

**INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE LEARNERS' ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE IN GOVERNMENT AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
INDUSTRIAL CITY DIVISION MBALE CITY**

MILLY BECCA WABUSA

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I, Wabusa Milly Decca, do hereby declare that this research report is my original work and has never been submitted to any University or Higher Institution of learning for an academic award.

Sign: 

WABUSA MILLY DECCA

R123/MUC/BE0040

Date: 30/8/2024

APPROVAL

This work by Wabisa Milly Becca entitled "Influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City" is her original work and has been done under my supervision.

Signature: 

Mr. WASALAINÉ PATRICK

RESEARCH SUPERVISOR

Date: 30-08-2024

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my beloved family members especially my dear husband and the children for their prayers, financial and moral guidance, compassion and their patience with me during my absence from home while at Uganda Christian University in Uganda.

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I am thankful to Almighty God for giving me the chance to embark on and complete this study. I give Him thanks and praise. I would also like to extend my genuine and heartfelt appreciation to the following persons for their significant support and endless encouragement, my supervisor Mr. Wasalaine Patrick for his guidance, expertise and time. He tirelessly accepted to guide and make me see ideas from an interactive academic engagement. His inspiration and guidance were an eye opener to me and worth imitating. Mr. Wasalaine Patrick made my Degree expedition much easier from first to last, very friendly constructive criticism, suggestions and guidance. I thank him for helping me find the way in this Degree programme. He enthusiastically pushed me forward and pulled me growing throughout the proposal. Special thanks go to the other lecturers especially Mr. Hasahya James Wangwe, Ms. Musingo Sarah and Ms. Bagaya Lulaba Victoria for their encouragement and support that pushed this book far; July the Lord bless them abundantly. To all my family members who supported me financially, ideologically and gave courage to me, July the Almighty God bless them abundantly. Their presence in my journey of studies was not only attractive and interactive but also kind. All of them made me realize what it takes to be a successful person in the world today.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADHD	: Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
CBT	: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CDC	: Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
DEO	: Division Education Officer
ESA	: Education Standards Agency
GPE	: Global Partnership for Education
ID	: Intellectual Disability
PTSD	: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SPSS	: Statistical Package for Social Scientist
T.V	: Television
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	: United Nations International Children's Fund
WFP	: World Food Programme
WHO	: World Health Organization

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. Evidence abounds of the influence of the pandemic on the learners in Mbale City. The general purpose of the study was to examine the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. Specifically, the study sought; i) to examine the psychological influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners, ii) to analyse the social influence on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City, iii) to assess how Covid-19 can be mitigated. The study adopted the descriptive research design. Data was analysed using self-administered questionnaires and interviews. It contained the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents and the data already existing and the information collected, The study was conducted in 04 selected primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. population of 131 respondents who comprised; 05 head teachers, 080 learners, 024 teachers and 01 education officer. In each school, the head of the school was interviewed together with the City education officer. The total number of respondents was 097 as per Kjerchie and Morgan Population Table. Both Random and Purposeful sampling techniques were employed to collect data in the Division. Data was collected by the researcher who developed three instruments; questionnaire, Interview Guide method and Data Quality Control for the teachers, school heads and learners respectively. The instruments were validated by three experts and both of them were from the Department of Education. The reliability coefficient that ranged between; 0.98, 0.99, 0.94, 0.88, and 0.92 was used to judge the validity and reliability of the instruments. The respondents were asked to examine the psychological effect of Covid-19 pandemic on academic performance of learners. In line with the above suggestions Covid-19 pandemic can be truncated and this requires a joint effort. The results show that what should mitigate the effects of the pandemic are; Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, vaccination, psychological assistance, reporting domestic violence and talking to children. This too calls for the school heads, educational officers, educationists and education stakeholders to carry out sensitization on how to cope with the pandemic. It was recommended in relation to the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City was made; Sensitisation of parents and teachers by the health workers and other experts should be carried out with regard to their role and responsibility to do counselling. Government to provide vaccines of children from 6 years of age and strengthen legal and policy framework that allows that the constitution of vaccination for all. Teachers and parents whose learners are have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic to try to counsel them and make them understand that Covid-19 had not come to stay. The religious leaders on top of church sessions should make an effort of extending the lessons to Christians with the Covid-19 pandemic. They should also invite Covid-19 task force to continue speaking to their congregations. Financial empowerment of parents is a key factor since most homes were financially hit. This will help parents to provide for their children other than sending them to sell their bodies for food. Finally, the researcher acknowledges that this research is not the end of the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance. It is recommended that further research should be undertaken in both private and government schools, urban and rural to have a comparative analysis of what goes on in these settings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, scope, and the significance of the study, conceptual framework, limitations and delimitations of the study.

1.0 Background to the study

The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has spread worldwide, affecting almost all countries and territories. The outbreak was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. The countries around the world cautioned the public to take responsive care and the public care strategies have included hand washing, wearing face masks, physical distancing, and avoiding mass gathering and assemblies. Lockdown and staying home strategies have also been put in place as the needed action to flatten the curve and control the transmission of the disease (Sintema, 2020).

Globally, by March 2020, over 200,000 cases of the corona virus had been reported in more than 160 countries, which resulted in more than 80,000 deaths and left several States dealing with severe outbreaks, Bago, J. L. et al, (2020). They reported that the COVID-19 pandemic would adversely impact the progress of some governments by increasing the education budget. Therefore, this is a crisis that requires urgent attention and collective action by all Governments, stakeholders and communities.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments around the world have ordered for the closure of schools in quick succession to contain the spread of the corona virus. Because of this, more than 60 per cent of the world's learners, around 1.5 billion students were unable to go to school in over 107 countries (UNESCO 2019). Given the grand scale of education disruption and the uncertainty of schools re-opening, this has led to a global education crisis.

Bhutan, first declared closing of schools and institutions and reduction of business hours during the second week of March 2020 (Kuensel, 2020). The complete nationwide lockdown was implemented from 1st July 2020 (Palden, 2020). In between, movements were allowed, offices began functioning, schools and colleges reopened for selected levels and continued with online class for others with more than 170,000 children in Bhutan (India) who

were affected by the school closure. The impact is far reaching and has affected learning during the academic year or even more in the coming days. Several schools, colleges and universities had discontinued face-to-face teaching leading to a pressing need to innovate and implement alternative educational and assessment strategies (Dhawan, 2020).

According to Defense Production Act (DPA), (2020), the first known American deaths of Covid-19 occurred in February 2020 and on March 6, 2020, which made Trump to allocate \$8.3 billion to fight the outbreak and declared a national emergency. The government also purchased large quantities of medical equipment, invoking the Defense Production Act of 1950 to assist in the fight of the pandemic. Nevertheless, Bowden J (July 9, 2021) reports that more than 38.3 million confirmed cases have been reported since January 2020, with more than 633,000 deaths, the most of any country, and the twenty-fourth-highest per capita worldwide which has caused a ban on education system. As many infections have gone undetected, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that, as of July 2021, there could be a total of 120.2 million infections in the United States, or more than a third of the total population (Bursztynsky J (July 16, 2021).

As far as South Africa was concerned, Voigt, Elri (2020), opined that following the Covid-19 pandemic had spread almost to the whole world by 5th March, 2020 where the Minister of Health Zweli confirmed the spread of the virus with the first known patient being a male citizen who tested positive upon his return from Italy. Following this, on 15 March 2020, the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa declared a national state of disaster and announced measures such as immediate travel restrictions and the closure of schools from 18 March that they thought would lead to the nation's plan to contain the spread and mitigate the negative impact of the corona virus. The first local death from the disease was reported on 27 March 2020 (Division Press, 2020). Ramaphosa announced that from 1 July 2020, a gradual and phased easing of the lockdown restrictions would begin, lowering the national alert to 4. From 1 June, the national restrictions were lowered to level 3. The restrictions were lowered to alert level 2 on 17 July 2020 (Schrader, Adam 2020). Consequently, Voigt, Elri, (2020), posit that from 21 September 2020, much as restrictions were lowered to alert level 1, it raised new cases to 52,880 raising the total number of confirmed cases to 725,452 with the death toll of 19,276. Due to the rise of the pandemic, schools were closed on 18 March 2020, where most universities suspended classes and graduation ceremonies around this time as well terrorizing the education system.

Bago, J. L., et al (2020), postulates that since the first case of the novel Corona virus Disease (COVID-19) was announced in Kenya, many aspects of society and the education sector have been dramatically affected. On March 15th 2020, the Kenyan government closed all learning institutions countrywide to contain the spread of the virus as the numbers of those infected by corona virus rose to over 8,000; the ministry of education announced on July 7th that, the 2020 school calendar year will be considered lost due to COVID-19 restrictions. Brand, S. P. et al, (2020), in their study on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners show that the emergence of Covid-19 pandemic had both socio-economic and physical impacts on the learners; the teaching and learning activities in all learning institutions in Kenya just like other parts of the world with the worst hit on learners in both the primary and secondary school candidates who should have sat for their national examinations by the end of 2020.

In Uganda, Tumwesige, et al, (2020), note that the advent of Covid-19 caused a lot of distress among all sectors but with more adverse effects on the education system. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda on Wednesday 18th March 2020 addressed the nation on corona virus and in his address noted zero registered cases in Uganda at the time notwithstanding, the volatility of the virus demanded that Ugandans take preventive measures to avoid acquiring and spreading it. To this effect, all Primary and Secondary Schools, as well as all Universities and Tertiary Institutions, were to close by mid-day 20th March 2020. According to the Ministry of Education (2020), more than 73,000 learning institutions of the world closed, and consequently, 15 million learners and 600,000 refugee learners were out of school. Without a vaccine for the virus, the end of social distancing measures were uncertain, affecting reopening of schools and could lead to a very disruptive stop-go period during recovery, with schools reopening in October 2020 and then closing. For instance, Global Partnership for Education (GPE) (2020), notes that with children out of school indefinitely, COVID-19 threatens to reverse years of educational progress in Uganda where daunting challenges remain and the country's education system is still confronting three key challenges: access to, quality of, and relevance of.

According to the World Health Organisation, (2020), the Ministry of Health informed the public that Uganda had registered the first COVID-19 death and the deceased was a 34-year-old Ugandan who was a support staff working at Buwasungui Health Center II in Namavia sub county Namisindwa Division.

The government of Uganda to a less extent tried to introduce technological learning which, UNICEF (2020), WHO and The Ministry of Education, (2020), think that the learning technologies, that is, print-material, radio, television, video, audio, telephone, computers and the internet appear to offer an answer to not only enabling learning to continue where education has been disrupted but also to offer opportunities for overcoming geographical access and rigidities of conventional education. However, Tumwesigye, (2020), notes that with 80% of Uganda's school-age children and youth living in rural areas characterized with lack of basic living resources and underdeveloped educational and supporting infrastructure, has difficulty of accessing learning technologies and the digital learning between privileged and deprived groups continued to widen the educational gap.

Furthermore, Mash, E. J., & Wolfe, D. A. (2020), contend that as the COVID-19 pandemic escalates; the day-to-day reality has created a frightening situation in developed and developing economies. Although to date Uganda has over 119000 confirmed cases with 2973 deaths, the numbers of those acquiring the virus and associated deaths globally is alarming WHO, (2020), with the impact of the pandemic already taking a toll on communities to vulnerable or marginalized, the poor, the rich, the illiterate, women and girls. What this means for Uganda is that since March 20th, over 15 million learners were shut out of classrooms and confined to their homes without access to instruction and uncertain of their future. However, there have been no studies yet on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic and with generally scanty literature on the pandemic that the study wishes to contribute to. At the same time, the pertinent question is; what is the negative influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners? To the best of my knowledge, there is generally limited research on the same. There had also been no studies yet on the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. Therefore, this study aimed at examining the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Industrial Division, Mbale City considering the psychological and social factors.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Studies based on the analysis of the influence of Covid-19 pandemic especially those on African countries are rare, (WHO, 2020). Although the ministry of education has made efforts to introduce radios, televisions, and e-learning, to enable the continuation of education through the live or recorded broadcast sessions for many learners, those without access to media should have been neglected, Elizabeth et al(2020). In Industrial City Division, the pandemic has influenced over 90% of school going children with prevailing effects on primary pupils who have been both socially and psychologically affected. Since these students have no prior knowledge about the use of media for serious studies with almost about 44% of them without radios and televisions, most of them see this teaching as a waste of time which has made some engage in untimely sexual relationships and abuse of drugs.

Also, literature indicates that there are great variations in television ownership across regions: with 42% of households in Kampala; 3% of households owned a television in Kigezi; 2% of households owned a television in Teso, Bukedi and Acholi, and 1% in West Nile. A report by UNESCO (2020), “shows that over 15 million children are out of school as a result of COVID-19 and the closure of institutions not only has affected learners and teachers but also brought forth numerous psychological, economic and social issues, including interrupted and loss of learning, education exclusion, homelessness, nutrition and economic crisis, childcare challenges, domestic violence and increase in teenage pregnancy cases, financial cost implication to households, and sexual exploitation among others which July have not left the students of Industrial Division untouched. Studies that have been conducted have no much interest on analysis of the pandemic on the academic performance. Against this gap, the main interest of this study was to examine the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners’ academic performance in Industrial Division, Mbale City.

1.3 General Objective

The study examined the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners’ academic performance in Industrial Division, Mbale City.

1.4 Specific Objectives

Thy study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To examine the psychological influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Industrial Division, Mbale City
- ii. To analyse the social influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Industrial Division, Mbale City
- iii. To assess ways through which the psychological and social influence of Covid-19 can be mitigated.

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions were answered:

1. What is the psychological influence of the Covid-19 on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City?
2. What is the social influence of the Covid-19 on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City?
3. How can the psychological and social effects of Covid-19 be mitigated?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Although some studies have been made on the Covid-19 pandemic, Tumwesigye, Elizabeth, UNICEF, WHO, Ministry of Education, (2020), Bursztynsky J (2021) & Flook et al (2020) assert that most of them did not base on the academic performance of learners. It is further observed that most of the scholars that have conducted research about Covid-19 pandemic have only concentrated on the information concerning the daily infections, death toll and the active numbers. In addition, because people are expectant of when schools are to be reopened, most news articles are gird towards giving false hope to people about this. This study therefore provided a body of data drawn from the influence of the pandemic and analysed in a way that sheds light on the academic performance of learners.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Successful completion of this study would be useful in the following ways:

1. The results of the study might be useful to the world Health Organization who need to understand the underlying psychological and social effects of the pandemic on learners.

2. To the ministry of education, the results July be useful in helping them look for vast ways of vaccinating learners so as to open schools in order to avoid social related effects.
3. The results July be useful to health workers who would provide psychological and social support counseling sessions to the affected learners
4. This study might help the teachers that teach the stigmatized learners to provide a friendly environment to them since their mind is already contaminated by the pandemic.
5. Since this is one of the first studies about the effect of the pandemic, the results July be useful to other researchers who July be interested in the same

1.8 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was to content, time and geographical scope.

1.8.1 Geographical Scope

Geographically, the study was carried out in Industrial city division, Mbale city. Mbale is in Eastern Uganda and is named after the largest district, Mbale which also serves as the main administrative and commercial center in the sub-region. Industrial city division is bordered by north city division to the North, Bungokho South Division to the South, Kamonkoli to the East and Nabweya Division to the West. Mbale city is the largest town in the region and the location of the city headquarters is located approximately 245 kilometers (152 mi), by road, northeast of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, and the largest city in that country. Industrial City Division was included in the study because it one of the areas that was greatly affected by the pandemic and its effect created a negative impact on the learners' academic performance.

1.8.2 Content Scope

The study was limited to examining the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.

1.8.3 Time Scope

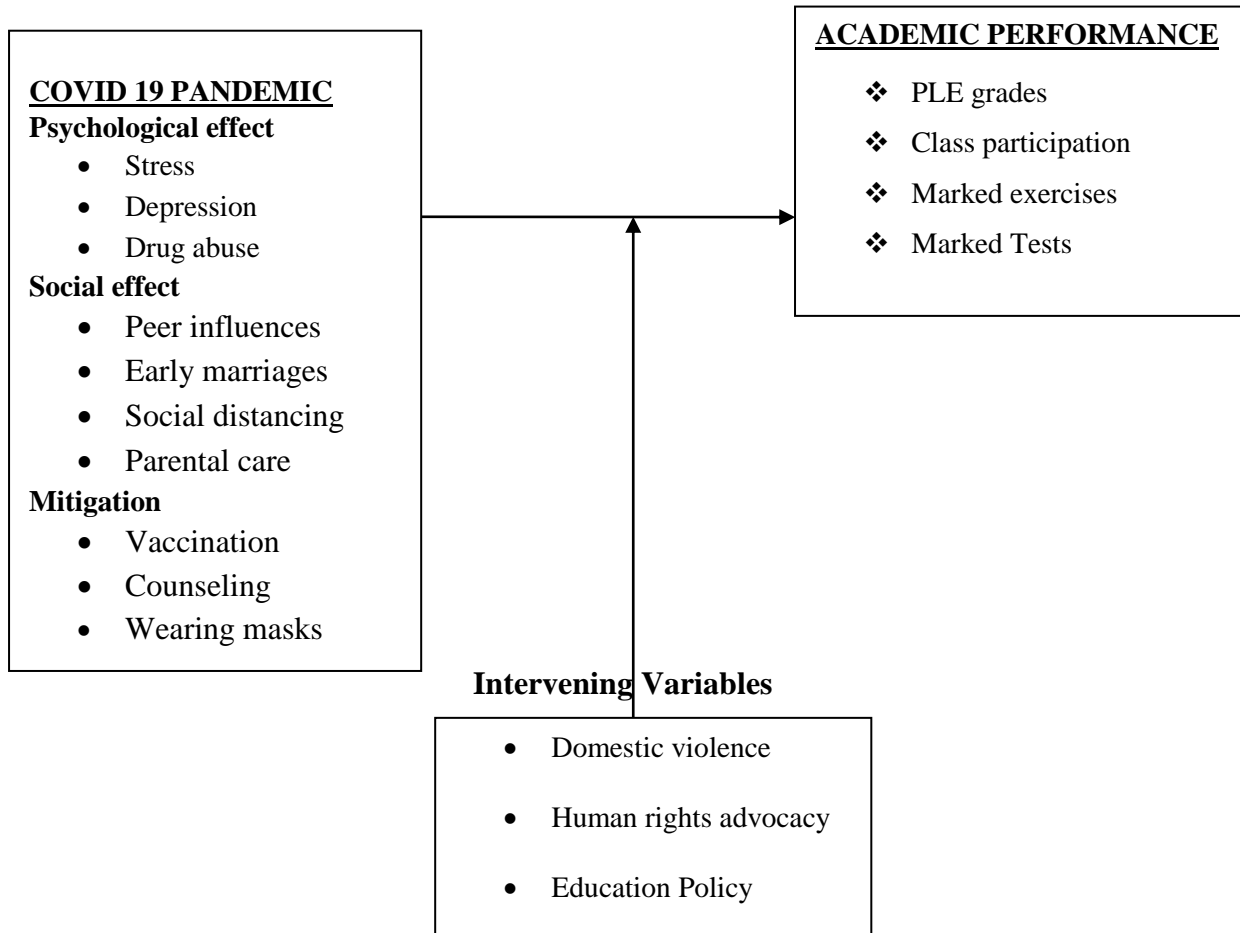
In terms of time span, the study was conducted from December 2020 to July, 2024. This period was considered because it is the time when UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, reported the high rates of the psychological and social effects of the pandemic on learners.

1.9 Conceptual Frame Work

Figure 1:1 A Conceptual Framework Showing the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners’ academic performance. The conceptual framework represents the relationship between the independent variable, Covid-19 and the dependent variable, academic performance.

Independent Variables (I.V)

Dependent Variables (D.V)



Source: Primary Data, 2024

From the conceptual framework above, Covid-19 pandemic had many effects which include; psychological; stress, depression, drug abuse, etc and social; parental care, peer influence, social distancing and early marriages; wearing masks, hand washing among others. The independent variables such as psychological effect and social effect affect the academic performance of the learners as they face a lot of challenges due to the lockdown. However there were other intervening variables such as; Uganda education policies, human rights advocacy and domestic violence among others that were not part of the study but had influence the academic performance of learners.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

Academic performance:

This is the outcome of the students after assessments. This study measured academic performance basing on average grade scored by students in exams.

Domestic Violence:

Is defined as a disagreement or opposition within the family members; these can be caused by poverty, infidelity, drunkardness high bride-wealth is demanded, stinginess or any other factors.

Impact:

Is defined as those factors that have a strong influence on a child's education/ learning.

1.11 Limitations to the Study

The researcher feared that most people July not give clear information due to the fact that Covid- 19 was still a fragile fact to handle and to address this issue.

Some teachers view researchers as idlers who go around creating trouble by reporting whatever is not right in their schools to the Ministry. In the schools where this attitude was prevalent, the researcher was neither welcomed nor given audience and teachers claimed to be very busy. They neither respond to the questionnaire nor allowed the researcher in their lessons to observe how they teach.

Limited time to collect data as the researcher was on course as well as executing other daily school duties and family obligations which delayed the study.

The research tools had difficult terms to respondents to interpret and this caused scanty responses.

Financial constraints posed a threat especially during printing, collecting data from respondents and transport costs.

1.12 Delimitations of the Study

The study was limited to Industrial City Division due to limited time and funds that did not allow the researcher explore the whole Mbale City.

The difficult terms were simplified through a translation where possible.

The researcher gave a clear background of the purpose of the study to the respondents to avoid mixed information.

In instances where there was negative attitude by teachers, the researcher found other schools that were willing to participate in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses a collection of materials from different sources that are related to Covid-19. Literature is reviewed on such issues as the psychological influence on academic performance of learners, social influence on academic performance of learners and how to mitigate the influence of the pandemic to boost the academic performance of learners.

2.1 Psychological influence of Covid-19 on academic performance

Covid-19 is a disease that mainly attacks people over 70 years old and only 0.3% of children in countries where there have been more deaths (for example, Spain). According to the Instituto de Salud Carlos (2020), this July be the reason why medical research does not deal with children, much as these subjects have special psychological, academic, and emotional characteristics at a stage of their lives when they are in full development. From the educational point of view, it is necessary to find out how children have developed in their homes, what they think, and what future expectations experts, teachers, and psychologists have for them. For all these reasons, the aim of this work is to find out whether the pandemic has psychological, economic and social aspects on children in times of confinement.

Considering this, (Huang and Zhao, 2020; Li et al., 2020; Qiu et al., 2020 Teufel et al., 2020), theorize that anxiety affects learners and note that in one of the main evaluated subjects, it has been significantly increasing in society during this pandemic. A research group in China analyzed the online posts from about 18,000 Chinese social media users before and after the declaration of COVID-19 in China on January 20, 2020 and found out that there was an increase in words that mirror negative emotions including anxiety, depression, and anger (Li et al., 2020). One particular kind of anxiety is worth mentioning: health anxiety. It is characterized mainly by catastrophic misinterpretations of bodily sensations, dysfunctional beliefs about health and illness and maladaptive coping behaviors which cause harmful consequences that can derive from this condition, including excessive hand washing, social withdrawal, panic purchasing and overspending in resources such as hand sanitizers, medications and protective masks (Asmundson and Taylor, 2020b).

In fact, in homes where there were suspected cases of COVID-19, the development of obsessive-compulsive symptoms were realized as a consequence of anxiety related to their

health status (Dubey et al., 2020). The same rising tendency has been seen for depressive symptoms on the learners (Bavel et al., 2020; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020; Restubog et al., 2020; Sher, 2020a). Interestingly, learners in the education system seem to be more susceptible to these manifestations in an epidemic context, especially due to unreliable access to information and apprehension to its academic realization (Pfefferbaum & North, 2020).

Brooks et al., 2020; Dutheil et al., 2020; Gunnell et al., 2020), note that stress is another alarming condition that can be expected to increase as a similar or worse to what happened in previous epidemics, such as H1N1 Influenza and Ebola (Xu et al, 2011; Cenat et al, 2020). Accordingly, the adverse effects of this illness are not manifested immediately and mental health support must be prepared to deal with this issue in a few months. Stress is more likely to take place after longer periods of school disconnection and it is associated with increased suicide risk by 2–5% (Thibodeau et al 2013; Brooks et al., 2020).

According to Nadkarni et al., (2020) during the lockdown, school going children around the globe are seen drinking alcohol although some countries have gone ahead to prohibit alcohol sales. The arguments to sustain the restricting conditions included impaired ability of those learners under the influence of alcohol to implement the preventive measures, the influence of drinking leading to domestic violence, its impact to the immune system and, finally, the high cost of acute drinking which may lead to school dropout. Nevertheless, Narasimha et al., (2020), adds that higher numbers of self-denial syndrome appeared as a consequence within learners with Covid-19 patients who suffered from addiction. In a psychiatry emergency service in Bangalore, India, twice the number of severe abstinence syndrome (seizures, delirium tremens, and hallucinations) occurred per day after the first lockdown (ibid). Furthermore, rise of the black marketing of alcohol, consumption of non-consumable alcohol and even suicide in those children suffering from addiction have been reported in India (Nadkarni et al., 2020). Whether this is true in Industrial City Division, Mbale City, is not known due to limited data.

Furthermore, Dubey et al., & Khan et al., (2020), indicate that several groups are more vulnerable to greater emotional, behavioral and psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic especially the school going age. Nevertheless, other groups at increased risk for the mental health repercussions of the pandemic include those with pre-existing health conditions, those living in care homes, domestic caregivers and COVID-19 patients and their family members.

Since many of the children under school going age have their parents working as health workers who are the healthcare providers during the pandemic, specifically frontline workers, in the alarming context of this health emergency, these professionals are put through different circumstances and afflictions, which include fear of being infected and infecting others, higher workload, significant pressure, pain of losing patients and colleagues, the yet unpredictability nature of the virus, inadequate testing, limited treatment options and disruption of regular routine in their homes, along with insufficient personal protective equipment and other medical supplies, especially in developing countries will cause stress (Chew et al., 2020; Lancet, 2020; Mamun et al., 2020c; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020). Evidence reports that such conditions might make both the children and the healthcare givers more vulnerable not only to physical symptoms, including headache and sore throat (Chwe et al., 2020), but also to psychological burden, with an increase in rates of anxiety, depression, stress, irritability, insomnia, anger, and frustration (Brooks et al., 2020; El-Hage et al., 2020; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020; Zhang J. et al., 2020). As an illustration, a study in China concluded that half of the frontline healthcare professionals had symptoms of depression and anxiety, 70% had psychological distress and many also reported insomnia (Mesa Vieira et al., 2020). Holmen et al, (2020), adds that the previous epidemics had a similar pattern, as 29% of the healthcare workers had emotional distress after the SARS epidemic in 2003.

However, El-Hage et al. & Lai et al., (2020), claim that the extent of psychological vulnerability seems to vary amongst different populations in the world. It has been reported that young people are at higher risk for adverse psychological repercussions than men. Moreover, nurses are also more likely to be affected than physicians; (Tsamakis et al., 2020). Interestingly, one study observed that non-frontline nurses were prone to emotional impact than the frontline group, which seems to be due to their greater working experience and psychological preparation (Ghaffari et al., 2020). Although results from other researches evidenced the opposite (Lai et al., 2020), it brings attention to the importance of providing psychological preparation and assistance to all individuals during the COVID-19 outbreak.

According to Fegert et al, (2020), children, especially the young ones, are in a position of vulnerability during the pandemic. This happens because, at home, they suffer with limited social connection, crucial for identity and well-being at young ages, reduced physical activity, loneliness and boredom which July result in long-term effects. Indeed, the Psychological and physical health, as well as productivity in adult life, is deeply rooted in the

childhood years (Loades et al, 2020). Wang G. et al, (2020), confirms that data from previous epidemics demonstrate that children who experienced isolation measures were five times more prone to demand psychological and mental health services and more inclined to experience Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Wang G. et al, (2020), opines that children who are out of school (i.e., lockdown, weekend and summer holidays) tend to have longer screen times, irregular sleep patterns and less favorable diets which can be exceptionally harmful in longer periods of time such as the yet unknown duration of this pandemic. Following the distancing measures given by the World Health Organisation, social media has become an important resource to maintain social interaction. Even though its use might alleviate some of the psychological and mental health impact of the isolation, it is essential to analyze its negative impact in children and adolescents (Deslandes & Coutinho, 2020). In addition, Lai et al, (2020), contends that consuming indiscriminate information about the pandemic among the children July trigger stress, anxiety, panic and depression. He notes that the effect is even more intense in younger individuals that do not have the discernment to filter information.

Coutinho, (2020), also confirms that the excessive use of the Internet might create an addiction, compromising the development of a healthier routine during the pandemic, which is also portrayed in the study, leisure, and exercise activities. Third, digital social networks are extremely based in the virtual construction of a self-image and visibility, which, especially for the youngest, might mediate self-esteem through the pursuit of social approval. Simultaneously, social media can be a violent place. As a consequence, its excessive use July contribute to self-harm actions through virtual challenges, in which the participant has assignments related to self-mutilation and even suicide that should be filmed and posted.

In comparison to SARS, Sher (2020a), made an analysis on sleep quality during the pandemic also indicated that there has been a rise in sleep disturbances, a critical condition associated with anxiety, depression, and suicidal behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, diminished sleep quality promotes short temperament and, as a consequence, complicates family cohabitation (Islam et al., 2020). Hence Dudey et al (2020), concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic July intensify psychological disorders or precipitate others, for instance, anxiety, depression, PTSD, alcohol misuse, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, panic and paranoia on the population.

Following the studies made on the previous pandemics over time, Barbisch et al, (2015), there is the evaluation of the psychological effects of the pandemic on the population, mostly children, college students, and health professionals; SARS, Ebola, H1N1, Equine Flu, and the current COVID-19, show that the psychological effects of contagion and quarantine is not limited on the fear of contracting the virus. There are some elements related to the pandemic that affect more the population, such as separation from loved ones, loss of freedom, uncertainty about the advancement of the disease, and the feeling of helplessness (Cao et al.,2020). In light of these consequences, a careful evaluation of the potential benefits of the quarantine is needed, taking into account the high psychological costs (Day et al., 2006).

In general, Cao et al (2020), posit that parents observed emotional and behavioral changes in their children during the quarantine: symptoms related to difficulty concentrating (76.6%), boredom (52%), irritability (39%), restlessness (38.8%), and nervousness (38%), sense of loneliness (31.3%), uneasiness (30.4%), and worries (30.1%). From the comparison between the two groups—Spanish and Italian parents—it emerged that the Italian parents reported more symptoms in their children than the Spanish parents. Further data collected on a sample of college students at the time of the spread of the epidemic in China showed how anxiety levels in young adults are mediated by certain protective factors, such as living in urban areas, the economic stability of the family, and cohabitation with parents (Alvarez et al., 2020).

2.2 Social effect on the academic performance of learners

UNESCO (2019), advance that due to loss of livelihoods particularly in low-income households, some children have been forced into income-generating activities to support their families' survival. In such poverty-stricken areas, securing food takes precedence over learning. For instance, children from poor families and disadvantaged neighborhoods have resorted to working as opposed to learning in order to provide for their families. This raises the increase on sexual exploitation with the young girls engaging in transactional sex in order to gain not only access to essential needs like sanitary towels but also to support their families. This has highly contributed to early and unplanned teenage pregnancies which have been projected to be on the rise during COVID-19 thus contributing to loss and disruption in learning.

As a matter of fact, as the “stay home” recommendations remain, it is crucial to remember that home is not always a safe place for everyone. It can also be a residence for distortion of

power and abuse, which is supported by studies that suggest that forced proximity, along with economic stress and disaster-related instability, are risk factors for aggression and domestic violence (Bavel et al., 2020; Usher et al., 2020). Furthermore, distancing measures also represent, for those living in violent places, diminished access to community-based and familial support, with fewer opportunities to ask for help (Usher et al., 2020). Fear of COVID-19 and threats about contamination can even be used as a coercive mechanism to maintain the abuse. As a consequence, for example, those suffering from domestic violence may be less inclined to go to school and resort to early marriages (ibid).

Murgatroid, (2020), indicates that with the restrictions on the movement of people, free interaction of learners, wearing of face masks, the need to practise physical distancing, and prohibitions on mass gatherings, face-to-face classes, community engagements, internships, practicum activities, and other forms of experiential learning methods can no longer be employed for as long as the pandemic persists. This presents an opportunity for the academic community to innovate and develop alternative teaching strategies that will allow for a more conducive learning environment, given these limitations. According to Nadkarni et al., (2020), the pandemic has clearly demonstrated the social, economic, political and environmental realities and phenomena from varying perspectives, and the unsustainable conditions that the learners have been living with; it has also produced new problems and challenges and changed the way we live our lives.

Quine, (1990), notes that the attribution of the so-called intentional states, through which the psychology commonly explains human behavior, is based on empathy (Treccani, 2020) and leads people to attribute beliefs, desires, and perceptions of analyzing this aspect within the recent situation of the pandemic, an increment of antithetical positions and attitudes could be noticed. On the one hand, people identify themselves with those who suffer (neighbors, friends, relatives who are living stressful events), promoting activities such as the so-called “suspended expenses.” For instance, Durkheim, (1992), found out that solidarity and humanitarian activities, food, and medicine delivery for people who are unable to go to the pharmacies was difficult to hand. The hyper connection of feelings becomes a way to reduce the self-isolation and its consequences, representing the contrary of the idea of Durkheim (1858), who considered society as a specific entity, built on social facts. The sensation “to be forced to feel” could lead people to distance themselves from others after the emergency situation, incrementing social phobias.

In addition, Holmes et al., (2020), says that critical aspect of this context is that, due to physical distancing, many elective appointments have been canceled and mental health support systems have been suspended, even though remote assistance is rapidly increasing. For example, the relationship between learner and the teacher is different, leading to more responsibilities in listening and understanding feelings expressed during the video call, generating a forced social distance. Hence, the aforementioned “forced empathy” July be common in this period because the social distance and the emergency situation make people want to be heard and appreciated, and the simple question “how are you?” becomes an anchor to express fears and emotions (Pasetti, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the way people live interpersonal relationships. The lockdown was characterized by a different organization of daily life, with an increase of time at home and a reduction of distance through digital devices. This period was also seen as an evolution in the concept of empathy, producing new perspectives in the study of the phenomenon according to sociological and neurological points of view. Indeed, empathy defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another—involves several elements, such as: (a) social context and historical period of the individual, (b) neurological mechanisms, and (c) psychological and behavioral responses to feelings of others. The neuro-sociological perspective analyzes the mechanisms involved in the empathic process, focusing on human communication and interpersonal relationships (Singer & Lamm, 2009; Decety & Ickes, 2009). Specifically, in this historical period characterized by an increment in the man–machine relationship, neuro-sociology could become one of the principal sciences for the study of human relations and technology. “We live increasingly in a human–machine world. Anyone who doesn’t understand this, and who is not struggling to adapt to the new environment—whether they like that environment or not—is already being left behind. Adapting to the new, fast-changing, technologically enhanced context is one of the major challenges of our times. And that certainly goes for education” (Presky, 2012).

Additionally, Bago, J. L. et al., (2020), reports that on March 15, 2020, when the Kenyan government abruptly closed all schools and colleges nationwide in response to COVID-19, it disrupted nearly 17 million learners countrywide. The closure of institutions not only affected learners and teachers but also brought forth numerous economic and social issues, including loss of learning, the beauty of meeting and discussing concepts together, education exclusion, homelessness, nutrition and economic crisis, childcare challenges and increase in teenage

pregnancy cases, financial cost implication to households, and sexual exploitation among others. The effects have been more severe for the underprivileged children and their households from the urban poor communities.

Much as the ministry of education has tried adopting a remote and digital mode of learning in Uganda, Tumwesigye, (2020), is in agreement with (Elizabeth et al., (2020); Mash, E. (2020), who note that the learning gap has increased and most learners being excluded from online education, television, radio and telephone due to challenges of access to internet and the affordability factor and unreliable electricity in the Division. According to an article in the New Vision newspaper on July, 2020, most parents are not able to finance the school digital related expenses such as learning materials and daily internet bundles; thereby they are disadvantaged compared to their counterparts who can afford these items. This further widens the inequality gap and impedes their ability to access quality education and continued learning. This has resulted into limited and minimal learning within the areas, especially in urban informal settlements. (Mash, E. (2020). Also, smart phones are beyond reach for most of these communities. Even when adults have those, tensions around privacy and children unsupervised internet use renders access to digital learning non-existent (The New Vision, (2020). Areas where electricity and technology do not exist, learning does not take place. Yet such disadvantages present challenges for the marginalized families and learners who must compete with their more privileged peers during the digital lessons and national examinations (Nadkarni et al., 2020).

Likewise, Clemente-Gonzalez, (2016), points out that lack of other family members such as grandparents, who had been playing a role in accompanying especially with children in preschool, complicates the state of confinement and the lack of school attendance that is taking place, initially planned for 6 months in a row. The study by Clemente-Gonzalez of the University of Murcia highlights the relevance of grandparent–grandchild relationships and the role of the former in the social and emotional development of the child, which gives great significance to their grandparents for the appreciation observed in them, recognizing their importance in the family structure. At this point, it is also necessary to point out the lack of relationships between equals and a face to face interaction with their teachers which is so important for correcting the emotional development of children is lacking.

Another important aspect that has been affected by the Corona Virus pandemic is the practice of Physical Education (PE). Many schoolchildren practice physical exercise based solely on

the subject of Physical Education. This subject is not only based on motor skills but is a practice that affects schoolchildren in a global way, influences many aspects of their daily lives, and helps teachers to better understand students in their different dimensions (Founaud & Gonzalez-Audicana, 2020). Lack of PE is associated with obesity, as indicated by different studies that relate the regular practice of physical exercise with the reduction of health problems (Castaneda-Vazquez et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Elhadary et al. (2020) evaluated the social impacts of COVID-19 on the academic performance of science and social science students in Turkey. Their findings showed that many factors affected the academic performance of the students during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite that, their study also revealed that both teachers and students are satisfied with the application of digital and online learning and teaching. Loton et al. (2020), note that the result of their findings showed that there is a significant impact on both performances of the students and their level of satisfaction with online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 outbreak since learners are tJulyht by new teachers and their participation lay devoid.

Likewise, another study conducted in Indonesian context where the researcher explored the solution, advantages and constraints with digital learning during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that their participant's satisfaction on the performance of the students during the COVID-19 outbreak was alarming (Fatoni et al., 2020). Hence, based on the aforementioned researches carried out on the effects of COVID-19 on the performance of students, one can infer that there is a great influence of COVID-19 on the academic performance of students as most of them are not attending the lessons.

2.3 Mitigation of the psychological and social effects of Covid-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has produced a new world full of challenges, dilemmas, as well as opportunities. It is up to us to adapt and transform the challenges and dilemmas to opportunities for growth and development for our nation and the global community. According to Nadkarni et al., (2020), there is an urgent need to provide visionary solutions to mitigate the looming social and psychological challenges ahead of the education of our learners. Exacerbated socio-economic hardships imposed on households by the health crisis will have ripple effects as families consider the financial and opportunity cost of education. Dwindling incomes and loss of parents due to prolonged lockdown could mean that large numbers of children will never return to the classroom. There is overwhelming evidence the

longer children are out of school, the greater the risk of violence, rape, child marriages, child labour, prostitution and other life-threatening often criminal activities.

According to Wang, G. et al, (2020), social isolation and mental health problems that co-occur in early childhood and to children who exhibit problematic behaviors and force them to struggle to cope with social challenges that accompany their progression throughout childhood leading to loss of the physical and social benefits of a schooling environment, other risk factors which are likely to affect the learning process could be mitigated by having Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with an emphasis on Problem Solving Therapy, activity scheduling, and peer led group support. This initiative July result in actual benches in various communities where individuals with mental health issues could go and talk to lay-people who have received training. As far as Mental Health Covid-19, (2020), adolescents with previous psychological mental health disorders require particular attention since disruption of school routine can decline their mental health status (Khan et al., 2020). Moreover, the current events have further prompted the expansion of remote work, whereas schools and daycare centers had to interrupt their activities. In this setting, family and work environment have merged and decreased performance that can be seen in both spheres, as stress intensifies (Mental Health Covid-19, 2020).

Although not many studies have been done exploring the effects of COVID-19 on the academic performance of students and assessing their level of performance and satisfaction with the digital and online teaching during the outbreak of COVID-19, the researcher made an effort to find out the most related studies concerning the present study (Wang & Tang, 2020), the government of each country should offer financial support for the vulnerable population in this context, including the self-employed and those with lower income in order to be able to support their children's education. Gunnell et al., (2020) indicates that it is also crucial for governments to prepare an economic plan during and after the quarantine, in order to reduce stress about the uncertainty of the future. Moreover, aiming to alleviate the economic burden faced particularly by numerous groups throughout the community, medical expenses of COVID-19 confirmed and suspected patients should be subsidized by the government. This strategy July also ensure that individuals seek medical care and, therefore, promotes health equity and disease control amongst the more vulnerable groups (Wang & Tang, 2020).

In light of this difficult scenario, there are ways in which individuals July personally attempt to improve both the psychological and social effects of Covid-19. Undoubtedly, maintaining interest and motivation is difficult for those suffering from mental health disorders or for those struggling financially (Mental Health Covid-19, (2020). Nonetheless, studies have suggested that nourishing adaptive mindsets regarding stress July exert positive effects on how people deal with their emotions. It July also reduce adverse physical symptoms and boost physiological functioning under acute stress (Bavel et al., 2020). In fact, stress and loss of life satisfaction have been associated with higher levels of inflammation, which increases the odds of contracting the disease (Mesa Vieira et al., 2020).

Moreover, a study with employed students observed that there are multiple emotion regulation strategies that might be helpful during this period. They include seeking and reaching out to social connection, such as friends or family, or even volunteering, as reducing the feeling of loneliness and enhancing belongingness is crucial to prevent suicide (Holmes et al., 2020). Keeping oneself committed to other things (i.e., hobbies, music, reading, film, and television and home improvements) and engaging in enjoyable activities to improve one's mood have also been suggested (Restubog et al., 2020). As complex and multi-component activities, arts and crafts have been highly associated with diminished risk of developing mental health disorders (Conejero et al., 2020). It is suspected that they modulate several neurotransmitters, as well as cortisol levels, and stimulate neuroplasticity. Therefore, they offer the possibility of emotional expression and regulation (Conejero et al., 2020).

Jimenez-Pavon et al., (2020); Lyons et al., (2020)., show that as the COVID-19 outbreak severely restricted people's movement, outdoor activities have been limited, which does not mean, however, that physical activity needs to be limited as well. Physical exercises have been strongly associated with positive effects regarding mental and physical health of our children. Therefore, exercising at home is an accessible and easy alternative, which includes not only walking and running, but also several online and free classes of different sport modalities (Chen et al 2024; Jimenez-Pavon et al., 2020;Mental Health Covid -19 2020).

Santarone et al., (2020), assert that support measures such as psychologists and psychiatrists' appointments, psychological assistance hotline, support groups and reading materials illustrating coping mechanisms to deal with stressors to the population should also be provided without stigma. For instance, Zaka et al., (2020) insist that since many professionals are afraid of going home and infecting their families, it is important to inform

them about the safety measures that can minimize the chances of infection. Furthermore, the family members of the healthcare professionals should receive special access to testing and treatment, if necessary (Dutheil et al., 2020).

Deslandes & Coutinho, (2020) notes that it has been recommended that the children maintain a healthy routine with adequate sleep cycle and physical activity, and videos can be used to encourage them to exercise and to play. Additionally, Wang .G. et al., (2020), posit that in order to prevent loneliness, families might seize the opportunity to establish better bonds with their kids, providing them a sense of belonging in the family. Loades, et al., (2020) contend that social networks should be used to allow interaction of children with their peers; nevertheless, it is important that the parents monitor and control the screen time and the content visualized as their children interact with their peers.

According to Brand S. et al, (2020), parents should always talk to children about the current circumstances clearly and directly, in order to minimize the negative feelings and to help the kids better comprehend the pandemic and the information received from the Internet. Unfortunately, Wang et al., (2020) note that an effort that has already been made is the creation of the book *My Hero is You* (Storybook for children on Covid-19, 2020) by the United Nations in conjunction with other agencies which was designed to help children aged 6 to 11 to cope with the stress and anxiety generated by the pandemic has done little as more cases of mental health are reported.

Domestic violence is a complex issue with strong cultural components (Gunnel et al 2020). Therefore, it requires a combination of multiple measures in order to protect the victims (Sacco et al., 2020), suggest improved reporting of domestic violence, he notes that it is important to ensure constant availability of hotlines and digital reporting. However, Borah et al, (2020), think that since the victims July be isolated with their perpetrators, other alternatives must be adopted. For instance, family, friends and neighbors have an essential role revealing domestic violence, and advertising campaigns should encourage the community to report the cases (Marques et al., 2020; Sacco et al., 2020; Sharma & Borah, 2020; Usher et al., 2020).

Regrettably, the outbreak of COVID-19 greatly affected all the educational levels in different contexts across the globe and has been incorporated into the educational settings to have possible provision for teachers and students (Oyinloye, 2020). A study conducted by WHO

(2020), examined the impacts of COVID-19 confinement on the performance of students at both higher and lower education level and concluded that to allow free interaction and commencement of education, vaccination was the only option. Surprisingly, their research revealed that COVID-19 vaccination left many with negative impacts on the performance of the students with speculations that the vaccine would kill.

Due to COVID-19, country-wide school closures in Uganda have threatened the social and mental health of the youth. Some notable problems are lack of nutrition and social isolation. Lack of nutrition poses many risks to healthy development. Similar to many countries in the world, in Uganda food is often supplied to children while they are at school. In fact, since the 1980s, the World Food Program (WFP) has provided school meals in Karamoja. These meals encourage children to enroll in and finish school. Since the pandemic hit, the WFP has worked to provide “take home rations” to some children, however, this program is evidence that access to nutrition is being threatened. Findings from Mash and Wolfe (2010) suggest lack of nutrition in childhood enhance risk factors for Intellectual Disability (ID) and Attention Deficit- Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). In terms of mental health, Loades et al. (2020) conducted a study on children and adolescents in isolation as a result of COVID-19 and found data that suggests children are, “more likely to experience high rates of depression and most likely anxiety.” In another finding, the longitudinal significance of social isolation of children is noted by countries and has led to depression.

2.4 Literature Gap

Studies based on the analysis of the influence of Covid-19 pandemic especially those on African countries are rare, (WHO, 2020). Although the ministry of education has made efforts to introduce radios, televisions, and e-learning, to enable the continuation of education through the live or recorded broadcast sessions for many learners, the learners without access to radio should have been neglected, Elizabeth et al (2020). Mash, E. (2020), adds that, despite the growth in active Pay-Tv in Uganda subscribers, TV access is still low.

Literature indicates that there are great variations in television ownership across regions: with 42% of households in Kampala; 3% of households owned a television in Kigezi; 2% of households owned a television in Teso, Bukedi and Acholi, and 1% in West Nile. The findings July be explained by the fact that resources are not evenly distributed across regions in Uganda (Uganda National Household Survey, (2016). With “over 15 million children out of school as a result of COVID-19,” the closure of institutions not only has affected learners

and teachers but also brought forth numerous psychological, economic and social issues, including interrupted and loss of learning, education exclusion, homelessness, nutrition and economic crisis, childcare challenges, domestic violence and increase in teenage pregnancy cases, financial cost implication to households, and sexual exploitation among others(UNESCO 2020).

In addition, Tumwesigye (2020), indicates that while education provides many intellectual and financial benefits to society, school also serves as a place where children develop mentally, physically, and socially where without schools, children become vulnerable to many psychological factors such as distress, suicide risks, mood dysfunction and sleep disturbances, as well as increased anxiety and depression factors that July stunt their development. The studies that have been conducted have no much interest on analysis of the pandemic on the academic performance. Against this gap, the main interest of the study was to investigate the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the relevant literature for this study. The first part presented empirical literature that revolved around the three objectives developed in chapter one. These included: the psychological influence of Covid-19 on learners; the social influence of Covid-19 on learners' academic performance; and the strategies to minimize the Covid-19 pandemic factors.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the methodology, which was used in the study. It included the description of the research design, area of study, population, and sample size and sampling procedures, data collection procedures data quality control procedures and data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach using structured questionnaires. According to Hedrick et al (1993) the purpose of a descriptive study was to provide a picture of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs and to draw a picture of a situation or show how things are related to each other. Mugenda & Mugenda (2008), shares the same views that a descriptive research design provides a foundation upon which a phenomenon can be described to indicate disparities or certain characteristics. This study described the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. It was considered because the design focused on the collection, analysis and interpretation of information on the instructional materials with the view of making value judgment. According to Marks and Coleman (1989), a descriptive design study is the one which attempts to assess the worth of an event or situation with the sole purpose of making a judgment about it. In the same way, the study intended to assess the influence of Covid-19 in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City with the sole purpose of making a judgment about it. The researcher used a descriptive design with the help of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative methods was used to collect, interpret and analyze numerical data which was done in form of tables, figures and frequencies while qualitative methods was used to analyze verbal data hence the design was found suitable for the study.

3.2 Study Area

Geographically, the study was carried out in Industrial city division, Mbale city. Mbale is in Eastern Uganda and is named after the largest district, Mbale which also serves as the main administrative and commercial center in the sub-region. Industrial city division is bordered by north city division to the north, Bungokho south Division to the south, Budaka District to

the west and Nabweya Division to the east. Mbale city is the largest in the region and the location of the city headquarters is located approximately 245 kilometers (152 mi), by road, northeast of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, and the largest city in that country. The following schools were chosen for the study; Fairway primary school, Julyor Mbale primary school, Nashibiso primary school, Mbale Police primary school and Nabuyonga primary school.

3.3 Study Population

The study population involved the selected primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. The main target groups of sampling comprised; head teachers, teachers, students and the City education officer. The sampling procedures that were used to get the required sample included simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The schools were randomly selected from the list of all the schools in the Division. To obtain the samples, the names of the schools were written on pieces of papers, put in a container and then drawn randomly. Purposive sampling technique was also be used to obtain the required population. In this case, heads of schools in the selected primary schools and one City education officer were involved in the study. Purposive technique had been generally recommended in social science research by (Kothari, 2006), as it focuses directly on the area intended for the study. The target population of the study included 25 teachers, 100 pupils, 5 head teachers and 1 education officer totaling to 131 respondents.

3.4 Sample Size

According to Mugenda (2010) and Peter (2012), sampling is the process of choosing the research units of the target population, which are to be included in the study. The sample size of the study comprised 097 respondents with both sexes regardless of age, literacy levels and also included persons with disabilities who are stakeholders in education provision. The sample size of study was drawn from the total population of 131 respondents who comprised; 05 head teachers, 080 learners, 024 teachers and 01 education officer. In each school, the head of the school was interviewed together with the City education officer. The total number of respondents was 097 as per Kjerchie and Morgan Population Table (1970) in appendix VI.

Table 3.1: Summary of the Population, sample size and sampling technique

Items	Target population	Sample size	Sampling techniques
Head teachers	05	05	Purposive
Teachers	025	024	Simple Random Sampling
Students	100	080	Simple Random Sampling
Education officer	01	01	Purposive
Total	131	097	

Source: Primary Data, 2024

3.5 Sampling Techniques

Sampling technique is defined as the process of selecting samples to represent the population (Kothari, 2009). In this study, the researcher used two types of sampling techniques namely simple random and purposive sampling techniques as described below;

3.5.1 Simple Random Sampling

According to Cohen, et al (2000), simple random sampling appears when each unit of the sample has been selected entirely by chance where each subject or unit in the population has an equal chance of being selected. This technique was used to select the pupils and teachers from the primary schools from Industrial city division. After the pieces of papers have been mixed up in a basket and the researcher asked students from a public school to randomly pick up four pieces of papers one at a time until a sample of five schools was obtained. Simple random sampling procedure was preferred because of its power to minimize biasness in sample selection and therefore maximize sample representativeness.

3.5.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the City Education Officer who was expected to provide information on the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in the Division. The technique was also used to sample the head teachers who are responsible for the management of the schools. The City Education Officers were the overseers of these schools and hence have information regarding the influence of Covid-19 in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. Purposive sampling was suitably chosen for this study because it best enabled the researcher to answer the research questions. The choice of purposive sampling was based on characteristics or quality of the

respondents for the purpose of this research. For example, head teachers were selected based on their administrative and leadership roles they played.

3.6 Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires and interview guides to collect data for the study.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is defined as a list of questions which are designed to solicit specific responses that are required, Sarantakos, (2005) which was used in this study. This method was used to aid in the collection of data from learners and teachers. According to Amin, (2005), a questionnaire is a self-report instrument used for gathering information about variables of interest in an investigation. Closed ended likert scale questionnaire were designed and used in accordance with the objectives one and two and the key variables of the study. A questionnaire was preferred because there was a less chance of any bias with a standard set of questions used for your target audience. According to Mugenda & Mugenda, (1999), a questionnaire is appropriate for large samples and respondents can fill them at their own convenience as recommended. The questionnaire was designed as follows; section A had demographic data, Section B questions on the study variables with closed ended questions and section C had open ended questions. The researcher developed a questionnaire based on a five point Likert scale as follows: Strongly Agree 5, Agree 4, Neutral 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly Disagree 1.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

This refers to a one on one vocal questioning method of discussion. It involves face to face interaction between a respondent and the researcher. Structured questions was used to allow head teachers to freely interact with the researcher who had a chance to ask broad questions concerning the study. This enabled provision of high degree of clearing up the unknown information. The interview guide was used because of its advantages; such as simplicity, applicability, and flexibility in tapping information that could be acquired in details and in a well explained manner. The interviews were conducted with head teachers and one city education officer to discuss questions on the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance regarding the psychological and social effects and how these could be mitigated in the primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.

3.7 Data Quality Control

In an attempt to achieve quality data, the researcher made an analysis with respect to instrument validity and reliability.

3.7.1 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability refers to the degree to which scores on same test by the same researcher are consistent overtime. The researcher used a test – re-test reliability method to determine the reliability of the study which was established by administering the same test to the same sample that was not part of the sample of the study on two different occasions within an interval of two weeks. The relationship between the two scores was generated and reliability established. The purpose was to ensure consistence in the views and opinions of respondents regarding the study at hand. After computation, the reliability was found above 0.75, and the instrument was good enough and satisfactory and therefore worthy being used for data collection.

3.7.2 established the validity of the questionnaires through discussion of the instrument with colleagues followed by confirmation and criticisms by the supervisor. For content validity index (C.V.I) to be computed in this study, questions were formulated and the views of the supervisor in the field of Educational Management and Administration were put into consideration to ensure consistence and applicability of the instrument. The judges were selected to independently rate the relevance of the items in the questionnaire and interview guide in relation to the research objectives. To compute the Content Validity Index (CVI), the researcher utilized the formulae below.

$$CVI = \frac{X}{Y}$$

Where CVI = content validity index

X= No. of items rated as relevant

Y = Total No. of items in the instrument

$$CVI = \frac{14}{18} = 0.8$$

$$CVI = 0.8$$

According to Amin (2005), whenever values obtained fall below 0.7, the research tools are confirmed inappropriate and invalid. This therefore implied that for instruments to be confirmed appropriate and valid, the CVI score was expected to above 0.7.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Head of Department Education of Uganda Christian University, Mbale University College, introducing her to the management and administration of the primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City, seeking permission to be allowed to conduct a study in the schools. Thereafter the researcher made prior appointments with the respondents to seek views and opinions on the study under investigation.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a systematic process involving working with organizing data and breaking them into manageable unity (Bagdon & Biklen, 1992). It is also concerned with systematizing data searching for patterns, discovering what is important, what is to be learnt and deciding what to tell others (Cohen et al, 2007). All information that was collected from interviews and questionnaires were subjected to content analysis which involved identifying coherent and important examples, themes and patterns in data collected from the field work. Qualitative approach therefore, was analyzed through thematic analysis where data was categorized according to their relevant themes and patterns developed accordingly. Quantitative data from the questionnaires was analyzed through simple descriptive statistics after tabulation and conversion into frequencies and percentages for descriptive purposes. In the first place data was cleaned from errors and then coded. After coding, data was analyzed through content analysis to examine its influence on pupils' academic performance.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics refers to moral principles guiding research (Horman, 1991). It means conducting research in a way that goes beyond merely adopting the most appropriate research methodology, but conducting research in a responsible and morally defensible way.

To ensure these ethical considerations are taken into account, the consent of the respondents and confidentiality was sought and assured that the data they provided was strictly for purposes of the study.

In addition, to enhance the participant's privacy, the respondents' names were not used thus; Confidentiality was practiced by avoiding the use of names but rather initials or codes.

The researcher endeavored to respect the rights of the respondents in the process of getting the information; sought for permission from the local leadership before carrying out the study.

Coercive approach was as much as possible avoided in trying to access information from the respondents. The researcher rather observed professional ethics in conducting the study. It is emphasized that this research report is original, and that no known study regarding the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in primary in Industrial City Division, Mbale City had been done.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The chapter presents findings on the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on academic performance of the learners in selected public primary schools of Industrial City Division Mbale City. Data was analysed using self-administered questionnaires and interviews. It contained the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents and the data already existing and the information collected as being presented and discussed below.

4.1 Response rate of the respondents

Table 4.1 The response rate of the respondents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Expected respondents	97	100
Actual respondents	95	97.9
Non response	02	2.1

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

In this study, the researcher expected to interview 097 respondents (100%), however, the researcher was able to interview 95(97.9%) with only 02(2.1%) that did not participate. This implies that the researcher was successful in getting majority of the expected respondents who participated in the study

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

This section describes the age, sex, marital status, level of education and religious affiliation.

4.2.1 Age of the respondents

Table 4.2 the age of the respondents.

Years	Frequency	Percentages
13-20	42	43.2
21-30	25	25.8
31-35	15	15.5
40-49	09	9.3
50 above	06	6.2
TOTAL	97	100

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

The data from research study showed that the respondents in the age bracket of (13-20) were represented by 42(43.3%), (21-30) were represented by 25(25.8%), (31-35) were represented by 15(15.5%), (440-49) were represented by 9(9.3%) and the least being 50 above with 06(6.2%).The implication behind this is that the majority of the pupils are below the age of 19 years,. This was followed by 21-35and this indicates that most of the teachers are at the age of 21years and above while those above of 50 years were the least and it includes head teachers and few parents and local leaders. These were few and had problems of sight. In most cases they use spectacles. This also implied that, the researcher provided an equal opportunity for all respondents of different age groups to participate in the study for accuracy and uniformity

4.2.3 Sex of the respondents

Table 4.3 Sex composition of the respondents

Sex	Number	Percentage
FEMALE	56	57.7
MALE	41	42.3
TOTAL	97	100

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

Findings from the table 4.3 above showing the sex of respondents indicated that 56(57.7%) were females whereas the male respondents were represented by 41(42.3%), this indicates

that the researcher was gender sensitive and provided opportunity to both genders to express their views. However the large female response could be attributed to the fact that there were more females in comparison to the males in the research study area.

4.2.4 Marital status of the respondents

Table 4.4: Marital status of the respondents.

Category	Number of respondents	Percentages
Single	54	55.7
Married	16	16.5
Separated	14	14.4
Widowed	09	9.3
Divorced	04	4.1
Total	97	100%

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

According to table 4.4 above, single respondents were represented by 54(55.7%) and this made the highest response. These were mainly school children. This was followed by married respondents who made 16(16.5%). The separated were represented by 14(14.4%), the widowed was represented by 9(9.3%) and divorced was rated at 4 (4.1%). From the table above, it therefore revealed that the majority of the respondents were single and these were children taking on studies at school.

4.2.5 Level of education

Table 4.5: The level of education of the respondents.

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentages
Unskilled	40	41.2
Certificate	32	33
Degree	20	20.6
Master	05	5.2
Total	97	100

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

The findings from the table 4.5 above indicated that 40(41.2%) were unskilled though had reached primary level. 32(33%) had acquired certificates. This is attributed to the fact that having a certificate was one of the requirements to be recruited in the public service as teacher. 20(20.6%) had acquired degrees while 05(5.2%) of the respondents were masters' holders. From the findings in the table above, it therefore showed that the majority of the respondents were learnt and live in the civil society. Most of the respondents who had acquired degrees were mainly head teachers hence a requirement for one to be appointed as a head teacher in primary schools. A master's degree was an added advantage for one to be appointed as a head teacher.

4.2.6 Religion

Table 4.6: Religious affiliations of the respondents

Religion	Number	Percentage
Islam	37	38.1
Christianity	60	61.9
TOTAL	97	100%

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

In line with table 4.6 above, the research findings indicated that the majority of the respondents 60(61.9%) were Christians and this could be because the Christians were more than the Muslims in most primary schools in Industrial City Division Mbale City. The least response came from the Muslims who made 37(38.1%). The low response can be attributed to the fact that they were few generally Muslims compared to the Christians counterparts in the region.

4.3 Psychological influence of Covid-19 pandemic on academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division

The respondents were asked to examine the psychological effect of Covid-19 pandemic on academic performance of learners. The following responses were captured as indicated below:

Table 4.7: The Psychological influence of Covid-19 pandemic on academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Stress leads to poor academic performance	14	14.4
Anxiety makes learners to disengage in school activities	10	10.3
Depression makes learners to disassociate with their friends	15	15.5
Lockdown restrictions make learners unable to build their talents	08	8.3
Alcohol addiction affects learners' school attendance	20	20.6
Self-denial syndrome leads to poor academic performance	30	30.9
Total	97	100

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

From the table 4.7 above, it indicates that psychological effect of Covid-19 pandemic is due to stress which leads to poor academic performance. Stress was reported by 14(14.4%). This observation rhymes with Brooks et al., 2020; Dutheil et al., 2020; Gunnell et al., 2020), who note that stress is another alarming condition that can be expected to increase as similar or worse to what happened in previous epidemics, such as H1N1 Influenza and Ebola (Xu et al, 2011; Cenat et al, 2020). Accordingly, the adverse effects of this illness are not manifested immediately and mental health support must be prepared to deal with this issue in a few months. Stress is more likely to take place after longer periods of school disconnection and it is associated with increased suicide risk by 2–5% (Thibodeau et al 2013; Brooks et al., 2020).

Anxiety was proposed by 10(10.3%) of the respondents who affirmed that failure to address this concern leads to anxiety. Considering this, (Huang and Zhao, 2020; Li et al., 2020; Qiu et al., 2020 Teufel et al., 2020), theorize that anxiety affects learners and note that in one of the main evaluated subjects, it has been significantly increasing in society during this pandemic. A research group in China analyzed the online posts from about 18,000 Chinese social media users before and after the declaration of COVID-19 in China on January 20, 2020 and found out that there was an increase in words that mirror negative emotions including anxiety, depression, and anger (Li et al., 2020). From the findings, Asmundson and Taylor, (2020b), reveal that health anxiety among the learners was manifested. It was characterized mainly by catastrophic misinterpretations of bodily sensations, dysfunctional beliefs about health and illness and maladaptive coping behaviors which cause harmful consequences that can derive

from this condition, including excessive hand washing, social withdrawal, and panic purchasing and overspending in resources such as hand sanitizers, medications and protective masks.

The findings are in line with Dubey et al, (2020), who assert that in homes where there were suspected cases of COVID-19, the development of obsessive-compulsive symptoms were realized as a consequence of anxiety related to their health status (Dubey et al., 2020). The same rising tendency has been seen for depressive symptoms on the learners (Bavel et al., 2020; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020; Restubog et al., 2020; Sher, 2020a). Interestingly, learners in the education system seem to be more susceptible to these manifestations in an epidemic context, especially due to unreliable access to information and apprehension to its academic realization (Pfefferbaum & North, 2020).

Depression was reported by 15(15.5%). They asserted that due to increasing Covid-19 cases across the globe, depression among learners could not be avoided. This is in agreement with Dubey et al., & Khan et al., (2020), who indicate that several groups are more vulnerable to greater emotional, behavioral and psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic especially the school going age. Since many of the children under school going age had their parents working as health workers who are the healthcare providers during the pandemic, specifically frontline workers, in the alarming context of this health emergency, these professionals are put through different circumstances and afflictions, which include fear of being infected and infecting others, higher workload, significant pressure, pain of losing patients and colleagues, the yet unpredictability nature of the virus, inadequate testing, limited treatment options and disruption of regular routine in their homes, along with insufficient personal protective equipment and other medical supplies, especially in developing countries will cause depression (Chew et al., 2020; Lancet, 2020; Mamun et al., 2020c; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020). Evidence reports that such conditions might make both the children and the healthcare givers more vulnerable not only to physical symptoms, including headache and sore throat (Chwe et al., 2020), but also to psychological burden, with an increase in rates of depression, anxiety, stress, irritability, insomnia, anger, and frustration (Brooks et al., 2020; El-Hage et al., 2020; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020; Zhang J. et al., 2020). As an illustration, a study in China concluded that half of the frontline healthcare professionals had symptoms of depression and anxiety, 70% had psychological distress and many also reported insomnia (Mesa Vieira et al., 2020). Holmen et al, (2020), adds that the

previous epidemics had a similar pattern, as 29% of the healthcare workers had emotional distress after the SARS epidemic in 2003.

Lockdown restrictions was hinted on by 8(8.3%) of the respondents who asserted that such learners cannot concentrate and in the long run their memory is affected by the environment they live in. This is in agreement with Murgatrotd, (2020), who indicates that with the lockdown restrictions on the movement of people, free interaction of learners, wearing of face masks, the need to practise physical distancing, and prohibitions on mass gatherings, face-to-face classes, community engagements, internships, practicum activities, and other forms of experiential learning methods can no longer be employed for as long as the pandemic persists. This presents an opportunity for the academic community to innovate and develop alternative teaching strategies that will allow for a more conducive learning environment, given these limitations. According to

Alcohol addiction affects learners' school attendance and affects their performance. This was suggested by 20(20.6%). This finding is supported by Nadkarni et al., (2020), who opine that during the lockdown, school going children around the globe are seen drinking alcohol although some countries have gone ahead to prohibit alcohol sales. The arguments to sustain the restricting conditions included impaired ability of those learners under the influence of alcohol to implement the preventive measures, the influence of drinking leading to domestic violence, its impact to the immune system and, finally, the high cost of acute drinking which July lead to school dropout.

Self-denial was proposed by 30(30.9%) and globally, Narasimha et al., (2020), add that higher numbers of self-denial syndrome appeared as a consequence within learners with Covid-19 patients who suffered from addiction. In a psychiatry emergency service in Bangalore, India, twice the number of severe abstinence syndrome (seizures, delirium tremens, and hallucinations) occurred per day after the first lockdown (ibid). Furthermore, the rise of the black marketing of alcohol, consumption of non-consumable alcohol and even suicide in those children suffering from addiction were reported in India leading to self-denial.

4.4 Social effect of Covid-19 on Academic Performance of Learners in Industrial City Division

After interaction with respondents on different fora, they reported various social effects of Covid-19 pandemic on academic performance of learners. Their responses were indicated as in Table 4.8 below;

Table 4.8: The Social effect of Covid-19 on Academic Performance of Learners in Industrial City Division

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Social distancing of learners leads poor classroom participation of learners.	36	37.1
Loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends.	15	15.5
Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance	20	20.6
Domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities.	10	10.3
Peer influence affects learners' school attendance	4	4.1
Separation from their dear ones affects learners' school attendance.	12	12.4
Total	97	100%

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

In accordance to table 4.8 36(37.1%) of the respondents reported that Social distancing of learners leads poor classroom participation. This is in line with Holmes et al., (2020), who say that critical aspect of this context is due to social distancing, many elective appointments have been canceled and mental health support systems have been suspended, even though remote assistance is rapidly increasing. For example, the relationship between learner and the teacher is different, leading to more responsibilities in listening and understanding feelings expressed during the video call, generating a forced reciprocal. In an interview with the head teachers, they said;

The Covid-19 pandemic is a disease which caught all of us unaware. It came with a lot of social restrictions with social distancing as the major remedy. In Industrial City Division, our children didn't know the vocabulary of social distancing. When

introduced, it forced some of them to drop out of school due to the fact that they could not cope with the restrictions which were introduced by the ministry of education amidst learning ...”

Pasetti, (2020), is contends with the assertion when he says the forced Covid-19 restrictions of social distance, wearing of masks, washing of hands and the emergency situations make people want to be hide and shun the simple activities in school, a clear portrayal of fear and emotional development.

Loss of freedom was reported by 15(15.5%) of the respondents who assert that learners in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic lost their freedom to social media. The findings of the study are supported by Wang G. et al, (2020), who opined that children who were out of school (i.e., lockdown, weekend and summer holidays) spent most of their time on screens, irregular sleep patterns and less favorable diets which could be exceptionally harmful in longer periods of time. From the findings, and following the social distancing measures given by the World Health Organization, learners disengaged themselves and resorted to social media which had become an important resource to maintain social interaction. In an interview with the district educational officer, he said;

“Industrial City Division and Mbale City as a whole, has experienced the effects of the Pandemic too. The curriculum of Ugandan education system allows for some practical lessons such as Music Dance and Drama, Physical Education and general physical interaction in classroom situation which has actually been banned. Most of the children are locked up in their homes and they have resorted to social media which is equally a vice to them...”

In addition, Lai et al, (2020), content that consuming indiscriminate information about the pandemic among the children continue to make learners more isolated and triggers stress, anxiety, panic and depression. They note that the effect is even more intense in younger individuals that do not have the discernment to filter information.

Poor parental care is another effect with 20(20.6%) of the respondents cementing that some learners have parents who have busy schedules and do not have good parental care lest the responsibility of grandparents and house helpers. This is supported by Clemente-Gonzalez, (2016), who points out that lack of other family members such as grandparents, who had been playing a role in accompanying children to school and properly caring for them especially

with children in preschool, complicates the state of confinement and the lack of school attendance that is taking place, initially planned for 6 months in a row. In an interview with the head teachers, it was revealed that;

“Some parents have been having busy schedules which made them shun the responsibility of caring about their children. In the Division, the responsibility of children and home chores was left to house maids. Parents became very tough to their children forcing some of them into early marriages with a good number of them going to the streets of Mbale city...”

The study by Clemente-Gonzalez, (2020), of the University of Murcia highlights the relevance of grandparent–grandchild relationships and the role of the former in the social and emotional development of the child, which gives great significance to their grandparents for the appreciation observed in them, recognizing their importance in the family structure. At this point, it is also necessary to point out the lack of relationships between equals and a face to face interaction with their teachers which is so important for the correcting emotional development of children is lacking.

Domestic violence was supported by 10(10.3%), this implies that domestic violence greatly affects learners’ academic performance. This is supported by Elhadary et al. (2020) evaluated the social impacts of Covid-19 on the academic performance of science and social science students in Turkey. Their findings showed that domestic violence made learners to disengage in school activities which greatly affected their academic performance during and after the Covid-19 crisis. In an interaction with the district education officer, he noted;

“Most families in Industrial City Division had couples who would not stay a long time together. When restrictions of movements were enforced, many of them were caught into wrong doings brought about by domestic violence. There were all forms of domestic violence which included; battering, physical abuse, sexual abuse, fighting among others. These both socially and psychologically affected the learners’ academic performance...”

Loton et al. (2020), also add that the result of their findings on the social effects of Covid-19 pandemic in India showed that there was a significant impact of the same on both performances of the students and their level of satisfaction with online teaching and learning during the COVID-19 outbreak since learners were always home and witnessing the violence.

Separation of learners from their dear ones was supported by 12(12.4%). The findings are in line with Bago, J. L. et al., (2020), who report that on March 15, 2020, when the Kenyan government abruptly closed all schools and colleges nationwide in response to Covid-19, it disrupted nearly 17 million learners countrywide. The closure of institutions not only affected learners and teachers but also brought forth numerous economic and social issues, including separation from friends, loss of learning, the beauty of meeting and discussing concepts together, education exclusion, homelessness, nutrition and economic crisis, childcare challenges and increase in teenage pregnancy cases, financial cost implication to households, and sexual exploitation among others. The effects have been more severe for the underprivileged children and their households from the urban poor communities.

4.5 Mitigation of Psychological and Social effects of Covid-19

The respondents were asked whether there are ways in which the challenges associated to Covid-19 pandemic could be mitigated to ensure quality performance in the primary schools in Industrial City Division. The following responses were recorded as shown in the table below.

Table 4.9: Mitigation of Psychological and Social effects of Covid-19

Responses	Frequency	Percentages
Talking / having time with learners	30	30.9
Use of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	28	28.9
Psychological assistance to learners	24	24.7
Vaccination of children	08	8.3
Reporting all forms of domestic violence	07	7.2
Total	97	100%

Source: Primary Field Data (July, 2024)

In accordance with table 4.9 above, 30(30.9%) indicated there is need for Talking / having time with learners. This was supported by Dey et al, (2020), who think that parents should always talk to children about the current circumstances clearly and directly, in order to minimize the negative feelings and to help the kids better comprehend the pandemic and the information received from the Internet. In an interview with the district education officer, he noted that;

“Some parents in the Division left their children, “to whom it July concern.” The way some children behaved showed there was very little input from the parents. During the pandemic, children lost hope. They needed someone to encourage them or even some books of hope to read but which was not the case in some families...”

Unfortunately, Wang et al., (2020) note that an effort that has already been made is the creation of the book *My Hero is You* (Storybook for children on Covid-19, 2020) by the United Nation in conjunction with other agencies which was designed to help children aged 6 to 11 to cope with the stress and anxiety generated by the pandemic but which has done little as more cases of mental health are reported.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy was supported by 28(28.9) of the respondents who proposed that talking to children would help to better learners’ performance. This is supported by Matthews et al. (2015), who assert that there is need for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as a result of social isolation and mental health problems that co-occur in early childhood and to children who exhibit problematic behaviors and force them to struggle to cope with social challenges that accompany their progression throughout childhood leading to loss of the physical and social benefits of a schooling environment and could cause other risk factors which are likely to affect the learning process. Such issues could be mitigated by having Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with an emphasis on Problem Solving Therapy, activity scheduling, and peer led group support. As far as Mental Health Covid-19, (2020), is concerned, adolescents with previous psychological mental health disorders July require particular attention since disruption of school routine can decline their mental health status (Khan et al., 2020). In an interview with the head teachers, it was revealed that;

“Most of the school-going children especially boys had resorted to drug abuse, bad groups and suicidal activities such as theft. The girls on the other hand, had resorted to flirting, early marriages among others. This is because the nature of the pandemic never allowed experts to talk to them about life...”

Mental Health Covid-19, (2020), notes that the current events of Covid-19 pandemic have further prompted the expansion of remote work, whereas schools and daycare centers had to interrupt their activities. In this setting, family and work environment have merged and decreased performance that can be seen in both spheres, as stress intensifies which requires a psychological therapy.

Psychological assistance accounted for 24(24.7%). Some respondents commented by saying;

“I can’t imagine our children who think the world is about to end can study. They are psychologically tortured. They were mentally sick and 24 seven, they were sleeping. They had it that education had ended and didn’t even mind about revision. I think, it was high time that the government offered experts to prepare them psychologically...”

This was supported by Santarone et al., (2020), who proposed that support measures such as psychologists and psychiatrists’ appointments, psychological assistance hotline, support groups and reading materials illustrating coping mechanisms to deal with stressors to the population should also be provided without stigma. For instance, Zaka et al., (2020) insist that since many professionals are afraid of going home and infecting their families, it is important to inform them about the safety measures that can minimize the chances of infection. Furthermore, the family members of the healthcare professionals should receive special access to testing and treatment, if necessary (Dutheil et al., 2020).

Regarding vaccination of children, respondents provided divergent views 08(8.24%) revealed that vaccination of school going children would help schools to open on time and to avoid degeneration decay. From the interviews conducted by the researcher, respondents gave their views as follows;

“Vaccination of our children wouldn’t be bad but are they having the rightful vaccine? In the first place, even we the parents fear the vaccine. How then can our children be vaccinated? In Industrial City Division and Uganda as a whole, there was no vaccine for almost 90% of the primary school children. Secondly, the government needed to have special people talking to our children’s vaccination...”

The findings are in line with WHO (2020), in a report conducted in India that examined the impacts of COVID-19 confinement on the performance of students at both higher and lower education level and concluded that to allow free interaction and commencement of education which revealed that vaccination was the only option. Surprisingly, their research revealed that COVID-19 the idea of vaccination left many with negative impact on the performance of the students with speculations that the vaccine would kill. Regrettably, the outbreak of COVID-19 greatly affected all the educational levels in different contexts across the globe and has been incorporated into the educational settings to have possible provision for teachers and students but have declined vaccination (Oyinloye, 2020).

Reporting domestic violence was supported by majority of the respondents with 7(7.2%). In their response to this, respondents confirmed that there was a lot of domestic violence in many homes leading to broken marriages and mental stress and depression of learners. This assertion was supported by many who reported that;

“Many homes in the Division went through serious domestic violence which in turn had affected our school going children. This violence, on a sad note was not reported to authorities but no serious course of action was seen. In turn, it caused some of the boys to vacate their homes into streets while girls went for early marriages...”

This is in agreement with Gunnel et al (2020), who confirms that domestic violence is a complex issue with strong cultural components, it requires a combination of multiple measures in order to protect the victims (Gulati & Kelly,(2020). Sacco et al., (2020), suggest improved reporting of domestic violence, he notes that it is important to ensure constant availability of hotlines and digital reporting. However, Borah et al, (2020), think that since the victims July be isolated with their perpetrators, other alternatives must be adopted. For instance, family, friends and neighbors have an essential role revealing domestic violence, and advertising campaigns should encourage the community to report the cases (Marques et al., 2020; Sacco et al., 2020; Sharma & Borah, 2020; Usher et al., 2020).

Comment

In line with the above suggestions Covid-19 pandemic can be truncated and this requires a joint effort. The results show that what should mitigate the effects of the pandemic are; Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, vaccination, psychological assistance, reporting domestic violence and talking to children. This too calls for the school heads, educational officers, educationists and education stakeholders to carry out sensitization on how to cope with the pandemic.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions, conclusions and recommendations on study findings. These are all based on research objectives.

5.1 Discussion of findings

5.1.1 Objective one

Objective one aimed to examine the psychological effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. The results from the findings presented by the respondents show the leading psychological effect of Covid-19 as self-denial. Self-denial by the learners was reported by 30(30.9%). This is followed by other factors such as alcohol addiction which was suggested by 20(20.6%), stress which was proposed by 15(15.5%), Depression which was suggested by 14(14.4%), anxiety 10(10.3%) and lockdown restrictions suggested by 08(8.3%) respectively.

5.1.2 Objective two

Aimed to analyse the social influence of Covid-19 on academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. It was found out that Covid-19 pandemic if not well handled affects the learners academic performance socially through separation from their dear ones which was suggested by 36(37.1%) of the respondents. Other effects per the findings included social distancing was reported by 20(20.6%), poor parental care with 15(15.5%), loss of freedom which was supported by 12(12.4%), domestic violence was supported by 10(10.3%) and peer influence which was rated by 4(4.1%). This implies that Covid-19 affected over 98% of the learners' academic performance.

5.1.3 Objective three

Sought to determine the ways of mitigating both the psychological and social effects of Covid-19 on academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City. Majority of the respondents proposed that talking to children would help boost their academic performance. This was proposed by 30(30.9%) of the respondents who indicated there is need for Talking / having time with learners. This was supported by Dey et al, (2020), who think that parents should always talk to children about the current circumstances clearly and

directly, in order to minimize the negative feelings and to help the kids better comprehend the pandemic and the information received from the Internet. In an interview with the district education officer, he noted that;

“Some parents in the Division left their children, “to whom it July concern.” The way some children behaved showed there was very little input from the parents. During the pandemic, children lost hope. They needed someone to encourage them or even some books of hope to read but which was not the case in some families...”

Unfortunately, Wang et al., (2020) note that an effort that has already been made is the creation of the book *My Hero is You* (Storybook for children on Covid-19, 2020) by the United Nation in conjunction with other agencies which was designed to help children aged 6 to 11 to cope with the stress and anxiety generated by the pandemic but which has done little as more cases of mental health are reported.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy was supported by 28(28.9) of the respondents who proposed that talking to children would help to better learners’ performance. This is supported by Matthews et al. (2015), who assert that there is need for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as a result of social isolation and mental health problems that co-occur in early childhood and to children who exhibit problematic behaviors and force them to struggle to cope with social challenges that accompany their progression throughout childhood leading to loss of the physical and social benefits of a schooling environment and could cause other risk factors which are likely to affect the learning process. Such issues could be mitigated by having Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) with an emphasis on Problem Solving Therapy, activity scheduling, and peer led group support. As far as Mental Health Covid-19, (2020), is concerned, adolescents with previous psychological mental health disorders July require particular attention since disruption of school routine can decline their mental health status (Khan et al., 2020). In an interview with the head teachers, it was revealed that;

“Most of the school-going children especially boys had resorted to drug abuse, bad groups and suicidal activities such as theft. The girls on the other hand, had resorted to flirting, early marriages among others. This is because the nature of the pandemic never allowed experts to talk to them about life...”

Mental Health Covid-19, (2020), notes that the current events of Covid-19 pandemic have further prompted the expansion of remote work, whereas schools and daycare centers had to interrupt their activities. In this setting, family and work environment have merged and

decreased performance that can be seen in both spheres, as stress intensifies which requires a psychological therapy.

Psychological assistance accounted for 24(24.7%). Some respondents commented by saying;

“I can’t imagine our children who think the world is about to end can study. They are psychologically tortured. They were mentally sick and 24 seven, they were sleeping. They had it that education had ended and didn’t even mind about revision. I think, it was high time that the government offered experts to prepare them psychologically...”

This was supported by Santarone et al., (2020), who proposed that support measures such as psychologists and psychiatrists’ appointments, psychological assistance hotline, support groups and reading materials illustrating coping mechanisms to deal with stressors to the population should also be provided without stigma. Forinstance, Zaka et al., (2020) insist that since many professionals are afraid of going home and infecting their families, it is important to inform them about the safety measures that can minimize the chances of infection Furthermore, the family members of the healthcare professionals should receive special access to testing and treatment, if necessary (Dutheil et al., 2020).

Regarding vaccination of children, respondents provided divergent views 08(8.24%) revealed that vaccination of school going children would help schools to open on time and to avoid degeneration decay. From the interviews conducted by the researcher, respondents gave their views as follows;

“Vaccination of our children wouldn’t be bad but are they having the rightful vaccine? In the first place, even we the parents fear the vaccine. How then can our children be vaccinated? In Industrial City Division and Uganda as a whole, there was no vaccine for almost 90% of the primary school children. Secondly, the government needed to have special people talking to our children’s vaccination...”

The findings are in line with WHO (2020), in a report conducted in India that examined the impacts of COVID-19 confinement on the performance of students at both higher and lower education level and concluded that to allow free interaction and commencement of education which revealed that vaccination was the only option. Surprisingly, their research revealed that COVID-19 the idea of vaccination left many with negative impact on the performance of the students with speculations that the vaccine would kill. Regrettably, the outbreak of COVID-

19 greatly affected all the educational levels in different contexts across the globe and has been incorporated into the educational settings to have possible provision for teachers and students but have declined vaccination (Oyinloye, 2020).

Reporting domestic violence was supported by majority of the respondents with 7(7.2%). In their response to this, respondents confirmed that there was a lot of domestic violence in many homes leading to broken marriages and mental stress and depression of learners. This assertion was supported by many who reported that;

“Many homes in the Division went through serious domestic violence which in turn had affected our school going children. This violence, on a sad note was not reported to authorities but no serious course of action was seen. In turn, it caused some of the boys to vacate their homes into streets while girls went for early marriages...”

This is in agreement with Gunnell et al (2020), who confirms that domestic violence is a complex issue with strong cultural components, it requires a combination of multiple measures in order to protect the victims (Gulati & Kelly,(2020). Sacco et al., (2020), suggest improved reporting of domestic violence, he notes that it is important to ensure constant availability of hotlines and digital reporting. However, Borah et al, (2020), think that since the victims may be isolated with their perpetrators, other alternatives must be adopted. For instance, family, friends and neighbors have an essential role revealing domestic violence, and advertising campaigns should encourage the community to report the cases (Marques et al., 2020; Sacco et al., 2020; Sharma & Borah, 2020; Usher et al., 2020).

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 Objective one

The first objective concluded that respondents recognize the fact that Covid-19 pandemic psychologically affects the pupils' academic performance and hinders their academic progress. This was revealed by 30(30.9%) of the respondents who said that self-denial syndrome leads to poor academic performance. Other psychological effects included; Alcohol addiction affects learners' school attendance which was supported by 20(20.6%), Depression makes learners to disassociate with their friends was proposed by 15(15.5%), Stress leads to poor academic performance was proposed by 14(14.4%), Anxiety makes learners to disengage in school activities by 10(10.3%) and Lockdown restrictions make learners unable to build their talents which was supported by 08(8.3%) respectively.

5.2.2 Objective two

The second objective concluded that the Covid-19 pandemic socially affects the learners academically. The leading effect was; social distancing of learners leads poor classroom participation of learners which was proposed by 36(37.1%). The other effects included; Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance which was proposed by 20(20.6%), this was followed by 15(15.5%) of the respondents who said that loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends, separation from their dear ones affects learners' school attendance 12(12.4%), domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities was suggested by 10(10.3%) and peer influence affects learners' school attendance was proposed by 4(4.1%) of the respondents respectively.

5.2.3 Objective three

This objective concluded that the psychological and social effects of Covid-19 could be mitigated as follows; Talking / having time with learners was suggested by 30(30.9%) of the respondents as the leading factor. This was followed by other ways of mitigation such as; using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy which was proposed by 28(28.9%), 24(24.7%) of the respondents proposed that psychological assistance to learners, vaccination of children of children was proposed by 08(8.3%) and reporting all forms of domestic violence which was proposed by 07(7.2%) of the respondents respectively.

5.3 Recommendations

Form the above analysis, the following recommendations in relation to the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City was made;

Sensitisation of parents and teachers by the health workers and other experts should be carried out with regard to their role and responsibility to do counselling.

Government to provide vaccines of children from 6 years of age and strengthen legal and policy framework that allows that the constitution of vaccination for all.

Teachers and parents whose learners are have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic to try to counsel them and make them understand that Covid-19 had not come to stay.

The religious leaders on top of church sessions should make an effort of extending the lessons to Christians with the Covid-19 pandemic. They should also invite Covid-19 task force to continue speaking to their congregations.

Financial empowerment of parents is a key factor since most homes were financially hit. This will help parents to provide for their children other than sending them to sell their bodies for food.

Finally, the researcher acknowledges that this research is not the end of the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance. It is recommended that further research should be undertaken in both private and government schools, urban and rural to have a comparative analysis of what goes on in these settings.

5.4 Areas for further study

- Carrying out a comparative study on the influence of Covid-19 pandemic in selected public schools of urban and rural settings.
- Examining the roles of stakeholders in combating the Covid-19 pandemic in primary schools
- Investigating the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' enrolment

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APPENDIX: I
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Respondent,

I am Wabusa Milly Becca; a student of Uganda Christian University, carrying out a study on the “the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners’ academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.” As a teacher, you have been selected randomly to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire as per the instructions at the beginning of a given section. You are kindly requested to freely fill in the questionnaire. All your responses will be kept confidential and for academic purposes only.

Thanks. `12

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Sex: Male () Female ()

1. Age: 20-25 (), 26-30 (), 31-35 (), 36-40 (), 41-45 (), 46 and above ()
2. Marital status: Single (), Married (), Widowed (), Separated ()
3. Educational level: College (), University ()

SECTION B: Questions on the variables of the study

Please tick what best applies to you.

Key: 5. strongly agree (SA) 4. Agree (A) 3. Neutral (N) 2. Disagree (D) 1. Strongly disagree (SD)

Psychological effect of Covid-19 pandemic	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Stress leads to poor academic performance					
2. Anxiety makes learners to disengage in school activities.					
3. Depression makes learners to disassociate with their friends.					
4. Lockdown restrictions make learners unable to build their talents.					
5. Alcohol addiction affects learners' school attendance.					
6. Self-denial syndrome leads to poor academic performance.					
Social influence of Covid-19	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. Social distancing of learners leads to poor classroom participation of learners.					
8. Loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends.					
9. Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance					
10. Domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities.					
11. Separation from their dear ones affects learners' school attendance.					
12. Peer influence affects learners' school attendance					
Mitigation of the Covid-19 pandemic	SA	A	N	D	SD
13. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy makes learners perform better in their academics.					
14. Vaccination of children can enable learners to engage in school activities					
15. Psychological assistance makes learners to associate freely with their friends.					
16. Reporting domestic violence cases boosts learners' school attendance					
17. Talking to children aids in classroom participation					

SECTION C

1. Give other psychosocial influences of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.

2. What other social factors of Covid-19 have influenced the academic performance of learners?

3. What do you think can be done to reduce the psychosocial effects of Covid-19 pandemic that affect children's academic performance?

4. To what extent is digital learning an achievement to education sector in relation to improving the academic performance of learners?

Thank you very much

APPENDIX II
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

Dear Respondent,

I am Wabusa Milly Becca; a student of Uganda Christian University, carrying out a study on the “the influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners’ academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.” As a learner, you have been selected randomly to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire as per the instructions at the beginning of a given section. You are kindly requested to freely fill in the questionnaire. All your responses will be kept confidential and for academic purposes only.

Thanks.

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

INSTRUCTIONS

Sex: Male () Female ()

1. Age: 9-12 (), 13- 16 (), 17and above ()

2. Education level: Lower Primary (), Middle Primary (), Upper Primary ()

SECTION B: QUESTIONS ON THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

Please tick what best applies to you.

Key: 5. strongly agree (SA) 4. Agree (A) 3. Neutral (N) 2. Disagree (D) 1. Strongly disagree (SD)

Psychological effect of Covid-19 pandemic	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Stress leads to poor academic performance					
2. Anxiety makes learners to disengage in school activities.					
3. Depression makes learners to disassociate with their friends.					
4. Lockdown restrictions make learners unable to build their talents.					
5. Alcohol addiction affects learners' school attendance.					
6. Self-denial syndrome leads to poor academic performance.					
Social influence of Covid-19	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. Social distancing of learners leads to poor classroom participation of learners.					
8. Loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends.					
9. Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance					
10. Domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities.					
11. Separation from their dear ones affects learners' school attendance.					
12. Peer influence affects learners' school attendance					
Mitigation of the Covid-19 pandemic	SA	A	N	D	SD
13. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy makes learners perform better in their academics.					
14. Vaccination of children can enable learners to engage in school activities					
15. Psychological assistance makes learners to associate freely with their friends.					
16. Reporting domestic violence cases boosts learners' school attendance					
17. Talking to children aids in classroom participation					

SECTION C

1. Give other psychosocial influences of Covid-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.

2. What other social factors of Covid-19 have influenced the academic performance of learners?

3. What do you think can be done to reduce the psychosocial effects of Covid-19 pandemic that affect children's academic performance?

4. To what extent is digital learning an achievement to education sector in relation to improving the academic performance of learners?

Thank you very much

APPENDIX: III

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Dear Respondent,

I am Wabusa Milly Becca; a student of Uganda Christian University, is carrying out a study on the “Influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners’ academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.” As a head teacher, you have been selected purposively to participate in the research by responding to the questions in the interviews as per the checklist and based on how the questions are posed by the interviewer. All your responses will be kept confidential and for academic purposes only.

Thanks.

1. Briefly comment on the academic performance of pupils in Primary Schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City

2. How has the Covid-19 pandemic enhanced absenteeism for teachers and learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City?

Prompts: What is being done to reduce absenteeism?

3. What are some of the social factors that could lead to school dropout of learners in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City?

Prompts: What is being done to better the situation in these schools?

4. Are there psychological factors of Covid-19 that have affected the academic performance of learners in primary schools in the Division?

Prompts: Mention them.

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX: IV

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE CITY EDUCATION OFFICER

Dear Respondent,

I am Wabusa Milly Becca; a student of Uganda Christian University, is carrying out a study on the “Influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the learners’ academic performance in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City.” As the City Education Officer, you have been selected purposively to participate in the research by responding to the questions in the interviews as per the checklist and based on how the questions are posed by the interviewer. All your responses will be kept confidential and for academic purposes only.

Thanks.

1. Briefly comment on the academic performance of pupils in Primary Schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City

2. How has the Covid-19 pandemic triggered absenteeism for teachers and learners in Industrial City Division, Mbale City?

Prompts: What is being done to reduce absenteeism?

3. What are some of the social factors that could lead to school dropout of learners in primary schools in Industrial City Division, Mbale City?

Prompts: What is being done to better the situation in these schools?

4. Are there psychological factors of Covid-19 that have affected the academic performance of learners in primary schools in the Division?

Prompts: Mention them.

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX: V

Kjercie and Morgan Population Table (1970)

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

Key: N= Population. S= Sample

APPENDI VI

INTRODUTORY LETTER



UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa
MBALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Office of the Academic Registrar

To THE HEADTEACHER
FAIRWAY PRI. SCH.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Academic Research

Christian greetings!

Received with much pleasure. MTR.

30 MAY 2024

We are honored to introduce to you Mr. Mrs./Miss. WABUSA MILLY BECCA

Of Registration Number; R122/MUC/BEA/040 pursuing a Masters' Degree/Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's Degree BACHELOR'S DEGREE

He/ she is required to carry out an academic research on the topic

INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE LEARNED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN GOVERNMENT AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN INDUSTRIAL CITY DIVISION, MBALE CITY and thereafter produce a well bound hard cover research report (MAROON) in color for undergraduate and three (BLACK) copies for Postgraduate students as a University requirement for the award of a degree/diploma in the academic discipline that he / she is pursuing.

We shall be grateful for the help you may offer to him or her accordingly.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

[Handwritten signature]

28 FEB 2024

Mr. Akampurira Timothy
Academic Registrar

APPENDIX VII

A MAP OF MBALE CITY SHOWING THE AREA OF STUDY

