculty ratio
- Ratio of students who acquired jobs upon graduation
- Number of senior managers of stock companies at the graduate level
- Annual income of 30-year-olds among alumni
- Ratio of increase/decrease of applicants
- Ordinary income ratio
- Share of external funds (except tuition fees and governmental support for operational expenditure) within the total income
- Capital Adequacy Ratio

National Government and University Rankings (ambivalent attitude)

- Basically critical of the hierarchical stratification based on the student selectivity scores (before emergence of world university rankings)
- Positively viewed a campaign by the leaders of top national universities on further investment in university education research in line with the government's policy on strengthening investment in the knowledge economy
 - Ranking of the University of Tokyo in the *Gourman Report* was referred to at the Diet on three occasions in the 1990s
 - Toyama Report: idea to foster around 30 “world-class” universities (no direct mentioning on rankings themselves)
- Emergence of World University Rankings (2003-): utilized as benchmarks in policy debates by political parties and the government (Ministry of Finance vs Ministry of Education and Science.. [MEXT])

Conclusion: A New Era of Regional Collaboration in Asia?

- Universities & government: Yes
 - the gap of ranking positions between Japanese universities and other Asian universities has nearly disappeared
 - collaboration among Asian universities as equal partners in education and research
 - benchmark exercises among Asian universities is becoming more active (but not collaborative in regional level seen in Europe yet)
- Rankers: not yet???
 - Different historical context (esp. in Japan?)
 - Some (but still minor) arguments for developing international rankings under our own (still national in case of Japan) sovereignty

Thank you!

ありがとうございます！

非常感謝！