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COVID-19 and teaching in higher education institutions: the case of Uganda Martyrs University relative to selected cases in the rest of the world

Author(s): Christopher Acaali Mukidi

Abstract:

The COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted global higher education, exposing the unpreparedness of several Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), especially in developing countries. This study, guided by Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), examines the response of Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) during the 2020-2021 lockdowns. Despite limited resources, UMU adopted digital teaching models, emphasized inclusivity, and promoted staff-student collaboration to maintain continuity in learning. The study highlights UMU's institutional adaptability through strategic academic and administrative interventions. It further explores how selected Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Uganda and internationally, particularly in the UK, India, and Ghana, responded through innovative pedagogical and technological strategies. By offering a comparative analysis, this work contributes to the growing body of research on crisis management in higher education. It underscores the importance of strategic flexibility, digital readiness, and inclusive practices in building institutional resilience during systemic crises.

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