

Emerging Methods and Challenges Associated With Teaching and Learning Media Studies During the COVID-19 Pandemic Induced Lockdowns in Zimbabwe and South Africa

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Abstract

COVID-19's arrival in Zimbabwe and South Africa in early 2020 caused disruptions to all facets of life including education. It disrupted traditional notions of media studies' teaching and learning. In the contexts of these disruptions, the present study interrogates how selected universities in Zimbabwe and South Africa adjusted to the new normal in so far as teaching and learning of media studies is concerned. It is a comparative analysis of selected Zimbabwean and South African universities. In-depth interviews with students and lecturers and participant observations were used to gather data whilst thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the data. The study found out South African universities adjusted far much better and easily than their Zimbabwean counterparts. This is because both lecturers and students were capacitated as opposed to the scenario in Zimbabwe where lecturers and students alike were not given gadgets to smoothen the transition to online learning. The data that was given to lecturers was too little whereas the data for e-learning was too exorbitant for the students. Furthermore, both lecturers and students noted that it is difficult to teach and learn practical modules online. However, universities in both countries utilized platforms such as Google classroom though students from rural areas in both countries were affected by the digital divide.

Key Words: media studies, teaching technologies, COVID 19, South Africa, Zimbabwe.