

# Enhancing Research Output in Higher Institutions of Learning: A Case Study of Busitema University Research Model

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## Abstract

University rankings have become a standard criterion of characterising higher institutions of learning irrespective of their specialisation, be it social sciences, natural sciences, health sciences or technology. The most highly ranked institutions worldwide are based on the same criteria despite the area of specialty and the geographical location. Higher institutional rankings are mainly based on pedagogy, strategic placement, research output in terms of publications, academic staff-student ratio, international linkage or partnerships, management of technological resources, and the existing human and infrastructural resources. This article attempts to address the possible ways to enhance research in developing institutions with a case study of Busitema University, Uganda. We propose the Busitema University Research (BUR) Model that can be used to analyse why the performance of higher institutions of learning (HIL) should be ranked based on the criteria of institutional research output (IRO). A survey was also conducted from 29 respondents and the data was analysed using Spreadsheet. From the generated results, it was established that the quality of academic staff highly determines the research output and thereby the increased university ranking. The results also formed the basis of the BUR Model development. The developed model will further be tested during a comprehensive study involving different HIL, especially in computing their respective institutional research index and rankings.

**Keywords:** *Higher institutions of learning; Institutional research index; Institutional research output; Research model; University ranking.*

The study also recommends that the university should develop clear policies on teaching, research and innovation that enable staff to attend local and international conferences and workshops as a means to build their research capacity and to mentor them. The policies would act as a stimulus to enhance the research agenda in the institutions, hence boosting research output and university ranking.

The study further recommends that universities should motivate academic staff to adopt a new culture on research, conference participation and publication to increase research output of the institutions. This can be achieved through the establishment of modern research infrastructure to transform the universities into research-oriented institutions, conducting capacity training and mentorship programmes for the academic staff and implementing policies that will compel academic staff members to treat research activities as the only means to steer the socio-development and transformation of the nation and the world at large.

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### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest pertaining to the publication of this work.

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