**THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE MARKETING STRATEGIES OF USIU\_AFRICA**

# **Chapter One**

**Background of the Problem**

Businesses and organizations worldwide are working to adapt to the new environment brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has also significantly impacted the global economy. The pandemic has forced businesses in the marketing industry to change their strategies (Firang & Mensah, 2021). Due to the pandemic, some educational institutions have shut their doors, while others have changed their business models to focus on online learning. As a result, educational institutions have had to significantly alter their marketing strategies.The pandemic has forced USIU-Africa and many other organizations to change their marketing tactics. This has necessitated several things, including a shift to digital marketing, an improvement in online presence, and the introduction of virtual campus tours.

The challenges that USIU-Africa faced when responding to the new marketing climate are common. Other institutions worldwide deal with similar issues, and the marketing sector is rapidly shifting. For instance, a study by Hutahaean et al. (2022) discovered that Indonesian colleges had needed help luring and keeping students since the pandemic. Similarly, a study undertaken by Osei‐Kojo et al. (2022) showed the obstacles faced by universities in Ghana while seeking to adjust their marketing strategies to the altering circumstances. Effective marketing tactics for educational institutions can achieve higher enrolment and retention rates. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented educational institutions with new challenges that must be overcome to deploy conventional marketing methods successfully.

Recent literature has examined the effects of COVID-19 on the marketing industry and the difficulties academic institutions have encountered in their attempts to adjust to the new environment. For instance, the pandemic has shifted toward digital marketing methods, and institutions need to increase their online presence (Istrefi-Jahja & Zeqiri, 2021). Similarly, Agasisti & Soncin (2020) suggest that schools adopt a more student-centric marketing strategy based on the needs and preferences of students in the new environment. The literature also emphasises the need for institutions to develop effective communication methods that address the concerns of students and their families around the pandemic.

Given the substantial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on educational institutions' marketing efforts, it is vital to analyse the efficiency of the techniques utilised by USIU-Africa (Njoroge, 2022).