Unpacking inconsistencies in the NIRF rankings

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India rankings released by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) since 2016, plays a vital role in the assessment of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the country. While the NIRF rankings aim to enhance transparency and accountability, the present study has identified several inconsistencies, thus raising concerns about their reliability. These include huge fluctuations in the rankings, overemphasis on bibliometrics neglecting non-traditional research outputs, subjective nature of perception rankings that introduces biases, challenges in the regional diversity metric, overlooking teaching quality, inadequate transparency in methodology, questions about data integrity and limited global benchmarking. This study emphasizes on dialogue, refinement and increased transparency to ensure that the NIRF rankings evolve into a reliable benchmark for the diverse landscape of Indian higher education.

Keywords: Bibliometric assessment, higher education institutions, perception, ranking fluctuations