

UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL'S VIEWS AND SUPPORT TOWARD GLOBAL RANKINGS AND RATINGS SYSTEMS: RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS TO STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT IN INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines university personnel's awareness, perceptions, and level of support toward global academic ranking and rating systems, and their implications for institutional strategic engagement. As higher education institutions increasingly engage with global benchmarking platforms such as QS, Times Higher Education (THE), and WURI, internal stakeholders play a critical role in shaping institutional outcomes. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, quantitative data were collected through surveys, followed by qualitative insights from focus group discussions involving faculty, administrative staff, and unit heads from selected public teacher education institutions. Results indicate a moderate level of awareness but generally strong support for ranking-related initiatives. Key influencing factors include institutional communication, workload, resource availability, and professional motivation. While respondents recognize the benefits of rankings in enhancing institutional reputation and global competitiveness, challenges such as limited training and coordination persist. The study underscores the need for strengthened capacity-building programs, improved communication strategies, and policy alignment to foster inclusive engagement. Findings provide actionable insights for higher education institutions seeking to balance global competitiveness with internal readiness and stakeholder participation.

Keywords: Global Rankings, Higher Education, Stakeholder Perception, Institutional Strategy, Mixed Methods

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Global academic rankings have increasingly influenced how universities position themselves in the international scholarly community. Systems such as the QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education (THE), and the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI) provide comparative benchmarks that assess institutions based on a variety of indicators, including academic reputation, research output, international faculty and students, teaching performance, and industry engagement. These ranking systems not only serve as tools for benchmarking but also significantly shape institutional policies, funding decisions, international collaborations, and student recruitment strategies (Hazelkorn, 2015; Salmi, 2020).

For instance, the QS Rankings focus on six performance indicators such as academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, international faculty ratio, international student ratio, and citations per faculty (QS, 2024). Meanwhile, THE Rankings include metrics

such as teaching, research, citations, international outlook, and industry income (Times Higher Education, 2024). On the other hand, WURI Rankings prioritize innovation, social responsibility, ethical value, and openness to international collaboration—making it a progressive alternative that highlights real-world impact with its 16 different categories (WURI, 2024). These emerging platforms democratize visibility for universities that prioritize equity, social impact, and innovation, rather than only research prestige.

However, not all universities meet the data submission thresholds or research output levels required to be listed in these mainstream rankings. To address this, QS and THE offer alternative evaluation systems designed to support institutional benchmarking and branding for emerging or developing universities.

One such alternative is the QS Stars Rating System, which provides universities with a detailed assessment across several indicators, allowing them to earn between 1 to 5+ stars. Unlike QS Rankings, which are comparative, QS Stars is diagnostic and formative, helping institutions measure their performance internally and communicate strengths externally. QS Stars uses indicators grouped into the following categories: Teaching, Employability, Research, Internationalization, Academic Development, Facilities, Social Responsibility, and Inclusiveness (QS Stars, 2025 methodology).

This allows institutions that may not yet be globally ranked to still demonstrate excellence in targeted areas, such as student services, diversity, or sustainability—important factors for stakeholder engagement and institutional reputation.

In parallel, the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings offer a different pathway for global recognition, emphasizing contributions toward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Launched in 2019, this ranking system evaluates universities' social, economic, and environmental impact based on their alignment with the SDGs. Indicators include the mandatory submission of data in SDG 17: Partnership for the goals and three other choice of the university among other 16 available SDGs (Times Higher Education, 2024).

Each university is evaluated across multiple SDGs and receives a ranking for its best-performing ones, as well as an overall score. This provides a valuable platform for universities that may be less research-intensive but excel in community engagement, equity programs, environmental initiatives, or student empowerment.

As universities strive to improve their standings in these systems, leadership teams often prioritize activities aligned with ranking metrics—such as increasing research productivity, enhancing graduate employability, and expanding international partnerships. These goals are typically embedded in institutional development plans, internationalization strategies, and quality assurance frameworks. However, the perceptions and support of the broader academic and administrative workforce—the very individuals who execute these plans—remain largely underexplored and, in many cases, taken for granted (Marginson, 2018; Hazelkorn, 2015).

Understanding the views of university personnel is thus critical for designing effective and sustainable strategies for institutional advancement. Faculty and staff are not just implementers of administrative goals—they are key contributors to the very metrics being measured by global

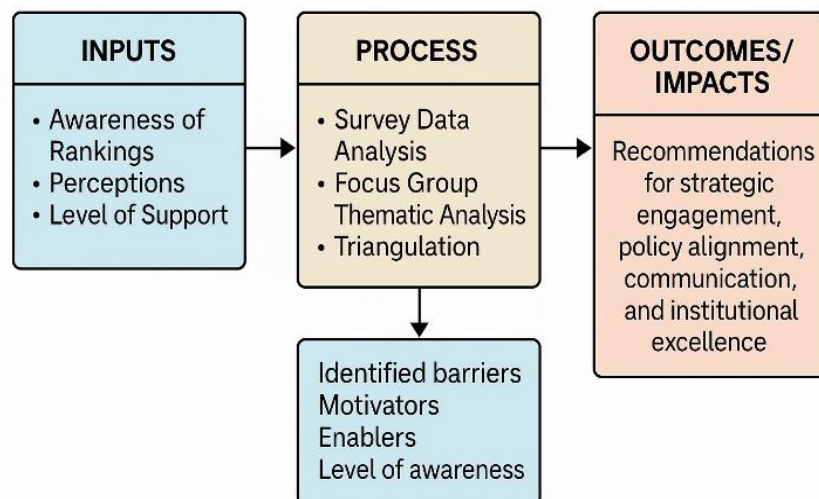
rankings: teaching quality, research output, extension and service activities, and global engagement. If they are unaware, indifferent, or skeptical about ranking systems, their level of participation in improvement initiatives may be minimal or misaligned. On the contrary, when personnel are well-informed, motivated, and strategically engaged, they can significantly enhance the university's performance in these rankings (Salmi, 2020).

Therefore, it becomes essential for university leaders to assess the awareness, perceptions, and level of support among internal stakeholders regarding global rankings and rating systems. Only by understanding and addressing the concerns, motivations, and expectations of these stakeholders can institutions ensure a more inclusive, participatory, and results-oriented approach to global competitiveness and institutional excellence.

This study examines university personnel's awareness, perceptions, and level of support toward global academic ranking and rating systems, and analyzes how these factors influence institutional strategic engagement. Specifically, it explores: (1) the level of awareness and understanding of ranking systems; (2) the level of support for ranking-related initiatives; (3) the factors influencing personnel perceptions and engagement; and (4) the implications of these findings for institutional strategies toward excellence.

1.1 Conceptual Framework

GRAPHICAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



This study is anchored on an Input–Process–Output (IPO) conceptual framework that explains how university personnel's views and level of support toward global rankings and ratings systems contribute to strategic engagement and institutional excellence. The input component consists of key variables such as awareness of rankings, perceptions regarding their credibility and relevance, and the level of support demonstrated by university officials and faculty. These elements collectively represent how personnel understand and respond to global ranking systems such as QS Stars, Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings, and WURI, which have become influential tools in shaping institutional priorities and global competitiveness (QS Quacquarelli Symonds, 2024; Times Higher Education, 2024). As emphasized by Ellen Hazelkorn (2015), rankings play a significant role in redefining higher education systems by

influencing institutional behavior, reputation, and policy direction. Similarly, Philip G. Altbach and Hans de Wit (2020) highlight that rankings have a global impact on how universities position themselves and respond to international expectations.

The process component involves the systematic analysis of these inputs through survey data analysis, focus group discussions, thematic analysis, and triangulation, allowing for a comprehensive interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data. Through this process, the study identifies critical factors such as barriers, motivators, enablers, and the overall level of awareness that influence participation and engagement. This aligns with the view of Simon Marginson (2018) that while rankings exert strong influence, institutional responses are mediated by internal contexts, capacities, and stakeholder perceptions.

Finally, the output or impact component translates these insights into actionable recommendations for strategic engagement, policy alignment, and improved communication within the institution. These outcomes are geared toward enhancing institutional excellence by strengthening participation in global rankings and improving the university's reputation and competitiveness.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study holds strategic and operational relevance across multiple stakeholder groups within the university setting. By examining the views and support of university personnel toward global academic rankings and rating systems, the research provides actionable insights that can directly inform institutional development and decision-making.

1. University Administrators

University leaders—including presidents, vice presidents, deans, directors, and unit heads—play a central role in shaping the vision, strategic direction, and policies of the institution. This study provides administrators with a clearer understanding of how their faculty and staff perceive the university's participation in global rankings such as QS, THE, WURI, and the Impact Rankings. With this knowledge, administrators can:

- Adjust institutional strategies and policies to better align with both global standards and the internal capacity of personnel.
- Develop targeted communication plans that explain the rationale, benefits, and expectations related to rankings, minimizing resistance and enhancing buy-in.
- Foster a culture of shared ownership, where performance indicators are embedded in operational plans and are viewed as collective goals, not just leadership mandates.
- Ensure that investment priorities (e.g., research funding, faculty development, infrastructure) are informed by personnel perspectives and institutional realities.

2. Faculty and Staff

Faculty members, support staff, and administrative personnel are the primary implementers of initiatives tied to ranking metrics—including teaching innovation, publication, curriculum internationalization, student support, and outreach programs. However, many may be unaware

of how their daily functions contribute to institutional performance in global evaluations. This study helps:

- Clarify the role of faculty and staff in contributing to specific ranking indicators such as teaching quality, research productivity, social impact, and international engagement.
- Promote a sense of empowerment and relevance, by showing how their work is directly connected to global visibility and institutional reputation.
- Encourage professional development and innovation, as personnel are made more aware of global benchmarks and motivated to improve practice in areas such as instruction, community extension, or student support.
- Inspire collaboration across units, recognizing that institutional performance is collective and multifaceted.

3. Policy Makers and Internal Decision-Makers

These include heads of internal offices such as planning, quality assurance, linkages and international affairs, research, and human resources. The study's findings will be vital in:

- Designing and implementing capacity-building programs (e.g., workshops, incentives, mentoring) that directly support the institution's global ranking aspirations.
- Aligning institutional policies (e.g., promotion and tenure, workload policies, recognition systems) with performance criteria used in global ranking systems.
- Creating performance monitoring tools and evaluation frameworks that integrate stakeholder perception and engagement into the institutional excellence narrative.
- Ensuring that development strategies are evidence-based and inclusive, grounded in the actual views and readiness levels of personnel.

4. Researchers and Academics in Higher Education Studies

The academic literature on global rankings tends to focus on institutional strategies, metrics, and global competition, with limited emphasis on the perceptions of internal stakeholders—especially in developing country contexts. This study:

- Contributes to filling the gap in scholarly literature on the human and organizational dimensions of global ranking participation.
- Provides empirical data on how university personnel view and support global ranking efforts, which can be used in comparative or longitudinal studies.
- Supports the development of contextualized models for strategic engagement in rankings, which take into account institutional culture, readiness, and stakeholder dynamics.
- Serves as a reference for future research on topics such as leadership, institutional branding, faculty motivation, and higher education governance.

1.3 Scope and Delimitations

The study focuses on three public teacher education universities in the Philippines. Respondents include both academic (faculty) and non-academic (administrative) personnel.

The study does not evaluate actual ranking performance but focuses on perception and support related to global ranking systems.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Global Academic Ranking Systems

University rankings have become powerful tools in shaping institutional strategies, public perception, and international engagement. These rankings assess universities on the basis of research productivity, teaching quality, internationalization, innovation, and community impact. The influence of these systems has prompted universities worldwide to strategically align their goals with ranking metrics (Hazelkorn, 2015; Marginson, 2018).

The QS World University Rankings emphasizes indicators such as academic reputation (40%), citations per faculty (20%), employer reputation (10%), and international diversity metrics for faculty and students (QS Quacquarelli Symonds, 2024). This ranking is one of the most widely recognized, offering both global visibility and comparative benchmarking. On the other hand, the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings utilizes a broader methodology that includes teaching (30%), research (30%), citations (30%), international outlook (7.5%), and industry income (2.5%). THE's model is designed to reflect comprehensive institutional performance across knowledge production, dissemination, and industry relevance (Times Higher Education, 2024).

Complementing these is the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI), which introduces an alternative perspective by valuing innovation over tradition. WURI ranks universities based on indicators such as industrial application, entrepreneurial spirit, ethical value, student mobility and openness, and crisis management (WURI, 2024). These metrics highlight real-world impact, allowing developing universities or those with non-traditional strengths to gain global recognition.

Notably, for universities that do not qualify or opt not to participate in competitive rankings, both QS Stars and THE Impact Rankings offer inclusive alternatives. QS Stars is a diagnostic rating system that evaluates institutions across multiple categories such as teaching, employability, inclusiveness, academic development, and facilities—assigning institutions a star rating (1 to 5+) rather than a rank (QS Stars, 2024). Meanwhile, THE Impact Rankings assess performance based on contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Universities are evaluated across individual SDGs — such as Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), and Climate Action (SDG 13) — and given an overall score reflecting their societal impact (Times Higher Education, 2024).

These systems, whether rank- or rating-based, not only shape institutional prestige but also influence stakeholder behavior and investment in higher education.

2.2 Perception and Organizational Support

The way personnel perceive institutional priorities—especially those related to global rankings—has a profound effect on their motivation, engagement, and productivity. Research

consistently shows that when faculty and staff understand the rationale behind certain strategic directions, they are more likely to align their efforts with institutional goals (Marginson, 2018).

Hazelkorn (2015) emphasized that internal communication about ranking systems and how they relate to institutional mission can bridge the gap between top-down policies and ground-level implementation. When university employees are unaware or feel excluded from ranking initiatives, there is a risk of disengagement, cynicism, or passive resistance. Conversely, when they are informed, consulted, and recognized, personnel are more inclined to support activities like international collaboration, research publication, and academic quality assurance, which directly influence institutional ranking performance.

Studies also suggest that perception influences actual performance: universities with high internal awareness and positive outlooks toward ranking systems tend to perform better not only in rankings but in institutional governance as well (Shin, 2011; Salmi, 2020). Personnel who see their efforts as contributing to broader recognition feel a stronger sense of belonging and professional identity within their institutions.

2.3 Strategic Engagement for Institutional Excellence

Strategic engagement in the context of global rankings requires a deliberate, inclusive, and systemic approach. Universities must not only focus on metrics but also foster a culture that values excellence, transparency, and collaboration.

Salmi (2020) argues that capacity-building programs tailored for ranking-aligned goals are critical. These include research training, academic writing workshops, international mobility schemes, and internal funding for innovation. Furthermore, reward systems—such as performance-based incentives, merit promotions, and research grants—can reinforce desired behaviors and outputs that support institutional rankings.

Another core element of strategic engagement is communication. Universities must articulate how each member contributes to institutional goals—making ranking participation a shared responsibility rather than a leadership-centric initiative. According to Altbach and de Wit (2020), inclusive engagement strategies that empower faculty and administrative units to take ownership of ranking-related tasks lead to more sustainable and effective improvements.

Additionally, institutions must balance ranking aspirations with their core educational mission and local context. This ensures that global recognition does not come at the expense of equity, access, and relevance—especially in public universities committed to social transformation.

3.0 METHODS

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of university personnel's perceptions and levels of support regarding global academic rankings and ratings systems.

The quantitative component utilizes a structured survey questionnaire to measure the level of awareness, understanding, and support of university personnel toward global ranking systems.

This approach provides measurable data that help identify trends, patterns, and levels of agreement across respondents.

Complementing the quantitative approach, the qualitative component involves focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore deeper insights into the perspectives, concerns, and experiences of university personnel regarding the institution’s participation in global rankings. Through open discussion, the qualitative method captures contextual nuances that cannot be revealed through numerical data alone, such as perceived motivations, institutional gaps, and expectations for policy development.

The integration of these two approaches enables the study to both quantitatively assess levels of awareness and support and qualitatively uncover underlying attitudes and institutional dynamics, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder engagement in ranking-related initiatives.

3.1 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study include faculty members, administrative staff, and unit heads (such as directors, deans, and coordinators) from the university. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to ensure representation across personnel categories and years of service in the university. Stratification allows the study to capture perspectives from employees at different career stages and administrative responsibilities.

The total sample size for the study is 50 university personnel, distributed as follows:

Strata	Number of Participants	Years of Service Classification
Faculty Members	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0–5 years (new / early-career personnel) • 6–10 years (mid-career personnel) • 11 years and above (senior personnel)
Administrative Staff	15	
Unit Heads	10	
TOTAL	50	

This sampling design ensures balanced representation across academic personnel, administrative staff, and institutional leaders, thereby enhancing the validity of the findings and minimizing role-based bias in interpreting institutional ranking initiatives.

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively examine university personnel’s views and support toward global rankings and ratings systems. The quantitative component utilized a structured survey questionnaire to gather data on respondents’ awareness, perceptions, and level of support for ranking-related initiatives.

The instrument was organized into three major sections aligned with the objectives of the study. The first section focused on awareness and understanding of ranking systems, measuring respondents’ familiarity with major global university rankings such as QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education (THE), WURI, Impact Rankings, and QS Stars, including their knowledge of ranking indicators and institutional participation. The second section examined the level of support for ranking-aligned initiatives, including engagement in research,

innovation, and internationalization activities, as well as respondents' willingness to contribute to institutional efforts related to global rankings. The third section explored perceived benefits and barriers associated with participation in ranking systems, such as institutional reputation, academic visibility, professional development opportunities, and challenges including lack of training, unclear policies, limited incentives, and workload concerns. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with selected open-ended items included to capture additional insights.

The qualitative component of the study was conducted through semi-structured focus group discussions (FGDs) to provide deeper insights into participants' perspectives on the university's engagement in global rankings. Each FGD involved approximately six to eight participants and lasted between 60 to 90 minutes, allowing for meaningful dialogue and in-depth discussion of experiences, motivations, concerns, and expectations related to ranking initiatives. The discussions also explored institutional challenges, gaps in implementation, and suggested strategies to strengthen personnel engagement in activities that contribute to institutional excellence and global visibility.

Data collection was carried out in two phases. In the first phase, the survey questionnaire was distributed to selected respondents through both online and printed formats, depending on accessibility and preference. Participants were provided with an informed consent form outlining the purpose of the study, voluntary nature of participation, and confidentiality of responses, and were given approximately one week to complete the questionnaire. In the second phase, FGDs were conducted with selected participants representing faculty members, administrative staff, and university officials. The sessions were organized in small groups to encourage open communication and minimize hierarchical barriers. With participants' consent, discussions were audio-recorded and transcribed to ensure accurate documentation.

The quantitative data were encoded and analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, including the computation of mean scores to determine the level of awareness and support, standard deviation to assess variability, and frequency and percentage distribution to describe respondent profiles and levels of engagement. Statistical analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS to ensure accuracy and systematic data organization. Meanwhile, qualitative data from the FGDs were analyzed using thematic analysis, beginning with initial coding of significant statements, followed by categorization of recurring ideas into themes such as motivations, barriers, and institutional enablers. To enhance the validity and credibility of the findings, triangulation was employed by comparing quantitative results with qualitative insights, allowing for a more comprehensive interpretation of the data.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were required to provide informed consent prior to their involvement. The study adhered to established ethical standards for research involving human participants, ensuring the protection of participants' rights, dignity, and well-being. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were treated with strict confidentiality. Unique codes were used in place of names, and all data were stored in password-protected files accessible only to the researchers. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, and any potential discomfort in expressing opinions about institutional practices was minimized by ensuring anonymity and allowing respondents to skip questions if desired.

Although no direct financial incentives were provided, the study offers potential benefits to both participants and the university community. The findings may contribute to improved institutional communication, policy development, and strategic engagement with global rankings and ratings systems. Furthermore, the results may enhance awareness and understanding among university personnel and support more informed decision-making toward institutional excellence and global competitiveness. The results of the study will be disseminated through summary reports and institutional presentations, ensuring that findings are shared in aggregated form without identifying individual participants. The researchers declare that there is no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study, and the research is undertaken solely for academic and institutional purposes, independent of any external ranking organizations.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents an integrated analysis of quantitative and qualitative findings on university personnel's awareness, perceptions, and level of support toward global ranking systems. The results are discussed in relation to existing literature and institutional implications to provide a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder engagement in ranking-related initiatives.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)	Description
Age	Mid-20s to Late-50s	—	Respondents represent a wide age range, capturing both early-career and experienced personnel. This diversity allows for a balanced generational perspective on global rankings and institutional engagement.
	Female	70%	Majority of respondents are female, reflecting the demographic composition of education-focused institutions.
Gender	Male	28%	Male respondents provide additional perspectives on institutional engagement.
	Prefer not to say	2%	A small portion opted not to disclose gender.
	Faculty Members	34%	Faculty contribute insights related to teaching and research performance indicators.
Position	Administrative Staff	28%	Administrative staff provide perspectives on documentation, coordination, and institutional processes.
	Unit Heads / Directors / Deans	38%	Leadership roles contribute strategic and policy-level insights on rankings.
Years of Service	0–5 years	50%	Majority are early-career personnel, indicating fresh perspectives and potential need for orientation.

	6–10 years	16%	Mid-career personnel provide transitional institutional insights.
	More than 10 years	34%	Experienced personnel contribute institutional memory and strategic understanding.
Attendance in Ranking-related Seminar / Orientation	Yes	38%	Indicates limited formal exposure to ranking systems among personnel.
	No	62%	Majority have not attended training, highlighting the need for capacity-building initiatives.

Table 1 presents the demographic and professional profile of the respondents. The participants represent a diverse age range, spanning from early-career to experienced university personnel, allowing the study to capture a balanced generational perspective. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents are female (70%), followed by male respondents (28%), reflecting the typical composition of education-focused institutions.

With regard to institutional roles, respondents include faculty members (34%), administrative staff (28%), and unit heads or academic leaders (38%), ensuring a comprehensive representation of both operational and strategic perspectives. In terms of years of service, half of the respondents (50%) have been in the institution for 0–5 years, while 34% have more than 10 years of experience, indicating a mix of new and seasoned personnel.

Notably, only 38% of respondents have attended seminars or orientations related to university rankings, while the majority (62%) have not. These finding highlights limited formal exposure to ranking systems and underscores the need for enhanced capacity-building, communication, and institutional support to strengthen engagement in global ranking initiatives.

Table 2. Awareness and Understanding of Ranking Systems

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Strongly Agree f (%)	Agree f (%)	Neutral f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Verbal Interpretation
1	I am familiar with the QS World University Rankings.	3.4	1.07	4 (8%)	24 (48%)	11 (22%)	7 (14%)	4 (8%)	Neutral–Agree
2	I understand the indicators used in the Times Higher Education (THE) Rankings.	3.12	1.07	2 (4%)	21 (42%)	12 (24%)	11 (22%)	4 (8%)	Neutral–Agree
3	I have heard of the WURI (World University	3.86	0.94	11 (22%)	25 (50%)	9 (18%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	Agree

4	Rankings for Innovation). I know about the QS Stars rating system and its purpose.	3.14	1.01	3 (6%)	20 (40%)	15 (30%)	7 (14%)	5 (10%)	Neutral–Agree
5	I am aware that the THE Impact Rankings use the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).	3.64	1.16	11 (22%)	23 (46%)	7 (14%)	3 (6%)	6 (12%)	Agree
6	I am informed about how our university performs in global ranking systems.	4.02	0.88	13 (26%)	25 (50%)	10 (20%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	Agree
7	I understand how my role contributes to the university’s global ranking performance.	4.08	0.96	16 (32%)	20 (40%)	7 (14%)	3 (6%)	4 (8%)	Agree

University personnel generally demonstrate a positive level of awareness and understanding of global university ranking systems. The highest mean score was recorded for the statement “I understand how my role contributes to the university’s global ranking performance” (M = 4.08, SD = 0.96), indicating that respondents largely recognize their individual contributions to institutional ranking outcomes. Similarly, respondents reported being informed about how the university performs in global ranking systems (M = 4.02, SD = 0.88), suggesting that institutional information regarding ranking performance is reaching many personnel.

Moderate levels of awareness were observed in statements related to familiarity with the QS World University Rankings (M = 3.40) and understanding of the indicators used in the Times Higher Education (THE) Rankings (M = 3.12). These findings suggest that while respondents generally recognize major ranking systems, a portion of university personnel may still have limited understanding of the specific indicators and methodologies used in these frameworks. Additionally, awareness of the QS Stars rating system (M = 3.14) reflects a neutral to agreeable level of familiarity.

Overall, the computed mean score of 3.61 indicates that respondents generally agree that they possess awareness and understanding of global ranking systems. However, the variability in responses, as reflected by the standard deviations, highlights the importance of strengthening institutional communication, orientation programs, and capacity-building initiatives to further enhance personnel understanding and engagement with global ranking frameworks.

Table 3. Level of Support for Ranking-Related Initiatives

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Strongly Agree f (%)	Agree f (%)	Neutral f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Verbal Interpretation
1	I support efforts to improve our university's global ranking.	4.68	0.51	35 (70%)	14 (28%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	Strongly Agree
2	I am willing to attend orientation or training related to rankings.	4.6	0.57	32 (64%)	17 (34%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	Strongly Agree
3	I am encouraged to publish in indexed or internationally recognized journals.	4.16	0.97	19 (38%)	21 (42%)	6 (12%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	Agree
4	I am interested in participating in international academic collaborations.	4.38	0.89	26 (52%)	17 (34%)	5 (10%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	Agree
5	I support the inclusion of rankings in the university's strategic priorities.	4.44	0.75	27 (54%)	18 (36%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	Agree
6	I believe institutional recognition through rankings benefits all stakeholders.	4.42	0.8	27 (54%)	17 (34%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	Agree

University personnel demonstrate a high level of support for ranking-related initiatives within the institution. The highest mean score was observed in the statement “I support efforts to improve our university’s global ranking” (M = 4.68, SD = 0.51), followed by willingness to attend ranking-related orientation or training (M = 4.60, SD = 0.57). These results indicate that respondents strongly recognize the importance of improving the university’s global competitiveness and are willing to participate in activities that contribute to ranking performance.

Respondents also expressed positive support for initiatives related to international academic collaboration (M = 4.38), publishing in internationally recognized journals (M = 4.16), and incorporating rankings into institutional strategic priorities (M = 4.44). Moreover, the belief

that institutional recognition through rankings benefits stakeholders (M = 4.42) further reflects a shared understanding of the value of global rankings for institutional development.

Overall, the mean score of 4.45 indicates that university personnel generally agree to strongly agree with ranking-related initiatives, suggesting strong institutional support for efforts that enhance global visibility, academic collaboration, and research productivity. These findings highlight the potential for strengthening institutional engagement strategies that align faculty and staff participation with the university’s goals for achieving institutional excellence and global competitiveness.

Table 4. Perceived Benefits and Barriers

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Strongly Agree f (%)	Agree f (%)	Neutral f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Verbal Interpretation
1	Global rankings enhance the reputation of our institution.	4.6	0.73	33 (66%)	13 (26%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	Strongly Agree
2	Engagement in rankings opens opportunities for international partnerships.	4.62	0.63	34 (68%)	13 (26%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	Strongly Agree
3	Rankings positively impact students’ global competitiveness.	4.5	0.73	30 (60%)	15 (30%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	Strongly Agree
4	I feel I lack sufficient training or knowledge about rankings.	4.02	1.03	17 (34%)	20 (40%)	5 (10%)	6 (12%)	2 (4%)	Agree
5	I think institutional goals related to rankings are not clearly communicated.	3.26	1.12	8 (16%)	17 (34%)	11 (22%)	12 (24%)	2 (4%)	Neutral
6	Administrative workload limits my ability to support ranking initiatives.	3.48	1.09	10 (20%)	18 (36%)	11 (22%)	9 (18%)	2 (4%)	Neutral–Agree

University personnel generally perceive global ranking systems as beneficial to the institution, particularly in enhancing institutional reputation and expanding opportunities for international partnerships. The highest mean score was recorded for the statement “Engagement in rankings opens opportunities for international partnerships” (M = 4.62, SD = 0.63), followed closely by “Global rankings enhance the reputation of our institution” (M = 4.60, SD = 0.73) and “Rankings positively impact students’ global competitiveness” (M = 4.50, SD = 0.73). These findings indicate strong agreement among respondents regarding the positive institutional and academic impacts of participating in global ranking systems.

However, some perceived barriers were also identified. Respondents indicated agreement with the statement “I feel I lack sufficient training or knowledge about rankings” (M = 4.02, SD =

1.03), suggesting that while personnel recognize the benefits of rankings, they may still require additional training or professional development related to ranking frameworks and indicators. Meanwhile, statements concerning communication of institutional ranking goals (M = 3.26) and administrative workload limiting participation in ranking initiatives (M = 3.48) yielded neutral to moderately agreeable responses, indicating mixed perceptions regarding institutional communication and workload challenges.

Overall, the mean score of 4.08 indicates that respondents generally agree that global ranking systems provide significant benefits to the university, although addressing challenges related to training, communication, and workload may further strengthen institutional engagement with ranking-related initiatives.

Table 5. Thematic Summary of Perceptions, Benefits, Barriers, and Recommendations

Dimension	Key Themes	Summary of Findings
Awareness & Understanding	Reputation, competitiveness, limited familiarity	Personnel associate rankings with global recognition and competitiveness, but understanding is often surface-level and technical aspects remain unclear.
Perceptions of Rankings	Institutional pride, benchmarking, partial accuracy	Rankings are viewed positively for visibility and benchmarking, but seen as limited in capturing teaching, community engagement, and full institutional mission.
Support & Motivation	Institutional pride, professional growth, commitment	Strong motivation is driven by pride, career development, and institutional recognition.
Perceived Benefits	Reputation, partnerships, research opportunities	Rankings enhance institutional visibility, international collaboration, research funding, and student opportunities.
Barriers & Challenges	Workload, lack of training, limited resources, complex systems	Major constraints include heavy workload, insufficient knowledge, weak data systems, and limited funding.
Institutional Support Needs	Training, incentives, policy alignment, data systems	Respondents recommend capacity-building programs, incentives, improved communication, and centralized data management systems.
Strategic Recommendations	Inclusive engagement, internationalization, planning	Institutions should align ranking strategies with mission, promote participation, and strengthen global partnerships and benchmarking efforts.

Table 5 presents a synthesis of qualitative findings, highlighting key themes related to university personnel’s perceptions, motivations, challenges, and recommendations regarding global ranking systems. The results reveal that personnel generally associate rankings with institutional reputation, global competitiveness, and benchmarking opportunities. While rankings are viewed positively as tools for enhancing visibility and driving institutional

improvement, respondents also recognize their limitations in fully capturing teaching quality, community engagement, and the broader institutional mission.

Motivation to support ranking initiatives is largely driven by institutional pride, professional development, and opportunities for international collaboration. Respondents acknowledge several benefits, including enhanced reputation, increased partnerships, research opportunities, and improved student outcomes.

However, significant challenges persist, particularly in terms of workload constraints, limited training, resource shortages, and complex ranking methodologies. These barriers affect the ability of personnel to actively engage in ranking-related activities.

To address these challenges, respondents emphasize the need for capacity-building programs, improved communication strategies, incentive mechanisms, and stronger institutional systems such as centralized data management. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of adopting an inclusive and strategic approach to institutional engagement in global rankings.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

1. What is the level of awareness and understanding of university personnel about global academic ranking and rating systems?

The results of the study indicate that university personnel possess a moderate level of awareness and understanding of global academic ranking and rating systems, as evidenced through the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitatively, responses to the Likert-scale survey items on awareness and understanding yielded mean scores within the neutral to agree range, indicating that respondents generally have basic familiarity with ranking systems such as QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education (THE), WURI, and QS Stars. A significant proportion of respondents selected Agree on statements related to familiarity with these ranking systems and their indicators, suggesting that many personnel are aware of the existence and purpose of global university rankings.

However, qualitative responses revealed that while respondents are generally familiar with the concept of global rankings, their understanding tends to be surface-level rather than methodological. Through thematic analysis, participants commonly associated global rankings with institutional reputation, international competitiveness, benchmarking, and global recognition. At the same time, several respondents acknowledged that they were not fully familiar with the specific indicators, methodologies, or scoring systems used by ranking organizations. Some participants also indicated that they primarily encounter ranking-related information during data submission periods, institutional announcements, or when ranking results are published, suggesting that systematic and continuous dissemination of information about ranking systems may still be limited.

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings therefore suggests that although awareness of global rankings exists among university personnel, there remains a need to strengthen institutional understanding of ranking frameworks and indicators through targeted capacity-building initiatives.

2. What is the level of support of university personnel toward initiatives aligned with global ranking criteria?

Triangulated findings from both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that university personnel demonstrate a moderate to high level of support toward initiatives aligned with global ranking criteria. Quantitative survey results show that respondents generally selected Agree or Strongly Agree on statements related to supporting efforts to improve the university's global ranking, participating in ranking-related orientations, and supporting the integration of rankings into institutional strategic priorities. The computed mean scores for these indicators fall within the agreeable range, reflecting a generally positive disposition toward ranking-related initiatives.

Qualitative findings reinforce this interpretation. Many respondents expressed institutional pride and commitment to the university's pursuit of global recognition, noting that participation in global rankings can enhance the institution's reputation, credibility, and international visibility. Participants also emphasized that global rankings can open opportunities for research collaborations, partnerships, and improved employability for graduates, which further motivates their support for these initiatives.

However, qualitative responses also revealed that while personnel are generally supportive of ranking initiatives, their ability to actively participate is often influenced by practical considerations such as workload, available resources, and institutional support mechanisms. Some respondents indicated that they support ranking initiatives in principle but require additional training, incentives, and administrative support to fully engage in related activities. These insights suggest that while support is present, it must be sustained through appropriate institutional strategies.

3. What factors influence their perception and support?

The triangulated analysis identified several factors that influence the perception and support of university personnel toward global ranking initiatives. Quantitative responses indicated varying levels of agreement regarding awareness, participation, and support for ranking-related activities, suggesting that perceptions are shaped by different institutional and professional experiences.

Qualitative findings provide deeper insights into these factors. One major factor identified was institutional awareness and communication. Participants indicated that clearer communication about ranking indicators, institutional strategies, and expected contributions would significantly influence their engagement. The lack of familiarity with ranking methodologies was frequently mentioned as a challenge that affects participation.

Another important factor identified was workload and resource constraints. Respondents noted that heavy teaching responsibilities, administrative duties, and limited research funding can affect their ability to actively contribute to ranking-related initiatives. Administrative staff also highlighted the challenges associated with data collection, documentation, and reporting requirements.

In addition, professional motivation and institutional pride emerged as influential factors. Many respondents expressed willingness to support ranking initiatives because they believe these efforts contribute to the institution's global recognition, academic competitiveness, and professional development opportunities.

Institutional incentives and support mechanisms were also identified as important determinants of engagement. Participants suggested that training programs, research grants, incentives for publications, and recognition systems could encourage greater participation in ranking-related activities. These findings demonstrate that perceptions and support toward ranking initiatives are influenced by a combination of institutional communication, resource availability, professional motivations, and organizational structures.

4. What are the implications of these findings for institutional strategies toward excellence?

The triangulated findings of the study have important implications for institutional strategies aimed at strengthening academic excellence and global competitiveness.

- First, the moderate level of awareness identified in the study highlights the need for universities to strengthen institutional capacity-building initiatives related to global rankings. Regular orientation sessions, workshops, and training programs can help faculty and staff develop a deeper understanding of ranking indicators and how their roles contribute to institutional performance.
- Second, the findings emphasize the importance of developing integrated institutional systems that support ranking-related initiatives. Establishing centralized data management systems, improving documentation processes, and designating focal persons or offices responsible for coordinating ranking activities can enhance institutional efficiency and coordination.
- Third, the study suggests that the university should align institutional policies, incentives, and workload structures with ranking-related objectives. Providing research funding, publication incentives, recognition programs, and workload adjustments may motivate faculty and staff to actively participate in initiatives that contribute to institutional ranking performance.

Finally, the qualitative findings highlight the importance of maintaining a balanced institutional approach that integrates global competitiveness with the university's core mission. While global rankings can serve as useful benchmarking tools for institutional improvement, they should complement rather than replace the university's commitment to quality teaching, research excellence, and community engagement.

Through the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative evidence, the study demonstrates that strengthening awareness, institutional support systems, and strategic alignment can significantly enhance the university's ability to effectively engage with global ranking frameworks while advancing its broader goals of institutional excellence.

The findings of this study align with Hazelkorn (2015) and Marginson (2018), who emphasize that global rankings significantly influence institutional behavior but require internal alignment to be effective. While personnel demonstrate strong support for ranking initiatives, the presence

of moderate awareness suggests a gap between institutional expectations and stakeholder readiness. This highlights the importance of bridging policy and practice through inclusive engagement strategies. Consistent with Salmi (2020), the results suggest that capacity-building, incentives, and institutional support systems are critical in translating awareness into meaningful participation. In the context of developing higher education systems, these findings underscore the need for a balanced approach that integrates global competitiveness with institutional mission and local relevance.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This study highlights the critical role of university personnel in shaping institutional engagement with global ranking and rating systems. While respondents demonstrate strong support for ranking-related initiatives, their moderate level of awareness indicates the need for enhanced institutional communication and capacity-building efforts.

From a policy perspective, universities should invest in systematic training programs, strengthen internal communication mechanisms, and develop integrated data management systems to support ranking-related activities. Institutional policies must also align incentives, workload structures, and performance evaluation systems with ranking indicators to encourage active participation.

Furthermore, the findings emphasize the importance of inclusive engagement strategies that involve both academic and administrative personnel in institutional planning and implementation. Rather than treating rankings as purely administrative exercises, universities should position them as shared institutional goals that contribute to broader objectives of academic excellence, global competitiveness, and societal impact.

Ultimately, global rankings should serve as tools for institutional improvement rather than ends in themselves. By aligning ranking initiatives with institutional mission and stakeholder capacity, universities can achieve sustainable and meaningful advancement in the global higher education landscape.

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APPENDIX

Table 9. Open-Ended Questions

A. Awareness and Understanding of Ranking Systems

Research Question	Theme	Category	Sample Responses
1. When you hear the term global university rankings, what comes to mind?	Institutional Reputation and Prestige	reputation, prestige, recognition	“international/global reputation”; “world-wide recognition”; “prestige and measurement of quality”
	Global Competitiveness	competitiveness, global standards	“global competitive advantage”; “capability of the university to compete globally”
	Institutional Performance and Quality	academic quality, research, teaching	“evaluation of institutions based on research and teaching”; “measurement of academic quality”
	Global Comparison	comparison of universities worldwide	“list of universities ranked globally”; “comparison of institutions”
	Critical Perspectives	political agenda, economic agenda	“hidden economic and political agendas of global university rankings”
2. How familiar are you with ranking or rating systems such as QS or THE?	Limited Familiarity	not familiar, surface knowledge	“not very familiar”; “surface level only”; “not familiar at all”
	Moderate Familiarity	somewhat familiar	“somewhat familiar”; “basic knowledge only”
	Operational Awareness	involvement in data submission	“helped gather documents”; “participated in data collection”
	High Familiarity	knowledgeable about ranking systems	“very familiar”; “highly familiar with ranking frameworks”
3. How is information about rankings communicated within the university?	Formal Communication Channels	memos, emails, official announcements	“through university memos”; “formal emails”
	Administrative Meetings	leadership meetings	“presented during Dean’s meetings”
	Digital Platforms	social media, website	“posted on the university page”; “shared on social media”
	Compliance-Based Communication	document requests	“only when documents are needed”
	Communication Gaps	lack of awareness	“only top management knows”; “not thoroughly discussed”
4. What aspects of ranking systems are difficult to understand?	Complex Methodologies	indicators, weighting systems	“complex methodologies”; “indicator weightings”
	Documentation Requirements	data gathering, evidence submission	“too much documentation”; “collection of MOVs”
	Scoring Systems	evaluation criteria	“points per supporting document”; “scoring system”
	Lack of Orientation	limited knowledge	“I want to be oriented first”; “surface understanding only”
	Critical Views	questioning rankings	“why universities need to compete globally”

Table 10. Perceptions of the University’s Participation in Rankings

Research Question	Theme	Categories / Codes	Sample Responses
5. How do you feel about the university’s participation in global ranking and rating exercises?	Positive Perception of Rankings	beneficial, good opportunity, commendable	“good opportunity for the university to be known globally”; “laudatory, highly commendable”
	Institutional Pride and Motivation	pride, recognition, visibility	“proud and motivated”; “source of pride and motivation”
	Institutional Improvement	benchmarking, improvement	“helps the university measure its performance”; “helps improve the quality of our university”
	Workload and Pressure	stress, time pressure, compliance workload	“fine but stressful due to time constraints”; “adds up to our workload”
	Critical and Neutral Views	skepticism, cost concerns	“rankings are for-profit companies”; “I’m neutral for now”
6. What are the main reasons the university engages in rankings?	Global Reputation and Recognition	reputation, global visibility	“to be globally known”; “enhance global reputation”
	Benchmarking and Quality Assurance	performance assessment, standards	“benchmark its performance globally”; “quality assurance and recognition”
	Internationalization and Partnerships	partnerships, global collaboration	“gain international partnerships”; “strengthen global connections”
	Institutional Competitiveness	competitiveness, prestige	“global competitiveness”; “strengthen institutional brand recognition”
	Funding and Opportunities	resources, funding opportunities	“for funding”; “attract students and staff”
7. Do rankings accurately reflect the strengths and priorities of the university? Why or why not?	Partial Accuracy of Rankings	partially reflective	“rankings capture some strengths but not all priorities”
	Research-Focused Indicators	emphasis on research outputs	“focus mainly on research productivity”
	Limitations of Ranking Metrics	incomplete representation of institutional mission	“do not capture teaching excellence and community impact”
	Data-Based Evaluation	evidence-based measurement	“results are data-driven”; “based on submitted evidence”
	Skepticism and Critical Views	bias, political agenda	“political agendas behind rankings”

Table 11. Support and Engagement

Research Question	Theme	Categories / Codes	Sample Responses
8. How does your role in the university relate to ranking-related initiatives?	Academic Contributions	teaching quality, research productivity, extension work	“my role as a teacher contributes through high-quality instruction”; “teaching, research and extension”
	Administrative and Institutional Support	data submission, documentation, coordination	“assisting in preparation of documents”; “providing required data from our unit”
	Quality Assurance and Institutional Processes	institutional reporting, quality assurance	“ensuring consistency of institutional statistics”; “support to quality assurance”
	Leadership and Strategic Roles	planning, policy implementation	“strategic planning, resource management, and policy support”
	Limited Awareness of Role	unclear responsibilities	“I am unclear on this yet”; “not yet very involved”

9. What motivates you to support or participate in ranking-related activities?	Institutional Pride and Loyalty	pride, dedication, love for the university	"I love PNU"; "pride and honor to read achievements of PNU"
	Institutional Improvement	improvement, development	"to contribute to continuous improvement"
	Professional Growth	promotion, career development	"salary and promotion"; "professional growth and development"
	Institutional Recognition	reputation, global visibility	"to enhance university reputation"; "global competitiveness"
	Commitment to Institutional Goals	responsibility and service	"part of our commitment to the university"
10. What factors discourage or limit your participation?	Workload and Time Constraints	heavy workload, limited time	"heavy workload"; "time constraints"
	Lack of Training or Knowledge	unfamiliarity with ranking systems	"limited familiarity with ranking methodologies"
	Resource Limitations	lack of staff, funding, systems	"fewer people to help"; "limited resources"
	Organizational and Communication Issues	unclear instructions, lack of coordination	"lack of integrated data system"; "unclear instructions"
	Complexity of Ranking Requirements	technical documentation, data requirements	"complex ranking requirements"; "difficulty preparing MOVs"

Table 12. Perceived Benefits

Research Question	Theme	Categories / Codes	Sample Responses
11. What benefits do global rankings bring to the university, faculty/staff, and students?	Institutional Reputation and Visibility	reputation, global recognition, prestige	"strengthen the university's reputation globally"; "increased visibility and credibility"
	Institutional Development and Improvement	quality improvement, benchmarking, standards	"continuous improvement of the university"; "determine whether we are on par with global standards"
	Research and Professional Opportunities	research funding, collaboration, professional growth	"opportunities for research funding"; "faculty collaboration and networking"
	Student Opportunities	employability, academic opportunities, pride	"students gain better career opportunities"; "sense of pride in studying in a recognized university"
	Institutional Partnerships	international collaboration, exchange programs	"faculty and student exchange"; "international partnerships and linkages"
12. Have you observed any positive outcomes linked to ranking participation?	Increased Institutional Recognition	visibility, reputation	"recognition for the university"; "greater institutional visibility"
	International Partnerships and Collaboration	linkages, international collaborations	"stronger partnerships with international institutions"
	Funding and Resource Opportunities	research grants, financial support	"increased funding opportunities"; "external funding"
	Academic Opportunities	exchange programs, visiting scholars	"students sent abroad for training"; "visiting professors came to the campus"

	Institutional Improvement	internal development, benchmarking	“improved monitoring of accomplishments”; “institutional improvement efforts”
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Table 13. Barriers and Challenges

Research Question	Theme	Categories / Codes	Sample Responses
13. What challenges do you personally face in aligning your work with ranking indicators?	Workload and Time Constraints	heavy workload, multiple responsibilities, deadlines	“balancing multiple responsibilities”; “heavy loads and time pressure”
	Limited Knowledge or Familiarity	lack of understanding of indicators, limited orientation	“lack of understanding of the different indicators”; “limited familiarity with ranking methodologies”
	Resource Limitations	funding constraints, limited manpower	“lack of budget for research”; “manpower shortages”
	Institutional Systems and Infrastructure	data management issues, documentation systems	“lack of data management systems”; “documentation challenges”
	Misalignment with Work Roles	tasks not directly related to ranking indicators	“not all indicators align with my work”; “administrative work not directly linked to rankings”
14. Are there institutional constraints affecting engagement with rankings?	Heavy Workload and Staffing Constraints	understaffed offices, multiple responsibilities	“heavy workloads and understaffed offices”
	Limited Financial and Institutional Resources	funding limitations, infrastructure needs	“limited research funding”; “limited resources”
	Policy and Strategic Gaps	unclear policies, lack of strategic planning	“vague policies affect engagement”; “lack of clear institutional guidance”
	Information and Training Gaps	lack of orientation, unclear processes	“limited information about ranking frameworks”
	Institutional Coordination Challenges	inefficient processes, fragmented systems	“inefficient processes”; “lack of integrated systems”
15. How do these challenges differ across faculty, administrative staff, and unit heads?	Role-Based Workload Differences	teaching, reporting, management responsibilities	“faculty balance teaching and research”; “staff handle reporting tasks”
	Data and Documentation Responsibilities	reporting and evidence preparation	“staff handle data collection and reporting”
	Leadership and Coordination Pressure	strategic planning and compliance	“unit heads coordinate and ensure compliance”
	Resource and Performance Pressure	output expectations and performance monitoring	“pressure to meet institutional targets”
	Institutional Culture and System Factors	varying perceptions and responsibilities	“depends on the university’s system and culture”

Table 14. Institutional Support and Recommendations

Research Question	Theme	Categories / Codes	Sample Responses
16. What kinds of support would help you better engage in ranking-related initiatives?	Training and Capacity Building	seminars, workshops, orientation on ranking systems	“awareness seminars and trainings”; “training on ranking methodologies”
	Incentives and Recognition	rewards, career incentives, recognition programs	“incentives for research and publications”; “career development opportunities tied to ranking achievements”

	Policy and Institutional Support	policy adjustments, workload alignment	“policy adjustments”; “supportive policies aligning workload with ranking tasks”
	Resource Allocation	funding, additional staff, infrastructure	“hire additional staff”; “allocate budget for ranking initiatives”
	Data and Information Systems	documentation systems, HRIS, data management	“procurement of HRIS”; “clear guidelines on data reporting”
17. How can the university improve communication, capacity-building, or coordination related to rankings?	Clear Communication and Information Dissemination	regular briefings, guidelines, updates	“provide clearer communication”; “regular orientation about rankings”
	Institutional Coordination	collaboration among offices, designated focal persons	“add a focal person to coordinate activities”; “better coordination among offices”
	Capacity Building Programs	training workshops, seminars, expert speakers	“trainings with experts and international speakers”
	Data Management and Systems	centralized data systems, documentation	“establish data management center”; “clear data-sharing processes”
	Strategic Planning and Preparation	early planning, structured timelines	“planning ahead and making requirements available early”
18. What recommendations can strengthen the university’s strategic engagement with global rankings?	Strategic Planning and Institutional Alignment	clear ranking strategy, institutional goals	“develop a clear ranking strategy aligned with institutional goals”
	Research and Academic Productivity	research funding, publication incentives	“encourage faculty to publish in high-impact journals”
	Data and Monitoring Systems	tracking systems, performance monitoring	“improve data management and reporting systems”
	Collaboration and Internationalization	partnerships, benchmarking, global engagement	“partner with international universities”; “international benchmarking”
	Inclusive Participation and Engagement	involvement of faculty and staff, bottom-up approach	“let everyone feel they are involved”

Table 15. Closing Question

Research Question	Theme	Categories / Codes	Sample Responses
19. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding global rankings and the university’s pursuit of institutional excellence?	Balance Between Rankings and Institutional Mission	quality education, research, community service	“rankings should complement, not replace the university’s focus on quality education”
	Need for Institutional Collaboration	faculty–administration cooperation	“if administration and faculty collaborate it would be easier to achieve institutional excellence”
	Need for Awareness and Information	dissemination of ranking indicators	“more information about ranking systems should be shared with faculty and staff”
	Rankings as a Tool for Improvement	benchmarking, institutional development	“rankings are a useful compass, not the destination”
20. How can the university better involve faculty and	Training and Awareness	orientation, capacity-building	“fully orient faculty and staff on ranking criteria”
	Clear Roles and Responsibilities	IPCR integration, defined tasks	“include these in their IPCR and provide targeted training”

staff in global ranking efforts?	Institutional Coordination	focal persons, task forces	“designated focal person per cluster of units”
	Participation and Collaboration	involvement in planning and data collection	“involve them in planning and decision-making”
	Recognition and Incentives	awards, recognition programs	“recognize contributors through incentive programs”
21. What support or incentives would encourage your participation in ranking initiatives?	Financial Incentives and Research Support	research funding, grants	“research grants and financial incentives”
	Training and Professional Development	seminars, capacity-building	“training opportunities and professional development”
	Recognition and Career Advancement	awards, promotion incentives	“recognition for contributions”
	Collaboration Opportunities	research collaboration, international partnerships	“collaboration and publication opportunities”
	Workload Adjustments	reduced teaching load, dedicated time	“non-teaching load or dedicated time for ranking activities”
22. What challenges or barriers do you face in aligning your work with global ranking indicators?	Workload and Time Constraints	heavy workload, administrative duties	“time constraints and heavy workload”
	Limited Resources	funding, manpower	“limited funding and personnel for research activities”
	Lack of Knowledge or Familiarity	understanding ranking indicators	“limited familiarity with ranking indicators”
	Institutional Systems and Processes	data systems, documentation requirements	“lack of integrated data management systems”
	Complexity of Ranking Metrics	technical indicators, unclear guidance	“complex ranking methodologies”

Table 17. Summary of Key Findings and Proposed Strategic Programs for Strengthening Institutional Engagement in Global Rankings.

Theme	Key Findings from the Study	Program / Policy	Description	Expected Outcome / Impact	Responsible Office
1. Awareness and Understanding of Ranking Systems	Personnel demonstrate moderate awareness but limited understanding of ranking indicators and methodologies.	KAALAMAN Program (<i>Kaalaman at Alamin ang Akademikong Ranggo ng mga Institusyon</i>)	Institutionalize regular orientations and seminars explaining ranking systems (QS, THE, WURI, QS Stars) and how individual roles contribute to rankings.	Increased institutional awareness and alignment with ranking indicators.	Linkages and International Office / Quality Assurance Office
2. Capacity Building and Training	Respondents emphasized the need for training and knowledge development.	KAKAYAHAN Program (<i>Kasayanan at Kakayahang para sa Akademikong Ranggo</i>)	Provide workshops on ranking methodologies, research productivity, citation metrics, internationalization strategies, and data reporting.	Improved competencies of faculty and staff contributing to ranking indicators.	HR Development Office / Research Office
3. Institutional Communication and Coordination	Ranking-related information dissemination is inconsistent across units.	Ugnayan Program (<i>Ugnayan para sa Ranggo at Pandaigdigang Pakikipagtulungan</i>)	Implement regular institutional briefings, newsletters, dashboards, and cross-unit meetings about ranking initiatives and progress.	Improved transparency, coordination, and awareness.	Strategic Communications Office
4. Institutional Governance and Coordination	Ranking efforts are often concentrated in limited offices instead of institutionalized.	GABAY Committee (<i>Gabayang Akademikong Bentaha at Yaman</i>)	Establish a permanent committee composed of key administrators, faculty, and data managers responsible for coordinating ranking strategies.	Stronger institutional coordination and accountability for ranking initiatives.	Office of the President / Planning Office
5. Data Management and Institutional Systems	Challenges in data gathering, documentation, and submission were reported.	TALA System (<i>Tala ng Akademikong Lakas at Ambag</i>)	Develop a centralized institutional database tracking indicators such as publications, citations, partnerships, SDGs, and mobility programs.	Improved efficiency and accuracy in ranking submissions.	ICT Office / Institutional Planning Office

<p>6. Incentives for Faculty Participation</p>	<p>Faculty expressed motivation through research support, recognition, and promotion opportunities.</p>	<p>GANTIMPALA Program (<i>Gantimpala para sa Pananaliksik at Pandaigdigang Ambag</i>)</p>	<p>Provide incentives such as publication grants, citation bonuses, international conference support, and recognition awards for ranking-related outputs.</p>	<p>Increased research productivity and international academic engagement.</p>	<p>Research Office</p>
<p>7. Incentives for Administrative Staff Involved in Rankings</p>	<p>Administrative staff indicated the need for recognition, financial incentives, and workload support.</p>	<p>ALAY Program (<i>Alay ng Lingkod para sa Akademikong Yabong</i>)</p>	<p>Provide honoraria, service recognition awards, professional development training, and career advancement points for staff supporting ranking documentation and data management.</p>	<p>Higher staff motivation and improved operational efficiency in ranking processes.</p>	<p>Human Resource Management Office</p>
<p>8. Incentives for Directors and Unit Heads Leading Ranking Initiatives</p>	<p>Directors and unit heads face coordination responsibilities and accountability pressures.</p>	<p>PAMUNO Program (<i>Pamunuo para sa Pandaigdigang Ranggo</i>)</p>	<p>Provide performance-based incentives, leadership recognition, strategic project funding, and institutional awards for units contributing significantly to ranking outcomes.</p>	<p>Stronger leadership engagement and accountability in ranking initiatives.</p>	<p>Office of the President / Planning Office</p>
<p>9. Workload Management and Institutional Support</p>	<p>Heavy workloads limit participation in ranking-related activities.</p>	<p>BALANSE Policy (<i>Balanseng Alokasyon ng Lakas at Serbisyo</i>)</p>	<p>Provide workload credits, research time allowances, or administrative support for personnel involved in ranking activities.</p>	<p>Greater faculty and staff participation in institutional initiatives.</p>	<p>Academic Affairs Office</p>
<p>10. Internationalization and Global Partnerships</p>	<p>Rankings are linked with international collaboration and mobility programs.</p>	<p>KAAGAPAY Program (<i>Kooperasyon at Akademikong Ugnayan para sa Pandaigdigang Pag-unlad</i>)</p>	<p>Expand faculty exchanges, joint research projects, visiting scholar programs, and global partnerships aligned with ranking indicators.</p>	<p>Increased global visibility and international collaboration.</p>	<p>Linkages and International Office</p>

<p>11. Institutional Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>Rankings serve as benchmarking tools for institutional development.</p>	<p>TUKLAS Program (<i>Tuklas sa Kasagayan at Lakas ng Akademya</i>)</p>	<p>Conduct benchmarking visits, collaborative research, and institutional learning exchanges with globally ranked universities.</p>	<p>Improved institutional competitiveness and adoption of best practices.</p>	<p>Planning Office</p>
<p>12. Inclusive Institutional Participation</p>	<p>Engagement in ranking initiatives varies across units and personnel.</p>	<p>KASAMA Framework (<i>Katuwang sa Samasamang Ambag sa Ranggo</i>)</p>	<p>Integrate ranking-related contributions into faculty performance evaluations, staff appraisal systems, and institutional KPIs.</p>	<p>Increased institutional ownership and shared responsibility.</p>	<p>Human Resource Management Office</p>
<p>13. Strategic Alignment with Institutional Mission</p>	<p>Respondents emphasized balancing rankings with the university's educational mission.</p>	<p>LAYON Strategy (<i>Layuning Akademiko para sa Pandaigdigang Ranggo</i>)</p>	<p>Embed ranking goals into strategic plans while maintaining commitment to teaching excellence, research impact, and community engagement.</p>	<p>Sustainable institutional excellence and global competitiveness.</p>	<p>Strategic Planning Office</p>