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COVID-19 Pandemic and Institutional Management at the Higher Learning Institution in Gauteng Province

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AT THE HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTION IN GAUTENG PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected institutional management at higher learning institutions in South Africa, including Gauteng province. Institutional managers were challenged to think strategically to maintain sound functionality. In the South African institutional context, restrictive measures of level 5 lockdown forced higher learning institutions to adopt online learning without proper preparation impacting on quality of institutional management, undertaking research, and learning and teaching. 'Uberfication' of the university in learning and teaching affected social interactions which is a hallmark of academic freedom through knowledge sharing and debates for intellectual stimulation. Unintended consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic called for new institutional management approaches at higher learning institutions in the Gauteng province to maintain the stability of effective administration and management for students' academic success. A qualitative study using a case study design was undertaken to analyze how departmental managers performed their administrative duties to safeguard teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic in a higher learning institution in the Gauteng Province. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze findings and recommend solutions for effective institutional management in higher learning to prepare for crises similar to the Covid-19 pandemic. The study contributes to institutional management approaches during social crises.

Keywords: academic success, departmental managers, effective management, institutional sustainability, teaching, and learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the social ecosystem in different countries of the world which resulted in major disruption in the economy, health, education, and numerous aspects of life. This meant that life was no longer 'business as usual as nothing is guaranteed", and human lives have been disrupted in a manner that has never been experienced before. Covid-19 pandemic period challenged humans, social structures, and institutions to become agile, flexible, and adaptable to the "new normal"[1]. Every sector of our society, be it business, agriculture, health, and education has been disrupted and affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, whereby leaders and ordinary members of society are challenged to apply lateral thinking and develop new management strategies and approaches.

In the South African context, restrictive measures of level five lockdown in the 2nd quarter of 2020 grounded contact tuition at schools and universities to a halt forcing higher learning institutions or universities in the Gauteng province to devise online teaching and learning platforms such as Collaborate, Electronic Campus, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams.[2]. Hall,[3] invented a concept of "uberfication of the university" which has been modeled similarly to new disruption in transportation system by using cell phone apps to communicate with prospective clients as universities are forced to manage their affairs virtually. New approaches and practices to institutional management of universities are necessary to navigate challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and ensure that lecturers, students, and administrative staff are supported to perform their duties, and academic activities and provide academic throughputs using technological platforms.

One university in the Gauteng Province that constitutes the case study, experienced operational disruptions whereby academic

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[1] Hedding David and others, 'COVID-19 and the Academe in South Africa: Not Business as Usual' (2020) 116(7-8) South African Journal of Science 1

[2] Lesley Le Grange, 'Could the COVID-19 Pandemic Accelerate the Uberfication of the University?' (2020) 34(4) South African Journal of Higher Education 1.

[3] Gary Hall, The Uberfication of the University (University of Minnesota Press 2016).

teaching, student support, and other forms of institutional management activities, i.e., research, faculty meetings, and assessments were affected.[4]. For contextualization, the challenges that impacted universities during the COVID-19 pandemic will be reflected upon

2. BACKGROUND

Hall[5] postulates that institutional management entails efficiency in managing an organization or institution that entails management of daily tasks, implementing policies and providing direction and guidance to employees, and application of rules and regulations. All these institutional management factors and functions are possible in a normal environment where there is a lot of predictability that informs institutional planning, organization, coordination, and performing work activities. However, the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that was first detected in December 2021 in the Chinese City of Wuhan and rapidly spread across the globe disrupted the normality of institutional management that mainly rely on the predictability of events[6]. Due to the interconnectedness of the world because of the ease of air transportation, all countries of the world and sectors, including educational institutions such as universities were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that forced them to cut their contract learning short and transition to online or distance learning methodologies.[7]

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[4] Steyn, Adriana and others, 'Interactive Learning: Introducing a First-Year Systems Analysis and Design Course' (49th Annual Conference of the Southern African Computer Lecturers' Association, SACLA 2020, Virtual Event, July 6–9, 2020)

[5] See Hall, 15

[6] Hua, Jinling, and Rajib Shaw. "Corona virus (Covid-19)"infodemic" and emerging issues through a data lens: The case of china." International journal of environmental research and public health 17, no. 7 (2020): 2309; World Health Organization. "COVID 19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Global research and innovation forum: towards a research roadmap." (2020).

[7] Izumi, Takako, Vibhas Sukhwani, Akhilesh Surjan, and Rajib Shaw. "Managing and responding to pandemics in higher educational institutions: initial learning from COVID-19." International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment 12, no. 1 (2021): 51-66, See Shaw, 2020:3

Lall and Singh[8] explicate that shifting from traditional classroom teaching to online learning was a huge challenge for universities' management as they have to bear new financial costs that were not planned for and unforeseen before the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. A huge drawback on institutional level for managers and students was that online teaching did not have co-curricular activities and contact meetings that demonstrate participatory management and inclusivity were curtailed in favour of online meetings that were new and some technological devices malfunctioned which disrupted productive engagements[9]. From a global perspective, financial challenge due to cancellation of international students, fees refund, and costs of virtual technology threatened future financial stability of institutions and institutional managers were to think creatively to manage during a time of crisis that they were never prepared for in their professional life[10]. Delloitte[11] outlined how institutional leaders and managers were to engage in possible scenarios planning to maintain institutional operations and survival during period of continuous change and posed great difficulties in their leadership and management approaches.

Mncube, Mutongoza, and Olawale[12] reflect that from a South African perspective, the stringent Covid-19 measures posed challenges for universities by weakening research, led to the cancellation of examinations, posed safety risks at university campuses, and curtailed international collaborations that build institutional capacity and acquire financial contributions. Financial challenges were also experienced by many South African

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[8] Lall, Shatakshi, and Nardev Singh. "COVID-19: Unmasking the new face of education." Int. J. Res. Pharm. Sci. (2020): 48-53.

[9] See Izumu et al, 2020:4

[10] Rosowsky, David, 'Four Ways COVID-19 is Hurting Higher Education and Why That Matters' (2020) <www.forbes.com/sites/davidrosowsky/2020/05/04/four-ways-covid-19-is-hurting-higher-education-and-why-that-matters/#63c2c9b459f> accessed 17 February 2023

[11] Deloitte, 'COVID-19's Impact on Higher Education: Strategies for Tackling the Financial Challenges and Universities' (2020) https://www.2.deloitte.com/content/ data/Deloitte/us/Documents/public-sector/vs-gps-covid-19-impact-one-higher-educa stion.pdf accessed 17 February 2023.

[12] Mncube, Vusi, Bonginkosi Hardy Mutongoza, and Emmanuel Olawale, 'Managing Higher Education Institutions in the Context of COVID-19 Stringency: Experiences of Stakeholders at a Rural South African University' (2021) 39 Perspectives in Education 390.

universities, especially those that are poor and rely on government subsidies as their sole financial income. Because COVID-19 spread in South Africa at the beginning of the first quarter of the year 2020, many students from poor communities who normally register late because of lack of funding stopped registering which impacted the university subsidy per student and impacted their ability to operate optimally[13]. Therefore, the study is significant to explore how institutional management at a South African university dealt with the negative impact of COVID-19 in the post-COVID era to stay afloat. Lessons derived from the study will form institutional memory for institutional management practices in future crises that can fit into change management strategies and approaches.

This presentation is organized into the identified knowledge gap and significance of the study, the literature review that outlines the research problem, and the theoretical framework of institutional theory. It shares the research methodology that guided the study and provides results and discussions from reviewed literature.

3. KNOWLEDGE GAP AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is that the Covid-19 pandemic is a new and unpredictable phenomenon that has never been experienced and its impact on institutional management new thoroughly researched[14].Therefore, its consequences might be dire viability of higher learning institutions to conduct their affairs which required managers to think laterally and design new institutional management strategies to mitigate the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in their institutions[15] . This research study seeks to explore how unit managers at University One in the Gauteng province align its institutional management practices and approaches to mitigate challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. New work approaches such as social distancing, cancelation of contact learning, minimizing consultative

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13 See Reddy, Soudien & Winnaar, 2020:11
14 See Rowosky, 2020; 14
15 See Lall and Singh 2020; 50

engagement with lecturers and students, and resorting to online have become the new normal and created unpredictability and uncertainty at an institutional level[16].

Despite the commitment of higher learning institutions in South Africa toward efficient and effective institutional management, the Covid-19 pandemic poses a greater risk of disrupting institutional management approaches, and practices. Izumi, Sukhwani, Surjan, and Shaw[17] reason that this might be due to the unavailability of institutional risk management or business continuity plans necessary to manage risks and institutional challenges experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic and other disasters. Omorobi[18] also observes that the participation of lecturers, heads of departments, and deanery in decision-making processes at universities creates high morale and commitment which are critical for institutional efficacy but have been challenged during the Covid-19 pandemic due to restrictions on institutional meetings and sharing of best practices.

4. PROBLEMATIZING THE STUDY

Participatory democracy, participative management, decision-making processes, and institutional collaboration at South African higher learning institutions are challenged during the Covid-19 pandemic due to a lack of socialization and knowledge sharing.[19] Institutional management is a social activity that requires work with or through others to achieve institutional performance objectives and goals[20]. The covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the smooth management of universities in South Africa whereby student support activities, contact teaching, and assessment, research activities, and symposia were curtailed in

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16   See Hedding and others, 2020
17   See Izumi and others, 2020
18   Omorobi Omorobi and others, 'Participative management practices and institutional goal attainment in Nigerian universities'(2020) 5 American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities169
19   Macek, J.F, 'Why collaborative management is successful' 2019; Ibid, 17
20   Ogunruku, A.O, 'Statutory bodies in universities: Roles, organizational structure and functions'(Paper delivered at a retreat for Members of the Council of the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, 2010)

favor of online teaching and assessment which negatively impacted the quality of engaging relationships[21]. The covid-19 pandemic left many students, lecturers, academic managers, and heads of departments at universities in South Africa confused, uncertain, and stressed due to its unpredictability as they were forced to change work and management styles[22]. Higher learning institutions in South Africa were also not prepared to transition to online teaching and work practices due to the environment where most of its students come from communities characterized by poverty, lack of internet connectivity, and load shedding due to unreliable electricity supply from Eskom.[23]

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was significant in the research inquiry as it examines existing literature about the topic under scrutiny to analyze what has been done before[24] . Literature sources that were reviewed were journals and documentary sources. A literature review provided insightful knowledge and experiences that a researcher can utilize to limit the scope of a research inquiry[25]. Cooper[26] identified four types and usage of literature review which are:

- to integrate with other studies,
- critical analysis of previous scholarly articles,
- an amalgamation of related topics,
- and outlining important issues in the field.

A literature review first reflected on an institutional theory to guide the inquiry, then sought to answer the main questions of the study being:

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21 Le Grange, Lesley. 'Could the Covid-19 pandemic accelerate the uberfication of the university?.' (2020) 34 South African Journal of Higher Education 1.
22 See Hedding et al 2020
23 See Le Grange, 2020
24 Creswell, John W, A concise introduction to mixed methods research (SAGE publications, 2014)
25 Wilkinson, Antoinette Miele, 'The scientist's handbook for writing papers and dissertations.' (1991).
26 Cooper, Harris, Research synthesis and meta-analysis: A step-by-step approach (Sage publications, 2015)

- What was the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the institutional management approaches and processes of the university?
- What factors influenced departmental managers when managing their departments during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- What institutional management challenges did departmental managers experience during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- What strategies did departmental managers at a selected university formulate to mitigate institutional management challenges experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic and what lessons can be learned about their effectiveness?

6. INFLUENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL THEORY ON INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Institutional theory has proliferated to cover a wide range of phenomena as it seeks to explain how institutions formulate their policies to redefine institutional missions and forms to guide and influence performance approaches and practices (Edelman, 1993; Tolbert & Zacker, 1983). Zhou (1993) and Strang (1994), emphasize the irony of the lack of institutionalization of the institutional approach resulting in a lack of consensus regarding its definition of key concepts, measures, and methodological approach. Efforts have focused largely on the definition of an institutional theory being the important theoretical body of knowledge to guide institutional practices but insufficient effort attended to the conceptualization and "specifying the process of its institutionalization"[27] Institutional theory is fundamentally linked to some sociological approaches that explain how institutional structures define institutional practices and performance[28] . This means that normal institutional management approaches and practices get their cues from the way an institution is structured, whether guided by bottom-up, top-down, or

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[27] DiMaggio Paul, 'Constructing an organizational field as a professional project: The case of US art museums' (1991).
[28] Scott, W. Richard, and John W. Meyer, 'Institutional environments and organizations: Structural complexity and individualism' [1994] Sage.

consultative approaches. This further underpins the notion that institutional theory informs the practical application or implementation of decisions within a particular institution. Despite its limitation, the institutional theory is more relevant to analyze how higher education institutions are structured to deal with unpredictable challenges that were experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Scott[29] accentuates that institutional theory is more concerned about how rules, norms, and structures are designed to be authoritative guidelines of social behavior. Coleman[30] premise institutional theory on an institutional model that extrapolates that "over-socialized individuals accept and follow social norms unquestioningly without any real reflection or behavioral resistance based on their interest". On the contrary, institutional theory can be guided by a rational choice model whereby individuals make costs-benefit analyses about the choices and actions to pursue or follow when undertaking performance activities within an institution[31] . Decision-making process or behavior by an individual, whether a manager or employee, during the management or performance of tasks within an institution, resides within these two continuums of institutional or rational choice models.

Institutional theory becomes critical to reflect on when the rationality of the decision-making process or behavior is likely to be bounded. Before the analysis by Merton and colleagues, organizations or institutions were not recognized as representing social actors within modern societal processes [32]. Zucker[33] conceptualizes that new institutional structures are created by institutional and social actors within an institution. Institutional

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[29] Scott, W. Richard, 'Institutional theory: Contributing to a theoretical research program' (2005) 37no. 2, Great minds in management: The process of theory development 460.

[30] Coleman, James S, 'Foundations of social theory' [1994] Harvard university press; Coleman, J. S., M. Hechter, K. D. Opp, and R. Wippler, 'Social Institutions: Their Emergence, Maintenance, and Effects' (1990) 35-39.

[31] Wrong, D. H, 'The oversocialized conception of man in modern sociology (pp. 83–93).' (1961)26 American Sociological Review

[32] See Coleman 1990

[33] Zucker, Lynne G, 'Where do institutional patterns come from? Organizations as actors in social systems' in institutional patterns and organizations: Culture and environment.' [1988] Kondra, AZ & Hinings, CR

theory is significant to analyze how individual and institutional actors formulate their actions and behavioral thinking to insulate or assist their institutions to manage disruptions that characterized the Covid-19 pandemic and affect institutional performance management and practices.

Turner[34] presumes that a major hallmark of institutional theory is to view an institution or organization as a microcosm of society engaged in a dynamic social change that has been largely neglected by functionalist theory. The assumption made by functional theory is that for an institution or organization to survive its structural system components must be integrated because they are interrelated parts of a whole[35]. This further means that a change in one institutional component will affect and influence another component of a system. A second assumption from a functional theoretical perspective is that the structures of a system should enhance the function of a social system or balance it so that the system can survive. Merton[36] posits that a social system is likely to change when the functional contribution of a particular system is exceeded by dysfunctionality within that arrangement. This can happen when functionality in an institution is associated with dysfunctionality, thereby depicting a causal relationship. Fayol[37] concurs with the views of Merton (1948) by analyzing management science studies through a bureaucratic approach to emphasize that formal structures can maximize efficiency through the central institutional decision-making process of coordinating and controlling work activities in an institution. An implication for institutional theory is that institutional efficiency can be enhanced if there is a positive relationship between the complexity and size of administrative institutional components that require a level of direct supervision to coordinate and manage problems[38].

Numerous institutional structures like labor unions and professional associations exist and support work activities within an institution which requires better institutional management

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[34] Turner 1974
[35] Tolbert, Pamela S., and Lynne G. Zucker, 'The institutionalization of institutional theory.'[1999] Studying organization. Theory & method 1, 169-184.
[36] Merton, Robert, 'Manifest and latent functions.' [2016] Social theory re-wired 68, 84
[37] Fayol Henri, General and industrial management. (Ravenio Books, 2016)
[38] Ibid

approaches, engagements, and practices to garner institutional synergy[39]. Failure to achieve institutional collaboration and work synergies can lead to tension between professional employees, hierarchical supervision, and bureaucratic rules from management[40] . This might also create competing visions informed by 'institutional logic' regarding how to rationalize institutional work activities. There might also be institutional discrepancies between preferred and actual authority systems whereby workers might assume some degree of how to enforce their preferences[41].

Scott[42] views the contribution of institutional theory to the institutional management approach as being a need to understand that work arrangements and processes are shaped by cultural, social, and political processes as opposed to being preordained by natural economic laws. Covid-19 challenged the structuring of institutional theory and its assumptions whereby major decisions that impacted institutional management within institutions were taken at a higher level, i.e., the national government on Covid management protocol in South Africa, that disrupted institutional plans and implementation of activities as new challenges required emergency responses which challenged institutional stability.[43]

Different social and institutional theorists like Meyer and Rowan (1977); Meyer and Scott (1983) and Meyer, Scott, and Strang (1987) perceive institutions as rationalized systems that lay out work activities to achieve means-ends relationships in pursuit of institutional goals and objectives. It is however important to recognize that institutional models of rationality are culturally laden as they represent methods for achieving a particular purpose. While institutional systems of the past were conceptualized around guidelines of social behaviors that sanctioned arbitrary behavior, modern institutional systems

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[39] Hughes, Everett C, 'Men and their work.' (1958).
[40] Scott 1966
[41] Douglas, Mary, How institutions think. (Syracuse University Press, 1986)
[42] See Scott, 2004
[43] Angie Motshekga, 'Basic Education Sector Plans to support learners during Coronavirus COVID-19 lockdown' (South African Government, 26 March 2020) <https://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-angie-motshekga-basic-education-sector-plans-support-learners-during-covid-19> Accessed 20 November 2022

models embrace rationality that supports the proliferation of institutions[44].

Scott's view about the rationality of institutional systems resonates with those of Meyer and Rowan[45] who postulate that norms of rationality play a causal role in the creation of formal institutions. One shortcoming of some institutional models is that they are rationalized along a myth such as a 'rule-like system whereby efficacy is determined by individuals or groupings who have been given unfettered power to determine what is right or wrong. For these institutional models to gain social legitimacy they exercise their power through work activities that are decoupled from rule systems rather than on effects that work activities have on institutional participants.[46] A major contribution of institutional theory on institutional management approaches is that institutional management approaches and practices should factor cultural, social, and political dynamics amongst diverging groupings and build collaborative work approaches and practices to garner support, and ownership of the decision-making process to improve performance and management efficacy.

7. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT

The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on higher education institutions across the globe such as restriction of movement, personal contact and mass gathering, social distancing, and quarantining posed numerous challenges to institutional management processes and practices. [47] A case in point is that the majority of business school faculties in the United States of America (USA), Australia, and European Union (EU) universities

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44 See Scott, 2204
45 Meyer, John W., and Brian Rowan, 'Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony.' (1977)83 American journal of sociology 340, 363
46 Scott 1983
47 Brammer, Steve, and Timothy Clark, 'COVID-19 and management education: Reflections on challenges, opportunities, and potential futures.' (2020)31 British journal of Management 453.

registered many international students from China, Japan, and South Korea who were affected by international travel restrictions[48] . Even though Western higher education institutions have acquired experiences in using mature digital and online remote learning and teaching strategies, there are instances where physical teaching tuition like performing practical laboratory experiments is mandatory. The section examines the impact of Covid-19 on institutional management of university managers in Australia, the USA, and the United Kingdom (UK) when dealing with challenges encountered when forced to change their learning approaches necessitated by the pandemic. It is important to reflect on how the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted business and social institutions and their interactions which requires new institutional management approaches and practices whereby leaders and managers must think out of the box when crafting new strategic plans.

Schulmann[49] argues that the majority of students and other institutional stakeholders are largely affected by strategies that institutional managers adopt to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on teaching and assessment as they are not adequately consulted during the design of new academic plans due to the need for the speedy response to salvage academic period. Some students, lecturers, and academic managers and their families contracted Covid-19 which caused social and emotional anxiety resulting in a stoppage of teaching and assessment whereby institutional managers must reorganize their institutional management plans and programs[50]. An insurmountable challenge in the business schools' faculties in Australia is that their academic programs are designed in a way that students must engage in external internships and study tours and exchange to gain practical experience which became impossible during the lockdown period of Covid-19[51] Some international students were not able to be

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[48] Branco Oliveira, Diana, and Ana Maria Soares, 'Studying abroad: Developing a model for the decision process of international students.' (2016)38 Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management 126,139.

[49] Schulmann, P. The perfect storm: The impact of the coronavirus crisis on the United States. New York: World Education Services, 2020

[50] Tesar, Marek, 'Towards a post-Covid-19 'new normality?': Physical and social distancing, the move to online and higher education.' (2020)18 Policy Futures in Education 556,559.

[51] See Brammer & Clark 2020

repatriated back to their home countries and were forced to consider part-time work to finance their accommodation which was challenging as industries and businesses grounded to a halt. Universities were then expected to dip into their already vulnerable fiscal resources to assist international students to extend their stay in affected countries. Despite efforts of university management to assist international students, some of them were left stranded in foreign countries as institutional plans were hamstrung by governments' national health guidelines in dealing with pandemics.

Despite professional and administrative staff members being vulnerable to the Covid-19 pandemic, new institutional systems for quality assurance and governance put more pressure on them as they dealt with a new workload of moving from normal to new online teaching and assessment in a way that has never been experienced before[52] The professional teaching staff was to learn how to transform their teaching and assessment practices within a short space of time which required support from technical and logistical staff to design and develop new academic software. Some professional academics were not able to cope with new online teaching pedagogical methodologies which affected the quality of their work thus forcing institutional managers to look for alternative support mechanisms like new technicians for guidance[53]

Brammer and Clark[54] assert that navigation to online teaching pedagogy has negative ripple effects on students' academic teaching and performance because some technological platforms and programs were not thoroughly tested to ensure that they can perform as per expectation. Covid-19 caused stress and anxiety amongst professional staff because of inadequate training on the usage of online teaching methodologies resulting in the shifting of some examinations as they affected rigor and testing standards.

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[52] Xiong, Weiyan, Ka Ho Mok, Guoguo Ke, and Joyce Oi Wun Cheung, 'Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on international higher education and student mobility: Student perspectives from mainland China and Hong Kong.' Centre for Global Higher Education (2020).
[53] Ibid
[54] See Brammer & Clark, 2020

In countries like Australia and UK, governments were not in favor of providing financial assistance to universities to deal with the negative consequences of Covid-19 but instead opted to extend credit lines and offered generalized employment protections to employees in the whole economic system[55]. In contrast to Australia and the UK, the Ministry of Education in Singapore coordinated with six autonomous universities to tackle challenges, including funding, associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, and come up with a common approach.[56] Business models of many business schools of Australian, UK, and USA universities are hugely and negatively impacted by Covid-19 to the extent that it poses existential threats to some of them. Brammer and Clark[57] delineate that some issues that posed a negative impact on business models of business schools in faculties were that "research is cross-subsidized by teaching, disciplines with low teaching and assessment costs subsidize disciplines with higher costs, and international fee-paying students subsidize domestic students". The covid-19 pandemic, therefore, undermined such a fragile web of cross-subsidization within business models of universities with large business schools and faculties.

8. FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS AT UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA AND NIGERIA DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The section focuses on examining factors that influenced operational management at universities in Kenya and Nigeria during the Covid-19 pandemic to provide an African perspective of how life-threatening challenges that impact institutional efficiency are dealt with. Kenya and Nigeria are chosen to contribute ideas about how the Covid-19 pandemic was dealt with as they are dominant countries in their regions which are Eastern and Western African regions and have a major influence in

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[55] Marginson 2020
[56] University and College Union, 'Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on university finance' (London: University and College Union, 2020)
[57] See Brammer and Clark, 2020:4

regional affairs. Comparison of the two countries with South African universities can provide a realistic picture of the management of institutions during Covid-19 that outlines a continental approach as South Africa is the most influential country in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa are among significant countries in terms of trade and economic development in the African continent, and the approaches universities adopted in factoring the Covid-19 pandemic can provide impetus to other public and private sectors.

9. INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT PROCESSES AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA

The Kenyan government adopted a three-pronged strategy for education to guide schooling and higher education sectors to deal with the Covid-19 national protocol of ensuring social distancing, continuous washing of hands, and wearing of masks in public spaces[58]. Online learning content became one of the measures adopted by tertiary institutions to ensure that students at universities can access teaching and learning whilst being at home due to Covid-19 restrictions mandated by the government. Paschal and Mkulu[59] define online learning as a pedagogical strategy or methodology that uses digital and technological platforms to encourage learning interactions among students and lecturers, group learning, and teamwork among students. Successful implementation of online learning methodology and teaching platforms at Kenyan universities depended on the abilities of institutional managers to manage technological tools by strengthening digital skills in an institution, ensuring that there is good network coverage in the learning environment, and mitigating possible challenges related to connectivity. The most popular technological teaching and learning platforms made

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[58] (Wekullo et al, 2021).
[59] Paschal, Mahona Joseph, and Demetria Gerold Mkulu, 'Online classes during COVID-19 pandemic in higher learning institutions in Africa.' (2020).

available at tertiary institutions in Kenya were; Zoom, Youtube.com, Google Classroom, and Skype.com[60]

Nyerere[61] postulates that the adoption of online teaching mode at tertiary institutions in Kenya was riddled with challenges because this technological teaching approach was new and could have taken time to be institutionalized. Despite experienced challenges, online technological learning through internet connectivity was viewed as conceivable to enrich students' experiences because of the accessibility of learning resources which can improve student learning[62]. One identified challenge was that at Kenyan universities, like most African societies, there is a socioeconomic inequality among students[63]. Some students came from affluent backgrounds who had access to technological devices whilst others came from poor backgrounds who lacked technological devices which impacted negatively on their academic performance. Institutional managers were challenged to factor in the socioeconomic differences of students in their institutions when planning the implementation of technological online teaching approaches to mitigate learning disparities that can increase social segregation. Some students at universities in Kenya were refugees and disabled who are guaranteed equal rights to high standards of education, training, development, and research by the constitution of Kenya which compelled universities to ascertain equality of access in their institutional performance management[64] .

Odhiambo[65] accentuates that poor quality of education was a challenge in most of the universities in Kenya since some technical colleges were given university status but with poor infrastructure as they operated in dilapidated buildings in city centers. While public universities had a higher number of professionalized staff and research activity, they also experienced challenges of poor facilities, overcrowding, insufficient lecturing staff, and degraded

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[60] Wekullo et al 2021
[61] Nyerere, Julius, 'Moving online huge challenge for Kenya's Higher Education.' (2020) Social Science Space
[62] Horn, Michael B., and Heather Staker, 'The rise of K-12 blended learning.' (2011) Innosight institute 1, 17.
[63] See Pascal & Mkulu, 2020
[64] Republic of Kenya 2010
[65] Odhiambo, George O, 'Higher education quality in Kenya: A critical reflection of key challenges.' (2011)17 Quality in Higher education 299, 315.

facilities[66] There was also a large concentration of private universities in Kenya that had low staff-to-student ratios but with lower staff qualifications and who were overworked as they worked at different universities to earn better wages. McCowan[67] observes that students at universities in Kenya were critical stakeholders during the Covid-19 pandemic and were mostly dissatisfied with institutional management processes, but their voice was not accommodated within the higher education system. Poor quality of education amongst Kenyan universities compelled the Inter-Council University for East Africa to design quality assurance measures meant to build capacity programs to develop institutional practices at affected universities[68]. Capacity-building programs were well intended to build quality assurance, but their progress was hamstrung by the Covid-19 pandemic because of social distancing protocol that put them in abeyance.

10. PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT PROCESSES AT NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

Omorobi et al[69] (2020) posit that universities, like any formal institution, are established to meet the objectives and goals of an institution which require engagement with stakeholders to hold them accountable for their performance. A vision of a university in a country is to teach and produce graduates that are empowered to be globally competitive amongst their peers and improve socio-economic and living conditions in their respective countries and the world over. In keeping with this vision, the Federal Government of Nigeria[70] through its national policy on education stipulates that objectives and goals of the higher education system should include 'contribution to national development through manpower training, development and inculcation of proper values for the survival of individual and society, development of intellectual capability of an individual to understand and

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[66] (Wekullo et al, 2021).
[67] McCowan (2016)
[68] (Wekullo et al, 2021).
[69] Omorobi et al 2020
[70] Nigeria, National policy on education. (Federal Government Press, Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1981)

appreciate the local and external environment, and acquisition of physical and intellectual skills by an individual to be a self-reliant and useful member of a society'. Institutional objectives and goals of universities are a driving force for a member of society to aspire for a higher level of personal and intellectual achievement. Universities are therefore expected to nurture and guide individual members of society to add value and improve the well-being and developmental objectives of a country.

Francis[71] notes that despite the noble intentions of the Nigerian government's education policy of improving the intellectual and manpower capacity of its citizens, the goals and objectives of the universities have not yet been attained due to a lack of skills and developmental capabilities. Contrary to the stated intentions of the higher education system of producing skillful manpower, the quality of knowledge and skills amongst Nigerian graduates has declined rapidly which made it impossible for the country to deal with new socio-economic and health challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of improvement in the quality of graduates in Nigerian society denies industries and health care services the necessary manpower to innovate and contribute to the developmental trajectory of the country.

Abdullahi et al [72] identifies the lack of participatory management processes and practices within Nigerian universities as a major inhibiting factor that denied academic, administrative staff, and the university community the opportunity to contribute to the daily affairs of university life. Poor leadership and managerial approaches and practices were viewed as contributing to poor institutional performance within Nigerian universities leading to university community members being unhappy and developing negative perceptions about institutional values and vision. Omorobi et al[73] (2020) emphasized that institutions should conscientiously develop leaders and managers with the necessary competitiveness to ensure institutional survival during periods of crises and challenges.

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[71] Francis 2015
[72] Sawaneh, Ibrahim Abdulai, and others, 'Student Dissertation Database Management System: IAMTECH Sierra Leone as a Case Study.' (2018) 4 Science and Technology 93, 99.
[73] See Omorobi et al 2020

The institutionalization of participatory management processes and practices was identified as one approach that was adopted at Nigerian universities to capacitate leaders and managers to enhance inclusion which was key to achieving institutional goals and objectives[74]. The reason for adopting participatory management processes and practices was that universities were large and multi-faceted institutions that required inputs and contributions from different role players and stakeholders to be viable because one person cannot alone achieve the goals and objectives of a university education. Universities are complex institutions with specialized faculties, departments, and units that required technical skills for better and effective management that do not reside in one person despite his powerful position. Ogunruku[75] avers that participatory democracy through the engagement of staff members and students in university life is central to driving performance efficiency and efficacy. Macek[76] posits that some university managers supervised personnel who lacked technical skills to carry out some technical functions and sought guidance from technical advisers to arrive at informed decisions which indicated a need for collaborative and participatory approaches at strategic levels.

Lack of employee involvement in management processes by denial of participation in decision-making resulted in low staff morale, a higher level of work dissatisfaction, and impacted negatively on human relations in an institution that resulted in work stoppages and staff turnover[77]. What can be learned from this analysis about the importance of employee engagement through a participatory management approach is that institutional managers should design mechanisms to foster employee engagement and participation during periods of crises like Covid-19 so that they can have a sense of belonging and shared ownership during this period of uncertainty. The majority of employees were forced to work from home during Covid-19 because of social distance requirements and lost morale and felt isolated because of not interacting on a

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[74] See Abdullahi et al 2018
[75] See Ogunruku, 2010
[76] See Macek, 2019
[77] Kassa Y, 'Practices and challenges of participatory leadership in secondary schools of Nifas Silk Laftob Sub-City.' (Unpublished thesis submitted to school of Graduate Studies, Addis Ababa University 2017).

personal level with the supervisors. This resulted in fear about job security which might impact negatively their level of productivity.

11.   CHALLENGES AND IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Dube[78] notes that while all South African universities were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic because of lockdown measures that restricted contact learning, poor and rural universities were mostly affected than their urban and better-resourced counterparts. As the Covid-19 pandemic will be in existence for a long time to come, the South African government should collaborate with university leaders to design strategies that can assist to minimize its impact on teaching, learning, and assessment. While there have been previous debates amongst global universities about the adoption of online and distance teaching, many rural universities in Africa lacked the necessary technological and financial resources to uninterruptedly move to online teaching and learning as their mode of learning activities[79]. Mhlanga and Moloi[80] nonetheless argue that the impact of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) is putting pressure on institutional leaders and managers of many rural African universities to move to online technological teaching so that they can remain relevant in the fast-changing environment to benefit students and staff.

McDonald[81] analyses that the right to access education at South African universities has been a tricky political and historical issue

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78   Dube, Bekithemba, 'Rural online learning in the context of COVID 19 in South Africa: Evoking an inclusive education approach.' (2020) 10 REMIE: Multidisciplinary Journal of Educational Research 135,157.

79   Omodan, Bunmi Isaiah, 'The Vindication of Decoloniality and the Reality of COVID-19 as an Emergency of Unknown in Rural Universities.' [2020] International Journal of Sociology of Education 1, 26.

80   Mhlanga, David, and Tankiso Moloi, 'COVID-19 and the digital transformation of education: What are we learning on 4IR in South Africa?' (2020)10 Education sciences 180

81   Mc Donald

that impacted negatively the majority of students from underprivileged backgrounds due to the legacy of the apartheid education system. As the Covid-19 pandemic compelled institutional leaders and managers of universities to rethink their educational approaches and move towards online and distance technological learning, they should guard against deepening gaps in educational access based on levels of poverty among students. Omodan & Dube[82] concur about the strategic role of institutional leaders and managers of South African universities in ensuring that disparities between rural and urban institutions are minimized and not exacerbated due to limited educational resources in rural universities which can increase vulnerabilities of students in rural areas who are studying at these universities. Failure to ensure adequate support during the introduction of online teaching and learning across South African universities will further deepen class and racial contradictions between students and defeat the government's policies on improving access, equity, and success in educational attainment.

Moloi and Mhlanga[83] relate the first recorded case of a patient with Covid-19 in South Africa to be on 5 March 2020 which created fears within the health sector and resulted in the government declaring a national state of disaster under the Disaster Management Act (South African Government, 2020) which resulted in national lockdown. Schleicher[84] notices how several international countries responded to the Covid-19 pandemic by closing schools on a national scale which compelled the South African government to adopt the same response approach of closing educational institutions. Institutional leaders and managers at different levels of the educational system in South Africa adopted different institutional management approaches and processes to continue to provide education during the pandemic period. At the schooling level, the educational department coordinated with school managers, and public and private institutions to provide educational resources such as using

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[82] See Omodan 2020; Dube 2020
[83] See Mhlanga & Moloi, 2020
[84] Schleicher, Andreas, 'The Impact of COVID-19 on Education: Insights from" Education at a Glance 2020' (OECD Publishing 2020)

television broadcasting, the internet, and other social medial platform to provide remote learning to school learners[85] .

Adoption of technological learning approach using online devices posed challenges to educators who were forced to adapt their learning approaches which require adaptation of pedagogical concepts and modes of delivery that they were not trained for. At the university sector level, new online learning mechanisms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Collaborate were adopted to fit with Mytutor to continue with the delivery of lecturing and assessment. Online learning and digital delivery modes affected learners and students from marginalized social groups who could not afford to buy new digital learning devices and lacked the resilience to cope when learning on their own which posed risks of falling behind in learning[86]

Prevalent poverty levels impacted the learning of students from poor countries leading to crises in educational attainment that were further magnified at a global scale by the Covid-19 pandemic[87]. The covid-19 pandemic has heightened misalignment between learning resources and students' needs which challenges institutional leaders and managers to think strategically as they examine how to support students from poverty-stricken backgrounds who lack technological learning devices, and whose families and communities cannot afford data. Another challenge was that tertiary institutions in South Africa were found wanting due to an inability to adequately plan for research, practicals, and assessments as they are more used to personal supervision, as necessary mechanisms are not yet put in place.[88] Universities are currently trying to demonstrate new online assessment tools and supervisory mechanisms like telephonic invigilator apps to serve as new coping mechanisms to minimize students' cheating during examinations[89]. However, lecturers and students were not adequately trained and skilled to use these online assessment

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[85]   See Mncube et al 2021
[86]   See Schleicher, 2020.
[87]   The World Bank Education Global Practice, 2020).
[88]   See Mncube et al 2021
[89]   Weeden, Kim A., and Benjamin Cornwell, 'The small-world network of college classes: implications for epidemic spread on a university campus.' (2020)7 Sociological science 222, 241.

devices as they were operating in a trial-and-error mode which affected the quality and credibility of the assessment process. The rate of students' participation in online teaching, especially those from poor backgrounds decreased dramatically as they do not have sufficient data to log on to online devices to keep up with new developments which might lead to failure and dropout.

Mittal[90] contends that the Covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted institutional planning at universities due to a lack of forecasting about several students who will enroll in the new academic semester because of constraints of learning assessment using online pedagogy which posed risks of higher dropout rates. In the South African university context, low student enrollment rates affect university fiscal resources because universities are subsidized based on full-time equivalent rates which calculate students' enrolment figures per qualification. Sahu[91] reflects that while transitioning to a new technological delivery mode was not new to all universities, it posed greater assimilation challenges for those institutions that were implementing it for the first time as they were compelled to adopt new forms of organization to align with their teaching and learning culture and processes in new circumstances. This further required a paradigm shift in strategic thinking by institutional leaders, managers, and stakeholders so that they were to acclimatize and provide operational learning efficiency that suited their contextual factors and circumstances. Institutional management approaches from universities was challenged to factor in coping mechanisms to mitigate levels of stress, fear, and uncertainty that have affected students and staff and undermined their quality of work and productivity.[92] .

Rashid and Yadav[93] advise that educational institutions should involve their staff and students to adapt to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic so that they agree on the right approaches,

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90 Mittal, 2020
91 Sahu, Pradeep, 'Closure of universities due to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): impact on education and mental health of students and academic staff.' (2020)12 Cureus
92 Zhai, Yusen, and Xue Du, 'Mental health care for international Chinese students affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.' (2020)7 The Lancet Psychiatry 22
93 Yadav, Pushpendra, and Meenakshi Ingole, 'Online Education and COVID-19 Pan demic: Challenges for Higher Education.' (Special Issue of 'University News' 61, 2020)

strategies, and appropriate educational technologies and methods. Inclusivity of all stakeholders that adopt a bottom-up approach to assess the needs and challenges of those directly affected became a rallying point of institutional management at South African universities. Inclusivity during institutional planning indicates that institutional leaders and managers are transparent, caring, and willing to be held accountable by those that they lead and therefore sincere in their management approaches and practices. Contrary to the inclusivity of staff and students, the closing of tertiary institutions because of Covid-19 minimized opportunities to adequately engage with stakeholders and resulted in disconnectedness of instructions that were misinterpreted as a ploy to hide pertinent information to disempower stakeholders from acquiring information and making relevant contributions[94]. This is even though institutional leaders and managers were forced to be agile and act speedily during crisis periods because of the fluidity of the situation and not intended to undermine relevant institutional stakeholders in the decision-making process. When dealing with future crises, like the Covid-19 pandemic, institutional leaders and managers should strive to maintain the balance of being agile in decision-making and also more engaging which will require them to ensure that technological communication channels are accessible and effective to stakeholders.

12. INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES TO STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH EXISTENTIAL THREATS

Fox, Bailey, Seamon, and Miranda[95] outline different approaches and strategies that institutional managers at different universities in the US adopted in the post-Covid era to mitigate existential threats imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on their

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[94] Nganga, G., Waruru, M., & Nakweya, G, 'Universities face multiple challenges in the wake of COVID-19 closures' (Available at www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?20200407162549396.) Accessed 20 December 2022

[95] Bailey et al 2021

analysis, online learning, and teaching instruction were implemented at forty-five percent of colleges and universities, twenty-seven percent of these institutions provided in-person learning, and twenty-one percent implemented a hybrid model of teaching and learning. Despite the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2020) having published guidance for higher education on Covid-19, little was shared or published concerning the response to the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in universities and colleges in the US adopting individual approaches that were not systematized and not aligned. For example, Indiana University enrolled twelve thousand students of which eighty-five percent lived on campus and implemented various public health measures to reduce transmission of Covid-19 on their campuses[96] . However, due to a lack of coordination across the universities, states, and federal government because of opposing views driven by the US factionalized politics that divided the nation into two extremely opposing camps (Republicans and Democrats) who differed on approaching the pandemic, Covid-19 pandemic continued to spread across universities and states whereby in one university resulted in 371 cases at once due to large off-campus gatherings.[97]

Some universities adopted institutional approaches that targeted measures and mechanisms the US government adopted to curb the spread of the Coronavirus in their institutions which include rapid escalation of testing, tracing, and isolation measures that strengthened chances for in-person contact learning and return campus activities[98]. The Chronicle of Higher Education[99] elaborates that some targeted intervention mechanisms that the Indiana University adopted to curb the spread of Covid-19 pandemic in their campus to be "physical infrastructure rearrangement, disinfection of all public spaces and places in their university and campuses, reducing classroom numbers, and

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[96] Fox, Mark D and others 'Response to a COVID-19 outbreak on a university campus' (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 70, no. 4 2021) 118

[97] Centre for Disease Control (CDC), 'Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): consideration for institution of higher education' (Atlanta: US Department of Health and Human Services. 2019)

[98] See Fox et al 2021; 2

[99] The Chronicle of Higher Education, 'Here's our list of colleges' reopening models.' (Published October 1, 2020. Washington, DC: The Chronical of Higher Education)

mandatory wearing of masks at all times". However, despite restrictive measures that were attempted by the university, it became difficult to strictly monitor physical distancing of six feet among university students especially in lecture halls. While Indiana University managed to test 11 836 of its 12 000 students, 33 tested positive and were barred from campus until after 10 days of isolation and retesting period which could allow them to get out of isolation if they proved to be Covid-19 negative and did not show any symptoms[100]. A proposition made from the aforementioned analysis of the intervention strategies implemented by Indiana University is that lack of coordination amongst states, institutions, and federal agencies due to political divisions in the US undermined good intentioned strategies of some universities. Furthermore, coordinated, unified, and synergistic approaches and intervention measures are critically required to mitigate or undermine the spread of natural disasters like the Coronavirus pandemic that threaten the existence of all human species.

The Covid-19 pandemic compelled universities to introduce an eLearning strategy despite some lecturers not being adequately prepared and being more comfortable with in-person lecturing sessions[101] . However, the speed of the implementation of the eLearning strategy that was forced by the rapid spread of Covid-19 resulted in anxiety and confusion among lecturers. Tesar[102] proffers that lecturers at US universities were compelled to readjust their teaching approaches by adopting eLearning so that teaching can continue. Readjustment of teaching and learning approaches towards eLearning assisted lecturers to realize opportunities of eLearning which increased the flexibility of learning and encouraged students to learn independently[103]. eLearning assisted lecturers to reflect on their teaching approaches and methodologies that empowered them to improve practice. eLearning brought lecturers to a realization that the strategy

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[100] Ibid
[101] Müller, Andre Matthias, Charlene Goh, Li Zhen Lim, and Xiaoli Gao. 'Covid-19 emer gency elearning and beyond: Experiences and perspectives of university educators.' (2021)11 Education Sciences 19
[102] Tesar, Marek. 'Towards a post-Covid-19 'new normality?': Physical and social distancing, the move to online and higher education.' (2020)18 Policy Futures in Education 556, 559
[103] See Muller et al 2021

should be a common feature of teaching and learning in achieving educational goals[104] .

Weeden and Cornwell[105] assert that eLearning became the lifeline of the universities during the Covid-19 pandemic which is contrary to the past when it was regarded as an optional and fashionable way to deliver lectures and tutorials. Murphy[106] cautions that the eLearning strategy should not be viewed as a replacement for lecturers as they are key to its implementation and make it a major element of tertiary education. Different universities have therefore adopted the eLearning strategy as a part of the teaching and learning platform to plan for the future by minimizing the risk of infection and outbreaks that might occur in the future. Tong, Sainsburg, and Craig[107] elaborate that before the outbreak of Covid-19, institutional leaders started to review their strategies and budget allocation to invest more in online teaching and learning strategies whereby the outbreak of the virus accelerated the development of infrastructure, including technological resources.

The researcher argues that despite Covid-19 having threatened the survival of institutions, it also provided an opportunity for university leaders to speed up investment in online learning strategies and platforms which was a new developmental approach that encouraged universities to move forward. An experienced knowledge gap about eLearning and Covid-19 is that the was insufficient information on how to approach eLearning, grapple with challenges, and identify opportunities due to a lack of research on how lecturers grapple with eLearning strategy in their academic teaching.

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[104] Sahu, Pradeep, 'Closure of universities due to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): impact on education and mental health of students and academic staff.' (2002) 12 Cureus.

[105] Weeden, Kim A., and Benjamin Cornwell, 'The small-world network of college classes: implications for epidemic spread on a university campus.' (2020)7 Sociological science 222, 241

[106] Murphy, Michael PA, 'COVID-19 and emergency eLearning: Consequences of the securitization of higher education for post-pandemic pedagogy.' (2020) 41 Contemporary Security Policy 492, 505.

[107] Tong, Allison, Peter Sainsbury, and Jonathan Craig. 'Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups.' (2007) 19 International journal for quality in health care 349, 357

According to Dhawa[108] , eLearning strategies were not prioritized by universities in Singapore universities as lecturers have never experienced these strategies and always reverted to onsite teaching sessions as their default mode. Some lecturers viewed the eLearning strategy as a good entry point to a technological learning environment whereas others still preferred onsite teaching and learning. Sahu[109] asserts that the eLearning strategy required a shift in mindset and way of doing things from lecturers, but the majority were afraid of the unknown and were hesitant to adapt their onsite teaching and learning approaches as they were not using technological devices in their teaching. Hesitancy to shift teaching approaches and strategies resulted in lecturers experiencing internal struggle due to the uncertainty of adopting new and unfamiliar technologies that they were not thoroughly equipped for. As the Covid-19 pandemic was spreading faster, lecturers started to acknowledge realities that required them to act fast and adopted new technological strategies so that they can save the academic year[110] (Dixson, 2020). An implication deduced from the literature analysis is that shifting from physical onsite teaching to eLearning approaches in a rushed manner results in short-cutting of corners and being in a compliance mode rather than having a sense of ownership and buy-in.

13. CONCLUSION

The inquiry was conducted to explore how institutional managers at a higher learning institution in Gauteng Province performed institutional management functions during the Covid-19 pandemic. The literature review was achieved focused on an institutional theory that influences institutional management approaches to lay the groundwork for the study. The review also discussed institutional management during the Covid-19 pandemic from an international perspective by focusing on inter-organizational interdependence to improve institutional

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[108]   Dhawan, Shivangi. 'Online learning: A panacea in the time of COVID-19 crisis.' (2020) 49 Journal of educational technology systems 1

[109]   See Sahu 2020

[110]   Dixson, Marcia D, 'Measuring student engagement in the online course: The Online Student Engagement scale (OSE)' (2015)4 Online Learning 19

relationships and strategic management approaches to the Covid-19 pandemic in the European Union countries. Literature review studies were extended to examine institutional management from a continental perspective by outlining different areas such as institutional management processes at higher education institutions in Kenya, participatory management processes at Nigerian universities, and institutional management mechanisms of rural South African universities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Reflection from the review literature studies was that the Covid-19 pandemic caught institutional managers in Europe and Africa off-guard as they were not prepared for the pandemic and lacked the necessary institutional mechanisms to adequately perform their functions. Consequently, academic staff and students were negatively impacted by their academic work.