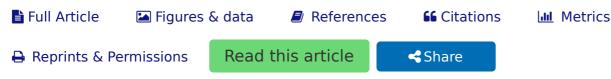




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Q Studies in Higher Education > Volume 36, 2011 - Issue 8 1,621 37 0 Views CrossRef citations to date Altmetric Articles Why does the USA dominate university league tables? Mei Li, Sriram Shankar & Kam Ki Tang 💟 Pages 923-937 | Published online: 26 Nov 2010 **66** Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2010.482981 Sample our Education Journals Sign in here to start your access to the latest two volumes for 14 days



Abstract

According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities, the world's top 500 universities are located in only 38 countries, with the USA alone having 157 of them. This article investigates the socioeconomic determinants of the wide performance gap between countries, and whether the USA's dominance is largely due to its economic power. A large amount of cross-country variation in university performance can be explained by just four socioeconomic factors: income, population size, research and development spending, and the national language. Conditional on the resources that it has, the USA is actually underperforming by about 4–10%. On the contrary, an emerging economic power, China, is rising fast in the league table as well as outperforming countries with similar levels of resources.

Keywords:

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