HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA'S GROWTH AND CHALLENGES MANAGEMENT IN POST COVID ERA

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Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
- Nelson Mandela

Education, particularly higher education, will take Africa into the mainstream of globalization.

— John Kufuor —

AZ QUOTES

Higher education is the strongest, sturdiest ladder to increased socio-economic mobility.

Drew Faust
President
Harvard University

Higher education is booming in the United States; the Gross National Mind is mounting along with the Gross National Product.

(Malcolm Muggeridge)

Higher Education in Uganda's Growth and Challenges Management in post COVID-19 era

1. Introduction and Background
2. Typology of Higher Education
3. Higher Education in Uganda
4. Higher Education and National Development
5. Higher Education Challenges in Uganda
6. The Covid-19 Engineered Challenges
7. Managing/Mitigating Effects of Covid-19
8. Needed Reforms in Higher Education

- Higher education, also called post-secondary education is an optional stage in formal learning that occurs after completion of secondary education

- Consists of **Universities, Colleges and Polytechnics that offer formal degrees** beyond high school or secondary school education

- Also **includes non degree professional and technical forms of study** at Certificate and Diploma level

- The right of access to higher education is mentioned in a number of international human rights instruments

- The UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 declares, in Article 13:

- "*higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education*"

- Tertiary non-degree education is focused on technical skills in a given field of study aiming at creating operatives and mid-level supervisors.

- Degree HEI are expected to impart critical thinking & analytical reasoning skills, teamworking skills, information literacy, decision-making skills, communication skills and problem solving skills.

- The oldest known HEIs are credited to Dynastic Egypt, with Pr-Anx (houses of life) built as libraries and scriptorium

- The disciplines included law, architecture, mathematics, and medicine (around 3rd millennia BC)

- In the Greek world,
  - Plato's Academy (387 - 86 BC)
  - Aristotle's Lycaeum (334 - 86 BC)
  - other philosophical-mathematical schools

- were models for other establishments, particularly in Alexandria of Egypt under the Ptolemies (who ruled the Ptolemaic Kingdom in Ancient Egypt).

- H/E began later in other regions: In South East Asia by the Budhist Monks (427 - 1197 CE); in China by the Han Dynasty (1905 CE) etc.

- In 425 CE, the Byzantine emperor Theodosius II established the Pandidakterion, with a faculty of 31 professors, to train public servants.

- According to UNESCO and Guinness World Records, the University of al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, Morocco is the oldest existing continually operating higher educational institution in the world (Scholars call it oldest university).

- The oldest modern university in the world is the University of Bologna, founded in 1088

- **Universities and Degree Awarding** Institutions versus **Non Degree awarding** Tertiary Institutions

- **Public** versus **Private** (latter not owned or funded by Government)

- **Faith-based** versus **Non Faith-based** (not affiliated to Religious Faiths e.g. Cavendish University Uganda)

- **Academic** versus **Technica**l (the technical ones are specialized in particular technical disciplines e.g. MUST and Busitema as opposed to Gulu and Kabale)

- National, Regional and International

- All universities are generally **international** except that some are part of a big network of international institutions and focus their marketing and operations on international rather than local markets

It should be understood that some of the institutions sit in the intersection between the seemingly dual typologies and portray characteristics of both types

*For analytical purposes, Uganda's HE devlpt can be grouped into three phases: **the colonial period** (1894 to 1962), the **first 25 years of independence** (1962 to 1985) and **1986 to the present** period*

	PHASES	MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS
1.	Colonial period (1894-1962)	State formation and exploitation including the HEIs • The Church started Education Institutions to develop a society that would appreciate the gospel and for holistic evangelism • State embarked on education to train a cadre of people to serve the Colonial Government • The curriculum was foreign aiming to create a society that would look to the colonizers as superior • Makerere was the only University
2.	First 25 years of independence (1962-85)	Political turbulence & breakdown of State structures • Attempts at creation of indigenous curricula • Amin's capture of power and persecution of the educated class • Economic decline, low salaries, brain drain, dilapidation of structures • Only Makerere, some Polytechnics and Colleges (public or govt aided)
3.	1986 to the present	National systems recovery & development • Recovery of the national economy • Liberalisation of Education including Higher Education • Expansion of Public Universities and Tertiary Educ. Institutions

Category	Number
Public Universities	10
Private Universities	44
Total	**54**

Category by faith	Number
Anglican	5
Catholics	4
Islamic	2
SDA	1
Other faith	2
Total	**14**

Other Degree Awarding Institutions

Category	Number
Public	02 (UMI & LDC)
Private	16
Total	**18**

Gross Enrolment Numbers

Category	Number
University	194,519
ODAIs	10,822
OTI	59,567
Total	**265,908**

Institutions approved to implement ODeL: only 8 approved for online and DL exams

Category	Public	Private	**Total**
Universities	10	44	**54**
Other Degree Awarding Institutions	1	2	**3**
Other Tertiary Institutions	0	7	**7**
Totals	**11**	**53**	**64**

- HE especially at university level is more than just the next level in the learning process. It is a critical component of human development worldwide.

- Higher Education is recognized all over the world as an engine of national growth and development.

- Increasing the number of citizens who complete tertiary education is a precursor to the development *of a modern knowledge-based society,* that can undertake entreprenuership*.*

- HEIs produce competent people who will meet the country's growing demand for human resources in production and service sectors such as Education, Health, Banking, Agriculture, Tourism and Telecommunications, just to mention a few.

- HEIs produce graduates with ready-to-use skills and competencies needed to manage various national institutions and development functions which move the economy forward.

- An educated populace is vital in Uganda's growth. Knowledge accumulation and application have become major factors in economic development and are increasingly at the core of Uganda's competitive advantage in the global economy.

- In April 2013, launch of Vision 2014 **to transform the Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years**.

- Taking 2010 as the baseline and 2040 as the target year, the vision seeks to:
  - Increase **per capita income** from $ 506 to $ 9500;
  - reduce percentage of **population below the poverty line** from 24.5% to 5%;
  - reduce sectoral **composition of GDP which is reliant on agriculture** from 22.4% to 10%,
  - reduce **labour force distribution in agriculture** from 65.6% to 31%;
  - increase **industry** from 7.6% to 26%
  - expand **services** from 26.8% to 43%.
  - Increase the share **of national labour force employed** from 70.0% to 94%;
  - **manufactured exports** from 4.2% to 50%;
  - **saving of GDP** from 14.5% to 35%;
  - **ICT goods and services total export** from 0% to 40%;
  - **technology up-take** from 0.24% and 0.5% (Rwendeire, 2012).

- increasing **life expectancy**; reducing **infant and maternal mortality rate**; reducing **population growth**; **literacy rate** and **reducing corruption** etc. (Rwendeire, 2012)

- The early German theorist of the political economy of development, Friedrich List (1789 - 1846) argued for **education and education institutions to play a role in national development**. This concern was taken up very clearly in the Innovation Systems (IS) approach (Kruss, McGrath, Petersen & Gastrow, 2015).

- The IS approach postulates that the ability of businesses to be competitive increasingly depends on their capacity to apply new knowledge to their products and processes.

- First, **there should be production and dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge in an interactive process** of many types of actors such as businesses, private and public laboratories and universities (Albert & Laberge, 2007).

- The character and outcomes of interactions determine how and to what extent goals can be attained (Johnson, 2007).

- Moreover, **innovations are characterised by fundamental uncertainties**, chaos, unintended consequences, conflicts and unpredictable trajectories of change which cannot be understood from a reductionist perspective (van Mierlo, Arkesteijn & Leeuwis, 2010).

- IS approach propounds that **innovation is a collective undertaking** in which knowledge is shared.

- **Knowledge is an economic activity**; its distribution helps in attainment of economic goals (Manley, 2002). Therefore, interaction of higher education and government agencies can lead to knowledge sharing and this will lead to the in achieving Uganda Vision 2040.

- The third stream (mission) of universities activities is concerned with the generation, use, application and exploitation of knowledge and other university capabilities outside the academic environment (Lebeau & Cochrane, 2015).

- The rise of the knowledge economy has thus posited a new conception of the role of HEIs in the development of the area on which they are embedded.

- International policymakers, such as the OECD and the European Union have put forward the need for universities to create networks with businesses and governments, in order to favour the knowledge flow (Rinaldi & Cavicchi, 2016).

- The role of higher education in achieving national development includes:

- Scientific advisory/ communicator role, where higher education actors can be used to disseminate pilot or research projects results and advise on the appropriate course of action (Rinaldi & Cavicchi, 2016).

- The inventor/ innovator role through involvement in creation and diffusion of cutting-edge technologies and innovative ideas.

- H/E actors also can play the revitalising /retrofitter role that is working with external developers and authorities to improve existing infrastructures rather than pursuing new development (Mirriahi, Dawson & Hoven, 2012). H

- Higher educationists can play the developer role by helping in the designing of new development infrastructure and construction.

- Can carry out the director/ linker role by which academics create a grand vision for the future and seek its materialisation by leveraging other partners' assets and know-how.

- Can engage other actors by creating networks into which they feed intelligence and guidance.

- Can play the facilitator/ empowering role and cause change by empowering key stakeholders to self-diagnose problems and create conditions that will lead to a self-realised transformation (Rinaldi & Cavicchi, 2016)

- Atchoarena and Holmes (2005) argue that HEIs can help the depressed, relatively neglected rural communities by forging new partnerships with schools, academia and rural space stakeholders; expanding their representation in governance; and holding continuous dialogue with policymakers.

- Moreover, HEIs provide access to lifelong learning to rural people.

- Bloom et al. (2014) reported that tertiary education improved technological catch-up helping to maximize Africa's potential to achieve more rapid economic growth.

- Research by Wilson Mugizi in *Elixir Social Studies 115 (2018) 49831-49837* established several roles (real and potential) played by universities in achieving growth and Vision 2040

- HE influences the development of improved technology necessary for development

- HE makes technological innovation leads to knowledge transfer.

- HE promotes national unity necessary for achieving national development. This is because higher education integrates nationals from diverse ethnic groups in a country.

- HEI can support implementation of a civilisation dialogue for shaping a one kind culture reminding students of the importance of achieving national unity

- Promote democracy by ensuring that values of peace, conflict prevention and resolution as well as the right attitudes, behaviours and ethics are inculcated in students and staff

- Promote community work that facilitates development - refocusing their research and teaching missions on national development needs.

- they provide access to lifelong learning to rural people - promote the conditions for wider and successful adult participation in learning and training activities, providing learning opportunities related to their needs and removing existing barriers, such as time and finance constraints

- **Financial challenges** – poor resource base, limited and sometimes erratic funding

- **Limited technology** – hampering innovation, teaching, learning and community engagement

- **Limited human resource** – few professors and Doctoral level instructors but also few instructors with industry experience

- **Poor governance and Management** – for some HEIs this is conflictual, unsupportive, uncreative, unexperienced, without vision, self seeking etc.

- **Pedagogical challenges** – still using methodologies that promote "Banking Education" (Paulo Freire) - memorization of facts, reproducing of knowledge, regurgitation of answers etc.

- **Limited academia/industry interaction** to establish the needed professions, skills and competences, but also dispositions (e.g. orientation to only urban as opposed to rural settings)

- **Limited academia/think tank interactions** to better influence policy by understanding action research and M&E tools e.g. the score card deployed by think tank but also policy-engaged communication techniques

- **A disconnect with communities** leading to failure to establish what is actually needed to solve problems at household level and contribute meaningfully to livelihoods.

- Shutdown of HEIs – scuttle and panic.

- Lack of access to technology

- Poor connectivity

- Policy delay on ODeL

- Lack of technical skills to work virtually

- Limited experience in virtual and DL

- Shrinking revenue

- Widening technological divide between HEIs and leaners

- Absence of training in trauma-informed pedagogy

- Limited capacity to manage online and DL exams

- Limited capacity to teach practical subjects online

- Challenges of integrating Covid-19 SOPs in operations

HEIs need to overcame challenges presented by Covid-19, and respond with adaptability, innovation & a commitment to emerging as blended learning institutions and active participants in online learning in a post Covid-19 environment

On-Campus Learning → **Emergency Remote Learning** → **E-Learning**
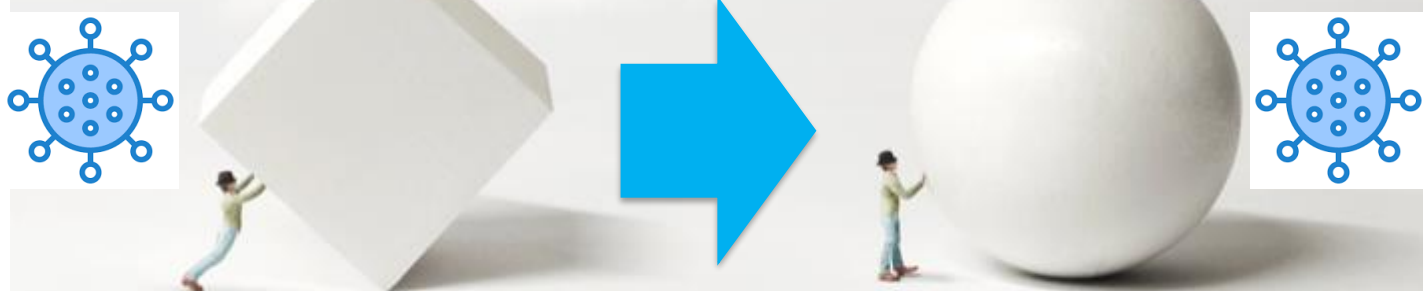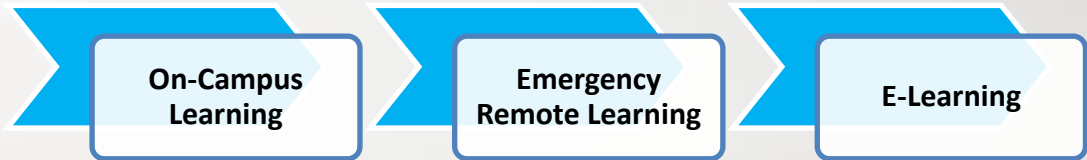
Contact modality	Instructor Role Online	Student-Instructor Ratio
Physical interaction	Student Role Online	Source of Feedback
Contact pedagogy	Online Communication Synchrony	Role of Online Assessments

- Financial challenges require a cocktail of strategies to solve:
  - Diversifying revenue streams (consultancies, industry funded research, other projects?)
  - Controlling academic costs (combining classes with similar learning outcomes across faculty and level, increasing cohort size, discontinuing unviable classes)
  - Increasing partnerships with HEIs in the same locality to avoid duplication of programmes hence increasing enrolment.

- HR limitations require
  - investment in staff training,
  - HEIs collaboration to use jointly the available HR,
  - Use of technology to engage professors to teach virtually
- **Build academia/industry relations** to improve relevance of the skills being imparted among the graduates

- **Partner with technology companies** such as Airtel and MTN (of course also bigger ones like Google) to offer subsidies to the HEI community

- **Train staff and students** in continuous use of technology in teaching and learning (**implement blended learning**, ensure all students have **a technology-mediated hour** for self study)

- **Focus on production of developmental research.**
  - providing invaluable contextualised knowledge, insights and locally relevant recommendations for policy formulation and implementation;
  - solving existential problems;
  - creating technological products;
  - and producing new knowledge that can be adapted for economic, political and social improvement.

- **Develop and turn out relevant and impactful graduates** with the skills, knowledge and disposition needed to meet the requirements of wherever the university is located.
  - undertaking periodic surveys and conducting focus group sessions with alumni, communities, governmental organisations and industry about what expertise is needed to support a country's economy and society.
  - Secondary data is also collected through government ministries, departments and agencies.

- Undertake **direct engagement of communities** to design innovations and models that directly improve livelihoods, solve problems and create opportunities for the population

Conceptual Transformational Process: Post Covid 19 Era

Teacher

Multimedia and technology enthusiast who facilitates learning and understanding via instructional guidance and support

Curriculum & Syllabus

Roadmap of student learning experience with assessment milestones toward the achievement of knowledge and skills for the job market

Student

Active self-learner who leverages instructional guidance to become job ready by demonstrating proficiency of knowledge and competencies

MAIN TRANSFORMATIONAL ACTORS AND TOOLS

Teaching & Learning

Inside Class

Outside Class

Methods

Individual

Team

Resources

Physical

Technology

Internet

Online Capabilities: Learning Platforms with an advanced Learning Management System (LMS), is the required as a platform via which teaching and content should be delivered to the learners

Operational preparedness framework

➢ **Facilities & SOPs meeting Ministry of Health Guidelines**

➢ **Equipment to support Teaching and Learning**

➢ **HR / Staff Training**

➢ **ICT Support**

- o *Internet*
- o *Email*
- o *Devices (laptops, tablets, smart phones etc)*
- o *Student Database/Tracking/Reporting*

➢ **Logistics**

➢ **Finance**

CUU Learning Management System (LMS) with educational Features

- **Student Centric solution creating personalised learning paths for each student**
- **Collaborative Learning (interaction with other students and instructors)**
- **Intuitive Interface**
- **Cloud based (online + mobile)**
- **Uses Artificial Intelligence**
- **Offer pedagogical design services**
- **Captures data on every online interaction learners make**
  - ➢ *Interactions occur when learners read, write, collaborate, organize and plan*
- **Real-time graphic analytics**
- **Identify high-risk students per course and allow interventions**

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THANK YOU