

## Accelerating the Fourth Industrial Revolution in Higher Education: Realities and Lessons from Universities in Kenya, Zambia and South Africa During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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### Abstract

Countries across the world advocate for the usage and benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). 4IR sets the pace for artificial intelligence, increased utilisation of the internet, and digital technologies in service delivery. Society expects universities to be able to understand the key tenets of 4IR and provide guidance in its utilisation. This article adopts a qualitative research method and uses content analysis to comprehend whether the teaching mode is a significant factor to assess and define the status, including the level of readiness of 4IR in higher education institutions. The article reviewed documents to establish the status, adaptation, and gaps in the university's learning management. Thus, the review includes government decrees/statements on COVID-19 related to university learning; Universities' press releases, social media, articles and/or reports, and benchmarks against 4IR expectations. The primary findings revealed the need for a proper key stakeholder coordination (*i.e.*, government, private sector, universities, and students) to implement a successful online teaching and learning in institutions of higher learning.

**Keywords:** 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution, Universities, COVID-19 Pandemic, Online learning

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