

Media Monitoring: Extract of Press News on Higher Education in Africa

1. Inside Higher Ed

What Have We Learned About Online Learning? (Global)

The COVID-19 pandemic forced colleges, professors and students to engage with digital forms of education in ways many of them never had. Did the experience of teaching and learning remotely make them more open to online education and to using technology in the physical classroom? Did professors get more comfortable with teaching with technology? Did it change student expectations about when and how they learn? A series of recent episodes of Inside Higher Ed's Key podcast explored those and other questions. One episode featured Shanna Smith Jaggars, assistant vice president of research and program assessment in Ohio State University's Office of Student Academic Success, and Jessica Rowland Williams, director of Every Learner Everywhere, which pursues equitable outcomes in higher education through advances in digital learning. Jaggars describes herself as a "critical friend" of online education; Rowland Williams is a strong advocate for the role high-quality virtual learning can play in improving postsecondary access and success for underrepresented students. Inside Higher Ed: Both of you have spent a good bit of time thinking and talking and researching about what we learned about digital teaching and learning during these two years in which we saw a lot more institutions, professors and students engaging in it than had been true before. What most altered your pre-pandemic view of the digital learning landscape? Shanna Smith Jaggars: Two things really surprised me. For many years I've been what you might call a critical friend of online education in higher education. Read more [here](#).

2. University World News

Climate-smart solutions can drive green growth in Africa (Africa)

African countries have a huge responsibility to transform climate change challenges into opportunities to ensure green growth. More can be done using technology, but technology alone cannot deliver sustainable solutions. This means that policies, institutional systems, incentives and digital revolution can help to mitigate climatic challenges in Africa. Therefore, government members of the Partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) have identified climate change as a priority theme to support transformative green technologies through PhD and M programmes through the Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF). This was revealed during the last day of the pan-African RSIF Conference held on 29 June, in a session on innovation and green growth for sustainable development. Panellists delved into various ways that African countries can enhance green growth at higher-education institutions. The theme of the conference was 'African-led science, technology and innovation for contributing to the SDGs and stimulating global development'. Panellists agreed that climate-smart agriculture is a viable mitigation strategy against climate change, and that involving communities and farmers in it is essential for green growth development. Professor Lindsay C Stringer of the University of York, United Kingdom, notes that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report shows that climate change can also constrain Africa's knowledge economy, as climate-related research faces severe data limitations as well as inequalities in research leadership that reduces adaptive capacity. Stringer told University World News that some of the biggest achievements of African universities in terms of green growth can be attributed to embracing inclusivity through collaborations and partnerships that bring on board those who are often left behind, such as women, marginalised groups and youths. Read more [here](#).

3. Morocco World News

Royal Air Maroc, UM6P Join Forces to Develop Innovative Solutions (Morocco)

Rabat - Morocco's national carrier Royal Air Maroc and the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) in Benguerir joined forces to launch an "Open Innovation" program aimed at developing innovative products and services for the company's customers. Entitled "RAM Digital Open Innovation," the program's approach relies on close collaboration between students, researchers, and the global ecosystem of startups to develop creative solutions, improve the customer experience, and respond to Royal Air Maroc's challenges. The program entered an advanced phase last weekend in Marrakech with the selection of finalists during the so-called "Demo Day" stage. A total of 18 projects participated in bootcamp coaching sessions between June 26 to July 2. Seven startup projects, two Royal Air Maroc employee projects, and one UM6P student project were selected on the basis of their contribution to the development of the company and its digital transformation, the national carrier said in a statement. After choosing the most promising projects, the program is now set to enter the operational phase. The developed solutions can also be employed by the partner airlines of the Oneworld Alliance, to which Royal Air Maroc belongs. Read more [here](#).

4. Times Higher Education

Making PhDs staff would worsen money worries, says Russell Group (Global)

Moving PhD students on to staff contracts in the UK will worsen the financial pressures faced by doctoral candidates as they struggle with the cost of living, the Russell Group's research lead has argued. With inflation set to hit 11 per cent this year, pressure is growing on universities and funders to increase the minimum stipend of £16,032 for 2022-23, which was set last year when price rises were forecast to be far lower. More than 8,000 people have signed a petition launched by the University and College Union (UCU) calling on UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to commit an extra £44 million to ensure that this year's stipend keeps pace with inflation. "Nobody should have to worry about whether they can heat their homes or whether they can eat full meals – but unfortunately this is the reality for many postgraduate researchers that carry out important research and teaching duties for universities," said Ansh Bhatnagar, a physics PhD student at Durham University, who helped organise the petition on behalf of the UCU's postgraduate research campaign. The UCU is also calling for PhD students to be treated as staff, which would guarantee them the same pension and employment rights as university employees. However, Colette Fagan, vice-president for research at the University of Manchester, said changing the employment status of PhD students could exacerbate financial hardship, as well as impose new tax, national insurance and pension costs on universities and funders that would likely lead to fewer studentships. "These financial concerns are legitimate things that need to be addressed, but changing the employment status of PhD students is not the way," said Professor Fagan, who chairs the Russell Group's committee of research leads. Read more [here](#).

5. Vanguard

FRSC advocates transportation studies in tertiary institutions (Nigeria)

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has called for the establishment of School for Transportation Studies in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The FRSC Sector Commander in Kwara, Mr Fredrick Ogidan, made the appeal while inaugurating The Special Marshal Unit of the Kwara State University (KWASU) in Malete. Ogidan, who was represented by Dr Oby Ndulue, said this would go a long way in instituting and promoting the right driving culture amongst Nigerian motorists. The sector commander said the solution to some of

the challenges of auto-crashes witnessed on Nigerian roads could be solved with the correct driving culture instituted in all drivers. He charged the new Special Marshals to be diligent, good ambassadors of the institution and obey all rules and regulations. Read more [here](#).

6. Food for Mzansi

Free State experimental farm is taking agri to next level (South Africa)

Adding to the value chain, extending the teaching and learning process, and supporting the development of the surrounding communities – this is the result of seven years of hard work for the Paradys Experimental Farm of the University of the Free State (UFS). Whether it is yoghurt and cheese from the dairy factory, wool products from the wool production and wool processing hub, or an ice-cold beer from the fermentation institute, the farm will soon share the fruits of its labour with the entire Bloemfontein community. Situated outside Bloemfontein on the road to Reddersburg, the farm is an agricultural training centre in the faculty of natural and agricultural sciences for UFS students who, among others, take modules in agriculture. They work with cattle, sheep, crop cultivation, and milk production. Moreover, the farm also offers training opportunities to members of the community, ranging from short courses in animal health and animal breeding to workshops in wool classing, sheep handling, and sheep management. “The scene is set, and soon all projects will benefit not only UFS staff and students, but also the Bloemfontein community.” According to Prof. Frikkie Nesor, the head of the department of animal sciences, they want to take students through the entire production chain. “It is a valuable part of our teaching and can make our work on the farm more profitable. The aim is to extend the use of a specific product. Instead of only selling milk, we add value to the product and sell it, for instance, as cheese or yoghurt. Or in the case of grain, rather than only selling it to wholesalers to make bread, it can be fermented into beer and waste can be used as animal feed.” Read more [here](#).

7. University World News

Global higher education finds itself at a crossroads (Global)

Global higher education finds itself at a crossroads unimaginable at the turn of the century when the world basked in the possibilities of globalisation, democratisation and multilateralism. Society is currently reeling from the multiple crises of climate change and loss of biodiversity, deepening inequalities, glaring developmental deficits, alarming democratic recessions, intolerant populisms, rising competitive imperialisms and persistent armed conflicts. Higher education is facing its own reckoning: expansion with enduring disparities, changing funding approaches, technological disruptions, uneven internationalisation, rising complexity of accountability frameworks, and intensifying struggles over the epistemic scaffolding that has long sanctioned exclusions of vast segments of global knowledge, created imagined hierarchies of humanity, histories of oppression, exploitation and marginalisation, reproduction of social inequalities, and the enduring fixations with economic growth, consumption and avarice at the expense of nature. A new social contract is required for higher education as part of a new compact of human solidarity and ecological sustainability. Under such a contract higher education becomes a global public good to advance ecological, intercultural, interdisciplinary, international and information literacies, as well as collaborations and partnerships within and among institutions and countries across the global divides of North and South. It must embrace the human rights principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, social justice, solidarity, and respect for life, human dignity, interconnectedness and collective responsibility. Read more [here](#).

8. The Citizen

Tanzania's role as world celebrates Kiswahili Day (Tanzania)

Dar/Arusha. The government said yesterday that it has set aside an area of 100 acres for the construction of a Kiswahili university. The area, located in Bagamoyo district in Pwani Region, will also serve as a cultural centre, according to the minister for Culture, Arts and Sports, Mr Mohamed Mchengerwa. He was speaking during a Kiswahili symposium themed; "Contribution of the Kiswahili Language in the Liberation Movement". The conference was a continuation of the celebrations to mark the World Kiswahili Language Day, which is being celebrated for the first time in the world today after the Unesco declaration. Mr Mchengerwa raised the issue of the college after former minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Bernard Membe, expressed his desire for a Kiswahili university in Africa to be built in Tanzania due to the country being the founders of the language. In his remarks, Mr Membe said that if Tanzania contributed to the use of the Kiswahili language in the liberation of African countries, the university would help spread the language quickly across the globe. "Minister you must go to the World Education Organization (Unesco) where they have the money for this. Ask them to complete the construction of the college and the government will contribute a little because if we could use that language in search of liberation, why should we fail in constructing the college to safeguard our language," said Mr Membe. Responding to the issue, Mr Mchengerwa said that the plan to have the college already exists, and they have already allocated 100 acres of land on which to manage funding, construction will begin immediately. Read more [here](#).

9. The Guardian

Human traffickers 'using UK universities as cover' (Global)

Universities have been urged to be on high alert for human trafficking after suspected victims brought to Britain on student visas vanished from their courses and were found working in exploitative conditions hundreds of miles away. In a recent case, Indian students at Greenwich, Chester and Teesside universities stopped attending lectures shortly after arriving in the UK, according to a report by the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) seen by the Observer. They were later found in the care sector in Wales, where they were living in squalid conditions with up to 12 people to a three-bed flat, and were working "up to 80 hours a week, sometimes double-shifting", for "way below" minimum wage. "[The students'] attendance at university was low or nonexistent and in some cases other persons were logging on for them at lectures to give the impression they were in attendance," the report said. It comes after an Observer investigation uncovered widespread labour exploitation in care homes across Britain, with workers from India, the Philippines and countries in Africa found to have been charged up to £18,000 in illegal recruitment fees, and in some cases forced to work in conditions akin to debt bondage to repay money owed, with their wages intercepted and passports withheld. In those cases, many of the suspected victims had come to Britain on legitimate skilled worker visas brought in by the Home Office to help plug shortages in the care sector. Read more [here](#).

10. Higher Ed Drive

It's time for schools, colleges, companies and policymakers to clear the path to postsecondary education (Global)

Fewer students are getting the information they need to find the right college for them, argue the CEOs of the National College Attainment Network and ACT. For more than 800 days spanning three school years, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated the long-standing inequities existing at every level

of our education system. Reading and math scores are falling, college enrollments are dropping, and racial and socioeconomic gaps are widening. While many of education's most pressing challenges predate the pandemic, the current crisis serves as yet another wake-up call. It is understandable to yearn for a return to normalcy, but we cannot simply turn back the clock to a system that was already failing so many. Instead, the months and years ahead must be a transformational moment for education. The silos separating K-12, higher education and the workforce must be dismantled — because the road to higher education, the great equalizer of our nation, begins long before students start applying to colleges. Together, we can reinvent the paradigm of postsecondary success. The need to act is clear; the warning signs of long-term damage to our country are stark. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, about 270,000 fewer high school seniors completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, than would have been expected if not for the pandemic. At the same time, fewer students are taking the ACT test, and among those who are, their scores are lower. Read more [here](#).

11. My Joy Online

High cost of internet affecting effective teaching in private universities – Prof Wiredu

An immediate past Chairman of the Governing Council of the Ghana Baptist University College has expressed worry over what he described as the exorbitant cost of internet services. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the 5th Governing Council of the University, Prof Edwin Wiredu revealed that the University has had to unsubscribe from high speed internet services used in facilitating teaching and learning and offering cost-effective programmes to students. “The IT challenge emerging from high charges compelled the University to unsubscribe from high speed internet services. “This has limited the ability of the University to leverage IT to deliver cost-effective programmes to link up with foreign institutions and local campuses and improve workable productivity,” he said. Prof Wiredu added that huge affiliation costs and exorbitant taxes are squeezing private universities out of business. According to him, the existing competition between public and private schools is affecting student enrollment. As a result, the University does not generate enough financial resources. He indicated that the situation makes it difficult to retain competent staff. “Financial challenges of the University are as a result of low student enrollment arising from competition with public and private universities. This is compounded by the huge affiliation fees that are to be paid to our mentoring institutions. Read more [here](#).

Note to Editors/PROs:

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