

Muslim world universities ranking in global science

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Madam, I would like to draw your attention about the ranking of Muslim World Universities in global Science. Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) also called Shanghai ranking is released in August 2013, by the Center for World-Class Universities at Shanghai. In science community, ARWU has been recognized as the precursor of global university rankings and most valid, reliable and reputable one.

ARWU announced the ranking of world top 500 universities based on well-established objective indicators in science and research.¹ There are 57 Muslim countries, with an estimated combined population of 2.04 billion people, and 1840 universities and degree awarding institutes.² Amongst these only 8 universities which achieved a place within top 500 universities in global science ranking. Saudi Arabia has 4 universities which placed top 500 universities,¹ while King Saud University (KSU) Riyadh, achieved 160th position. KSU maintained its highest ranking as the premier university among Arab and Islamic nations. The remaining three Saudi universities in the list of top 500 universities are King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah (201-300); King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals Dammam (301-400); King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) Jeddah (401-500). However, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia and Turkey have one university each with ranking (401-500).¹ In Pakistan, there are 150 HEC chartered universities,

but as per Shanghai ranking, regrettably none of the Pak universities have made a place to the list of top 500 global universities.¹

Worldwide, there are three main university ranking institutes including ARWU, QS and THE world university rankings. The ARWU indicators are based on number of alumni, staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, number of highly cited researchers, articles published in towering science journals including Nature and Science, and in journals indexed in Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index.

As per HEC-Pakistan, based on the QS ranking, seven Pak universities are within top 250 universities. However, in science community, the measuring indicators of ARWU are more reliable and considered as a pragmatic global university ranking body.

The presence of only 8 universities from Muslim world in Shanghai Ranking is an alarming message and illustrates our non-serious attitude and commitment to improve the quality and international status of our institutions of higher education and scientific impact.

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