

CAN "UNIVERSITY RANKING" LEAD TO THE PREDICTION OF "JOB PERFORMANCE"?

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Abstract

The following study aims to determine the impact of the university ranking on the employees' performance level at work. This research is based on a quantitative approach; accordingly, the study's target audience is the Saudi Arabian public, representing students and university graduates of different rankings. The instruments used to collect the study data were: A questionnaire and Google forms. Moreover, the collected data was analyzed in numerical form using the seven-point Likert scale. Subsequently, ADANCO software was employed to conduct various tests of Reliability and Validity (Cronbach's alpha, convergent validity, and discriminant validity). Coefficient of determination (R^2) and adjusted (R^2) as well as path coefficient was measured through ADANCO. The study's findings depict that the university ranking has notable results on the prediction of job performance, taking into consideration Saudi Arabia's limited area of responses (population of the study compared with the time of accomplishment needed). Although this study sheds light on the factors of the university ranking along with their impact on job performance, the impact of university ranking on these factors has never been done.

Keywords: University Ranking; Job Performance; Coefficient of Determination; Convergent Validity; Path Coefficient.

List of Abbreviations

UR: University Ranking

JP: Job Performance

R^2 : Coefficient of Determination

AVE: Average Variance Extracted Method

(β): Path Coefficient

I. Introduction:

In under a decade, the international university rankings (UR) have established themselves as a critical measuring tool used by both institutions and students. Rankings are now thought to be the single way for an employer to distinguish between two candidates with similar abilities and experience in the new era (Karzunina et al., 2015). Mehay (2017) ties up a university's ranking and quality to the employees' productivity and performance on a given job. URs serve as a foundation for quality and prestige perceptions. In addition, this is demonstrated by Volkwein & Sweitzer (2006) that colleges, as high rankings, invest more resources in their students' education. As a result, UR perceptually shows the quality of graduates' qualifications (Ehrenberg, 2003).

Furthermore, the research has discovered a correlation between studying at prominent colleges and graduating having career gains (Hazelkorn, 2015). According to Brewer & Zhao (2010), a university's reputation and prominence are indicators of its graduates' abilities. Hence, most universities strive to improve their public image (Hazelkorn, 2015). In this context, Merwe (2010) considered that these signals produce biases supporting the high-ranked institutions and marginalizing low-ranked ones, thus, causing challenges for many graduates searching for a working pinch.

Meanwhile, specific capabilities can boost the talents of some applicants from prestigious colleges with high ranks in contrast to those from low-ranked colleges even if they received the required education (Ghasemaghaei et al., 2019). The key drivers of a university's rating are teaching performance, consulting, societal contributions, and administrative work (Yee, 2018). On the same track, Karzunina (2015) added that the key indicators of UR are instructional quality, student happiness, and university employer reputation. Students' expectancy-value motivation was predicted by teaching standards as teaching for connection, acknowledging gloomy affections, cooperating in motivation, using a language that is in control, providing adaptive challenge, putting own focus on the process rather than the event, structuring the class, and caring (Ruiz-Alfonso et al., 2020). Taras, Grishma, Shah, Marjana, Gunkel, and Ernesto (2020) described that the top universities recruit better academics, give superior resources, and bring in leading lecturers and guests, which in turn lead to preferable training and performance. Bains & Rani (2021) indicated that the valued universities and institutions offer better career chances and human resources.

Job performance (JP) of employees has been a controversial topic in management circles. This process can be better expounded on the basis that the performance of an organization's human resources determines its results and achievement to a considerable extent (Mafini, 2015). JP has been among the most significant depending variables for over a decade. Declarative knowledge, knowledge of procedure and skill (ability to apply acquired information), and motivation are the three main components that influence JP (Mafini, 2015). Mehra (2006) found that the most important and renowned technique focused on leadership's impacts when specific departments were looking for suitable strategies to overtake their competitors. The interest of this study is to find the impact of attributes of UR on the prediction of JP of a particular person. Additionally, it will provide the organizations with fruitful insights into hiring employees with specific academic backgrounds.

II. Literature:

a. UR

The prestige and reputation of a university or an institute have significantly impacted higher education - nationally and internationally- as well as students. Employers consider the reputation of the university/institution when making a hiring decision (Bains & Rani, 2021). Universities are still judged on several factors, including reputation in academic fields, employers, and faculty and student ratio. Students will continue to view a university degree as a vital means of preparing for the job market. Wise (2016) analyzed, within a single organization, the influence of college features and academic achievement on workers' production; accordingly, he discovered that the academic major was linked to the initial wage, but college reputation and GPA were mainly used to explain promotion.

b. JP

JP is defined as workers' activities, behaviors, and results to support the organization's endeavors (Mafini, 2015). JP is affected by three main factors: declarative knowledge, procedural skills, and motivation. Furthermore, one of JP's most important predictors is the general mental capacity (Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Earlier research led to the production of the Performance Scale based on role, widely regarded as an exact tool for measuring the above-said predictors of JP at the office. JP links various organizational outcomes, including customer service and product quality, work satisfaction, and much more. As a result, JP seems to have a diverse set of antecedents and a broad range of applications in terms of its effects (Bono & Judge, 2003).

c. JP and Motivation

Motivation is of great value since it helps get the workers to do well and work faster towards their objectives. Motivated personnel assists the organization in achieving tremendous success since they constantly strive to improve their work performance (Shiraz et al., 2011). A constantly motivated person does not work as only a responsibility but to progress.

It is not a simple task, specifically for managers, to keep the individuals within their firm motivated and focused because they are the organization's most precious assets for future success (Kreisman, 2002). Said (2015) described that motivation is thought to be a predictor of JP. Employees who are highly work-focused and goal-oriented in their jobs are valuable assets for a company.

d. JP and Leadership

In the field of behaviors in an organization, leadership is recognized as a vital topic. Individuals interactions within an organization show that leadership has the most dynamic consequences (Uchenwamgbe & Ph, 2013). The impact of leadership on an individual's performance is essential since some experts assure that the most important thing in the progress of any firm is leadership supervision. Planned leadership is tracked as a long-term competitive advantage for advanced

organizational performance and an essential source of development (Rowe, 2001). Visionary leaders have a strategic vision for the nation in the coming era; thus, they communicate their visions through frames and metaphors, modeling it and promoting commitment by speaking coherently (Uchenwamgbe & Ph, 2013). Zhu (2005) said that visionary leadership would lead to high cohesion, dedication, loyalty, enthusiasm, and thus performance in novel organizational settings.

e. JP and Knowledge

Job knowledge is defined in the current organizational structure as "Technical information, facts, and methods required to perform a job. Employee performance is influenced by knowledge, satisfaction, and motivation" (Almusaddar et al., 2018). Used for education and development in many companies (Kuvaas, 2009), written job knowledge assessments are used in industry to choose candidates, recruit them and track their progress. It has been determined that job knowledge uses "written measurements of facts, principles, and so on, required for performing the job."

f. Conceptual Framework

Figure "1" displays the conceptual framework. Two variables are considered in the study: UR and JP. The model shows the relationship between these two variables. UR and JP are independent and dependent variables, respectively. This study includes three indicators of UR: teaching quality, better academic reputation, and student satisfaction. On the other hand, JP is demonstrated in three factors: Knowledge, motivation, and leadership. This study predicts that UR significantly leads to a better JP while impacting it. Table "1" depicts the research hypotheses.

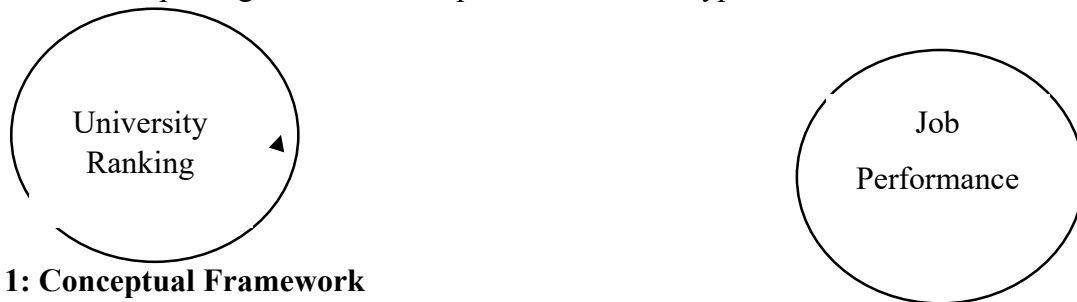


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Table 1: Research Hypotheses

Numbers	Hypotheses
H1	Ranking in university significantly influences the knowledge for high job performance.
H2	Ranking in university has a significant influence on motivation for high job performance.
H3	Ranking in university significantly influences leadership skills for high job performance.

III. Methodology

The researcher used a quantitative framework. The study's main objective was to identify the impact of UR on the prediction of JP. Respondents sharing the same attributes but from diverse areas were included, so the testing approach relied on a cross-section approach (Gratton, C. & Jones, I., 2004). The target audience was university-going or passed-out students with experience in the labor market. The population covered in this research belonged to the age group 22-45 from all over Lahore. Responses were collected from 108 graduates to doctorate holders.

In this study, convenience sampling and non-probability sampling were applied. Bias sampling was a type with a low probability of sampling from the nearest part of the population. For pilot trials, this form of sampling was ideal.

This research included two parts. The first part included the age (22-45), gender (Male and Female), and educational level (graduate to doctorate). The second part was all about the questions related to the variable of the study. The scales used in this instrument were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

The researcher collected data using a questionnaire and the direct responses of Saudi Arabia's general populace in addition to secondary resources such as E-books, E-journals, and E-articles. Google forms were used too. The 108 submissions were analyzed using ADANCO.

IV. Results Analysis

a. Reliability and Validity

The factor with the most significant influence on every variable was determined through factor loading. The acceptance parameter was 0.4, implying that the factor significantly impacted the variable (Mirza et al., 2020). Loadings near zero suggested that the factor had a minor impact on the variable.

Table 2: Factor Loading

Indicator	University Ranking	Job Performance
Rank 1	0.5214	
Rank 2	0.6982	
Rank 3	0.5449	
Rank 4	0.6594	
Rank 5	0.7237	
Rank 6	0.7696	
Rank 7	0.7603	

Rank 8	0.7574	
Rank 9	0.6497	
Rank 10	0.6428	
Rank 11	0.7316	
Job Performance 1		0.8166
Job Performance 2		0.8339
Job Performance 3		0.7493
Job Performance 4		0.8000
Job Performance 5		0.7942

b. Internal Consistency

Cronbach's alpha has a threshold value of 0.7. It is the test to estimate the composite core's internal consistency and reliability (Solution, 2022). In this study, the value of Cronbach alpha was above 0.7, which indicated the reliability of the study.

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha

Construct Cronbach's alpha(α)	
University Ranking	0.8848
Job Performance	0.8586

c. Convergent Validity (AVE)

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) method was applied to assess the construct's consistency with one another. The recommended range for AVE should be 0.5 or above; however, 0.4 was also acceptable in some instances (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4: Convergent Validity

Construct	AVE
University Ranking	0.4663
Job Performance	0.6389

d. Discriminant Validity: Fornell- Larcker Criterion

Fornell & Larcker's (1981) criterion was widely used to analyze the degree of the total variance of latent model variables. The extracted mean-variance and joint confidence can be used to test the convergent validity of the measurement model against this criterion. (Alarcón & Sánchez, 2015).

Table 5: Fornell- Larcker Criterion

Construct	University Ranking	Job Performance
University Ranking	0.4663	

Job Performance	0.5272	0.6389
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e. Coefficient of Determination (R²) and Adjusted (R²)

The proportion of an endogenous variable that specifies the independent construct is determined by R². The value should be in the range of 0 to 1. It is dependent on the sort of study (Cohen, 1988). If the R² coefficients and adjusted R² are less than 0.02, it suggests a mutual impact in latent variables that is weak enough to be measured by reasonable opinion (Sep & Wassertheil, 2014).

In this study, the endogenous variable's value is depicted in Table 5. The values of both Coefficients of determination (R²) and Adjusted (R²) were above 0.02, indicating that the mutual impact in a latent variable is not weak.

Table 6: Structural Model

Construct	Coefficient of determination (R²)	Adjusted (R²)
Job Performance	0.5272	0.5228

f. Path Coefficient

The path coefficient, commonly known as the beta value (β), depicts the relationship between two entities. It has a range of -1 to +1. A negative correlation is represented by a value of -1, while a positive correlation is represented by a value of +1. There is no association if the value is 0 (F. Hair Jr, 2014). In table 6, the connection between UR and JP depicts that the link between them is significant and positive ($\beta=0.7261$).

Table 7: Path Coefficient (β)

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
	Job Performance
University Ranking	0.7261

g. Graphical Representation of the Model:

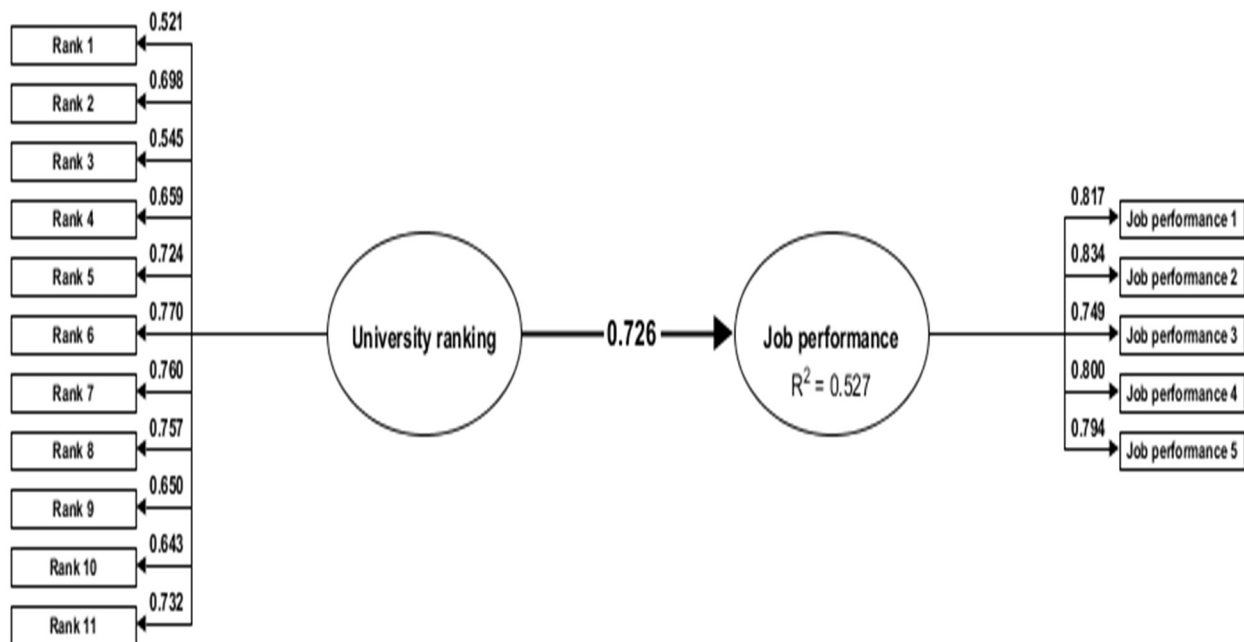


Figure 2: Graphical Representation of the Model

V. Conclusion

Researchers studied the factors and attributes of job performance and university ranking. However, this study emphasized the exploration of the impact of UR in case of prediction of job performance in a specified area -Saudi Arabia. In the present era, the prestigious university is considered and preferred higher when hiring the employee. The employees are paid higher as compared to other ones. The skills, motivation, resources, and opportunities are provided more to the students of top-ranked universities. This study aims to identify the relationship between UR and JP and examine the influence of university ranking on the prediction of job performance. The attributes of UR - teaching quality, university reputation, satisfaction level given to the students, and level of training they require - are considered in this study, and the factor loading shows its significance on the UR. Nevertheless, JP factors -knowledge, leadership, and skills- show a worthy impact too. The relationship between UR and JP is very considerable by analyzing the beta that refers to the path coefficient. Consequently, the university ranking can lead the employers to identify the employee's job performance.

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