

Application of Risk Management on COVID-19 by Universities in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Wan Norhayate Wan Daud
Fakhrul Anwar Zainol
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Terengganu, Malaysia
wnhayate@unisza.edu.my/fakhrulanwar@unisza.edu.my

Reynaldo Gacho Segumpan
Joanna Soraya Abu Zahari
University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Ibri, Oman
reynaldo.ibr@cas.edu.om/joanna.ibr@cas.edu.om

A pandemic is a disease spread over a wide geographic area and affects many people. The rapid spread of new coronaviruses throughout the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the world since 2019 has significantly impacted GCC's economic and social development, including HEIs in the Gulf Countries. This study provides a critical analysis of the coping strategies of HEIs in the Gulf with COVID-19 from a risk management perspective. It examines mechanisms and approaches on how HEIs in the Gulf contend with the ramifications of the pandemic. This study begins with the introduction and overview of the characteristics of risks associated to the pandemic. The authors contend that HEIs in the Gulf need to put mitigation plans to address each COVID-related risk. By taking these steps, the universities will be better positioned to reduce further spread and impact of the pandemic among the HEIs. It also seeks to highlight the factors underlying the mismanagement of risks related to the pandemic and the measures needed in executing the risk response. Moreover, it will assess the extent to which universities demonstrated their roles in preserving quality education standards and social responsibility in general across the GCC countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through close coordination with their respective governments, the Gulf HEIs need to promote the safety and welfare of the students, faculty, and staff while paying attention to their roles in implementing risk management to reduce, avoid, or eliminate the risks. The paper concludes that more research should explore the future of higher education institutions in the post-coronavirus era by emphasizing crisis and risk management.

Keywords: COVID-19, GCC Universities, Risk Management, Pandemic Risk