

**INFLUENCE OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON THE LEARNERS ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
KADAMA TOWN COUNCIL KIBUKU DISTRICT**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I, **Kataike Sarah**, 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 any academic award

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APPROVAL SHEET

This work by Kitaliko Sarah entitled "Influence of COVID-19 Pandemic on Learners' Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kakama Town Council, Kibuku District" is her original work and has been done under my supervision.

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Date: 25th JULY 2024

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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 valuable support and endless encouragement, my supervisor Mr. Hasahya James Wangwe 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. He 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. Wasalaine Patrick, Ms. Musingo Sarah and Ms. Bagaya Lulaba Victoria for their encouragement and support that pushed this book far; may the Lord bless them abundantly. To all my colleagues and family members who supported me financially, ideologically and gave courage to me, may 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 ACRONYM

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ADHD | : | Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder |
| CBT | : | Cognitive Behavioral Therapy |
| CDC | : | Centre for Disease Control and Prevention |
| COVID-19 | : | Corona Virus |
| DEO | : | District 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 Organization |
| UNICEF | : | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund |
| WFP | : | World Food Programme |
| WHO | : | World Health Organization |

ABSTRACT

This study is about the Influence of COVID- 19 Pandemic on the Learners' Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. The study adopted the descriptive research design. Evidence abounds of the influence of the pandemic on the learners in Kibuku District. The general purpose of the study was to examine the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. Specifically, the study sought; i) to examine the psychological influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on the academic performance learners, ii) to analyse the social influence on the academic performance of learners in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District, iii) to assess ways on how the influence of COVID- 19 pandemic can be mitigated. The study covered 04 selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. The population of the study comprised 131 with 01 Education Officer, 05 head teachers, 26 teachers, and 100 students totaling to 131respondents and data was collected from a sample size of 097 respondents. Both Random and Purposive sampling techniques were employed to collect data in the Town Council. Data was collected by the researcher who developed three instruments; questionnaire, focus and evaluation checklists for the teachers, school heads and learners respectively. The instruments were validated by three experts and both from the Department of Education. The reliability coefficient was; 0.88 for section A, B, C and D respectively with a reliability coefficient of 0.94. The study found out that some parents in the sub-county have left their children, "to whom it may concern." The way some children behave shows there is 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 which was not the case...? There was need for ssensitization of parents and teachers by the healthy 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 the constitution of vaccination for all. Based on the above findings, it is evident that COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the academic performance of learners in all aspects. Therefore, devising necessary interventions like talking to the learners, guidance and counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, good parental care, psychological assistance, reporting of domestic violence and vaccination would combat challenges associated with academic performance as mandatory.

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 8,000 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 who were making around 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 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 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 1 August 2020 (Palden, 2020). In between, movements were allowed, offices began functioning, schools and college reopened for selected levels and continued with online

classes for others with more than 170,000 children in Bhutan who were affected by the school closure. The impact was far reaching and has affected learning during this academic year or even more in the coming days. Several schools, colleges and universities 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 allocate \$8.3 billion to fight the outbreak and declare 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 (May 9, 2021) reported that more than 38.3 million confirmed cases had 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 caused a ban on education system. As many infections went undetected, the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that, as of May 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 (May 16, 2021).

As far as South Africa is concerned, Voigt, Elri (2020), opine that following the COVID- 19 pandemic on 5 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 (Town Council Press, 2020). Ramaphosa announced that from 1 May 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 August 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 was 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 would 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 showed 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 selected secondary and selected primary 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 had a lot of caused distress among all sectors but with more advance 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 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 and Sports (2020), more than 73,000 learning institutions 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 was 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 organization, (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 Town Council.

The government of Uganda has tried to a less extent to introduce technological learning which, UNICEF (2020), WHO and The Ministry of Education and Sports, (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 had 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 device between privileged and deprived groups continue to widen the educational gap.

Furthermore, Mash, E. J., & Wolfe, D. A. (2020), content that as the COVID-19 pandemic escalates; the day-to-day reality has created a nightmarish 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 death 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 meant for Uganda was that since March 20th, over 15 million learners had been 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 have also been no studies yet on the influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. Therefore, this study aimed at examining the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District 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 and Sports 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 were neglected Elizabeth et al. (2020). In Kadama Town Council, nothing much has been researched on regarding the influence of the pandemic on learners. Since these students had no prior knowledge about the use of media for serious studies with almost about 44% of them without radios and televisions, most of them saw this teaching as a waste of time which made some engage in untimely sexual relationships and abusing of drugs. Also, literature indicates that there were 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 were out of school as a result of COVID-19 and the closure of institutions not only 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 may have not left the students of Kadama Town Council 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 is to examine the influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on learners’ academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.

1.3 General Objective

The study examined the influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on learners’ academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District

1.4 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following objective:

- i. To examine the psychological influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on learners’ academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District

- ii. To analyze the social influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District
- 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 Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District?
2. What is the social influence of the COVID- 19 on the academic performance of learners in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District?
3. How can the psychological and social factors 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 and Sports, (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. This study therefore provides a body of data drawn from the influence of the pandemic and analyzed 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 and Sports, the results may be useful in helping them look for vast ways of vaccinating learners so as to avoid social related effects.
3. The results may 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 may be useful to other researchers who may be interested in the same study.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited in terms of content, time and geographical scope.

1.8.1 Geographical Scope

Kibuku District is a district in Eastern Uganda. It is named after its 'chief town', Kibuku, where the district headquarters are located. Kibuku District is bordered by Pallisa District to the North, Budaka District to the East, Butaleja District to the South, and Namutumba District to the West. The district headquarters at Kibuku, are located approximately 53 kilometres (33 mi), by road, west of Mbale, the largest city in the sub-region. The coordinates of the district are:01 02N, 33 50E.Geographically, the study was carried out in Kadama Town Council which is bordered by Kenkebu sub-county to the East, Nandere sub-county to the South, Nabiswa sub-county to the West and Kabweri sub-county to the North. The following schools were chosen for the study; Highlight Secondary School, Kaamu Memorial College, Paradise Secondary School, Kadama Islamic Secondary School and St. Peters Seed Secondary school.

1.8.2 Content Scope

The study examined the influence of COVID- 19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.

1.8.3 Time Scope

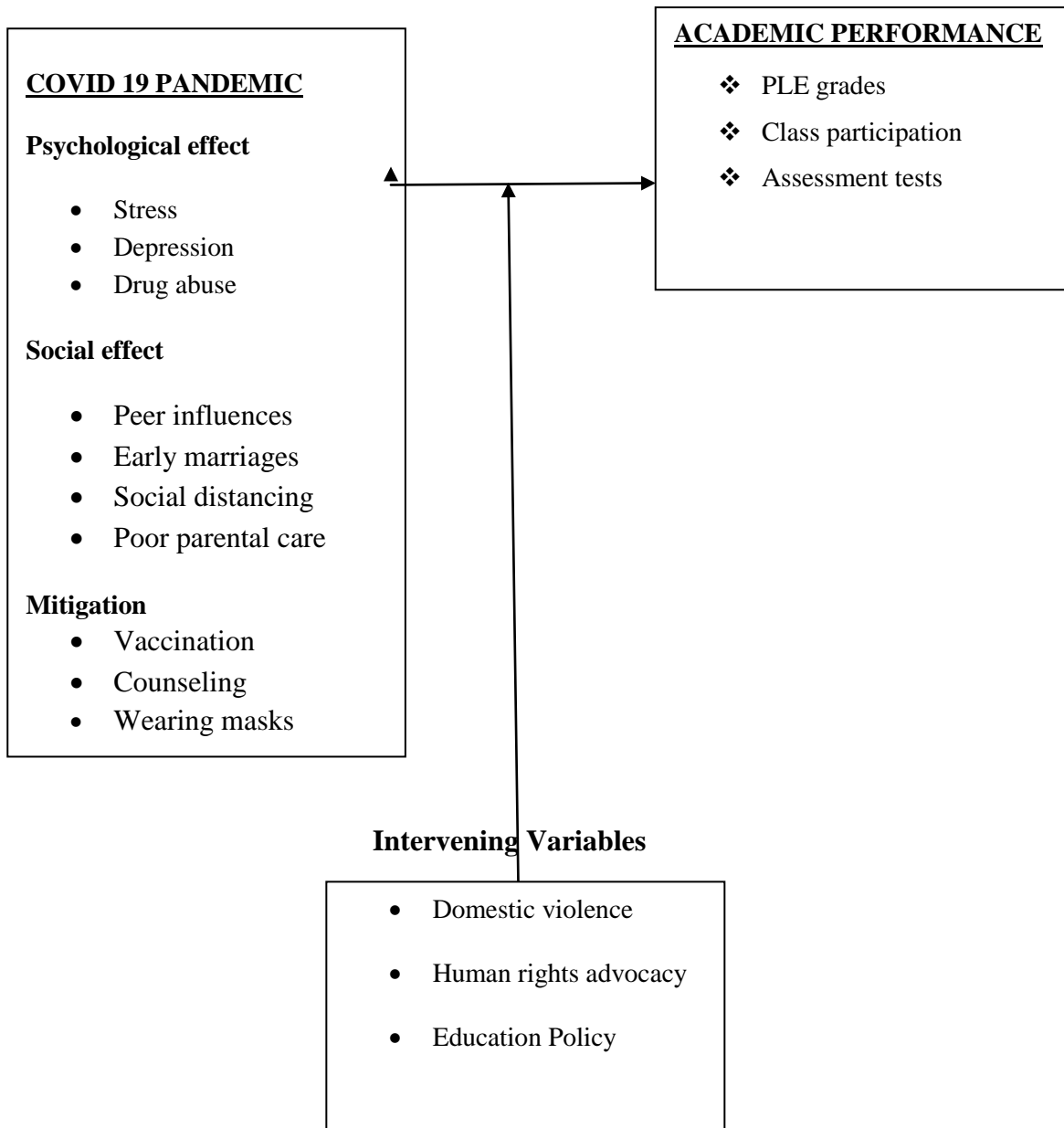
In terms of time span, the study was carried out from December 2023 to April, 2024. This period was considered because it was the time when UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, reported the high rates of the psychological and social effects of the pandemic on learners.

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: Selected secondary Data, 2024

From the conceptual framework above, COVID- 19 pandemic has many effects which include; psychological; stress, depression, drug abuse, etc. and social; poor parental care, peer influence, social distancing and early marriages; mitigation: wearing masks, hand washing among others. The independent variables such as psychological effect, social effect and mitigation affect the academic performance of the learners as they face lot of challenges due to the lockdown. However, there are other intervening variables like Uganda policies in education, human rights advocacy and domestic violence among others. To achieve affirmative decision making, model groups, good morals, vaccination and easing of the lockdown among others as the dependent variables.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

Academic performance:

Is the extent to which a pupil has achieved their educational goals?

Domestic Violence:

Is a disagreement or opposition within the family members? These can be caused by poverty, infidelity, drunkardness, high bride-wealth (dowry) demanded, stinginess or any other factors.

Impact:

Level of knowledge expected in learners' achievement after receiving an instruction.

1.11 Limitations to the Study

The researcher feared that most people would not give clear information due to the fact that COVID- 19 was still a fragile fact to handle and to address this issue; the researcher gave a clear background of the purpose of the study to the respondents.

Limited Funding

The lack of funding made it difficult for the researcher to reach more schools as was desired. The study was limited to the few selected secondary schools in the Town Council. This limitation was handled by employing mainly a qualitative design and some quantitative aspects to get rich and in-depth information from the respondents.

Teachers' Perception of Researchers

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 as they claimed to be very busy. They may neither respond to the questionnaire nor allow me in their lessons to observe how they teach. Nevertheless, the researcher found other schools that were willing to participate in the study.

Principles that exist in the mind and not visible with the naked eye

The researcher dealt with a subject of principles which were mental attitudes and thoughts which couldn't be observed in themselves. She went around this problem by employing observation as a research instrument to observe the effects of the principles and interviews to ask the teachers what principles they use to select teaching methods.

COVID-19 pandemic

The study was carried out during the post COVID- 19 effects which had hit the whole world. The pandemic came about with tough policies in form of SOPs, with the most outstanding as lockdown. This crippled the movement to reach some respondents. Given the difficult situation, the researcher had to meet 100% of his respondents.

1.12 Conclusion

Having outlined the background to the study, presented the problem of the study, purpose and objectives, research questions, the scope and significance of the study, the conceptual framework, operational definition of terms and limitations of the study; the next chapter presented a review of related literature about the social, psychological influence of COVID- 19 and how these could be mitigated.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discussed a collection of materials from different sources that are related to COVID- 19. Literature was 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 may 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 were 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 were reported in India (Nadkarni et al., 2020). Whether this is true in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District, is not known due to limited data

Furthermore, Dubey et al., & Khan et al., (2020), indicate that several groups were 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 had their parents working as health workers who were the healthcare providers during the pandemic, specifically frontline workers, in the alarming context of this health emergency, these professionals were put through different circumstances and afflictions, which included 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 would cause stress (Chew et al., 2020; Lancet, 2020; Mamun et al., 2020c; Pfefferbaum & North, 2020). Evidence reported 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 seemed to vary amongst different populations in the world. It had been reported that young people were at higher risk for adverse psychological repercussions than men. Moreover, nurses were also more likely to be affected than physicians; (Tsamakis et al., 2020). Interestingly, one study observed that non-frontline nurses were more prone to emotional impact than the frontline group, which seemed 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 brought 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, were in a position of vulnerability during the pandemic. This happened because, at home, they suffered with limited social connection, crucial for identity and well-being at young ages, reduced physical activity, loneliness and boredom which may 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), contents that consuming indiscriminate information about the pandemic among the children may 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 composed by 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 may 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 was 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 Dudgey et al (2020), concludes that the COVID-19 pandemic may 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 carefully 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 were forced into income-generating activities to support their families' survival. In such poverty-stricken areas, securing food took precedence over learning. For instance, children from poor families and disadvantaged neighborhoods resorted to working as opposed to learning in order to provide for their families. This raised 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 highly contributed to early and unplanned teenage pregnancies which had 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 reciprocity. Hence, the aforementioned “forced empathy” may 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 of 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 and Sports 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. According to an article on the New Vision Newspaper on May, 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 to 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 the correcting emotional development of children is lacking.

Another important aspect that has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is the practice of 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 taught 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 effect 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 Matthews et al. (2015), 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 may 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 economical 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 may 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 may 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 may exert positive effects on how people deal with their emotions. It may 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 2022; 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) content 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 Dey 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 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 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 (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).

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 the idea of vaccination left many with negative impact 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 on 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 is noted by countries 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 may 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 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 may 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 selected secondary in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.

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 1. 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. The next chapter presents the methodology of the study.

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, sampling procedures, description of the study location, data collection procedures and data management procedures.

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 is 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), share 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 selected secondary in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. It was considered because the design focuses 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 present study intended to assess the influence of COVID- 19 in selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District 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 method was used to collect, interpret and analyze numerical data which was done in form of tables, figures and frequencies while qualitative method 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 Kadama Town Council which is bordered by Kenkebu sub-county to the East, Nandere sub-county to the South, Nabiswa sub-county to the West and Kabweri sub-county to the North. The following schools were chosen for the study;

Highlight Secondary School, Kaamu Memorial College, Paradise Secondary School, Kadama Islamic Secondary School and St. Peters Seed Secondary School.

3.3 Study Population

The study population involved the selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. The main target groups of sampling were the head teachers, teachers, students and the City education officer. The sampling procedures that was 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 Town Council. To obtain the samples, the names of the schools were written on piece of papers, put in a container and then drawn randomly. Purposive sampling technique was also be used to obtain the desirable population. In this case, heads of schools in the selected secondary schools and one City education officer were involved in the study. Purposive technique was 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 Students, 5 head teachers and 1 education officer totaling to 131 respondents.

3.4 Sample Size

In the study area, 5 public selected secondary schools were selected for data collection, and in each school, 05 head teachers, 080 learners, 024 teachers and 01 education officer were used in the study. In each school, the head of the school was also interviewed. One City education officer was interviewed. The sample size of the study comprised 097 respondents with both sexes regardless of age, literacy levels and also include persons with disabilities who were stakeholders in education provision. The total number of respondents was 097 as per Kjerchie and Morgan Population Table (1970) in appendix VI.

Table 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: Selected secondary 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, a 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 Students and teachers from the selected secondary schools from Kadama Town Council. After the pieces of papers have been mixed up in a basket and researcher asked any student from a public school to randomly pick up four pieces of papers one at a time until a sample of five schools is 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 obtain head teachers and District Education Officers from the selected secondary schools which were expected to provide information on the role of instructional materials on the academic performance of learners in the Town Council. The technique was also used to sample the head teachers who are responsible for the management of the schools. The same technique was used to sample the Town Council education officers because they are the overseers of these schools and hence had information regarding the influence of COVID- 19 in selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. 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

characteristic 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 play.

3.6 Research Instruments

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

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A self-developed questionnaire named “Teachers’ Perceptions towards the teaching and learning of English Language in selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District, was used. Questionnaires were used for the study. The questionnaire was in form of LIKERT scales comprising of four sections, section A, B, C and D. The choice of question helped in generating a lot of specific responses from respondents. Therefore, questions were provided together with their list of possible responses, options for respondents to choose from.

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 were used to allow head teachers to freely interact with the researcher who had the 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 can 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 the learners’ academic performance regarding the psychological and social effects and how these could be mitigated in the selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.

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

The researcher used a test – re-test reliability method to determine the reliability of the study. It refers to the degree to which scores on the same test by the same researcher are consistent overtime. It was established by administering the same test to the same sample that may not be

part of the sample of the study on two different occasions usually 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, if the reliability is found above 0.75, it was good enough implying that the instrument was satisfactory and therefore worthy being used for data collection

3.7.2 Validity of Research Instruments

The researcher 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 supervisors in the field of Educational Management and Administration was put in 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

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

18

$$CVI = 0.8$$

According to Amin (2005), whenever values obtained fall below 0.7, the research tools are confirmed inappropriate and invalid for as far as the instruments is concerned. This therefore implies that for instruments to be confirmed appropriate and valid, the CVI score is 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 selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District, 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

The researcher used frequency and percentage to analyze the data for the study. During and after data collection, quantitative data was edited, coded, classified and tabulated. Data was finally analyzed using computer packages such as Microsoft word and excel. Descriptive statistics however, enabled the researcher to synthesize and summarize the quantitative data. The descriptive statistics described the sample in terms of responses to the question using tables and frequencies.

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 they were assured that the data they provided would be strictly for purposes of this 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 to be avoided in trying to access information from the respondents. The researcher rather observed professional ethics in conducting the study. It can be emphasized that this study is original work, and that no known study regarding the

influence of COVID -19 pandemic on the learners' academic performance in selected secondary in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District had been conducted.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter included among others the research design, description of the study area, population and sampling procedures, data collection procedure and tools, data analysis, ethical considerations, validity and reliability of data.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The chapter presented findings on the “Influence of COVID- 19 Pandemic on Academic Performance of the Learners in Selected Secondary Schools of Kadama Town Council Kibuku District. Data was analyzed 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 2: The response rate of the respondent

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

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

In this study, the researcher expected to interview 97 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 described the age, sex, marital status, level of education and religious affiliation.

4.2.1 Age of the respondents

Table 3: The age of the respondents.

| Years | Frequency | Percentages |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 13-20 | 36 | 37.1 |
| 21-30 | 25 | 25.8 |
| 31-35 | 15 | 15.5 |
| 40-49 | 12 | 12.4 |
| 50 above | 09 | 9.3 |
| TOTAL | 97 | 100 |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

The data from research study showed that the respondents in the age bracket of (13-20) were represented by 36(37.1%), (21-30) were represented by 25(25.8%), (31-35) were represented by 15(15.5%), (40-49) were represented by 12(12.4%) and the least being 50 above with 09(9.3%).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 retired parents and local leaders. These were few and had problems of sight. In most cases they used 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

4.2.2 Sex of the respondents

Table 4: Sex composition of the respondents

| Sex | Number | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------|
| FEMALE | 57 | 58.8 |
| MALE | 40 | 41.2 |
| TOTAL | 97 | 100 |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

Findings from the table 4 above showing the sex of respondents indicated that 57(58.8%) were females whereas the male respondents represented by 40(41.2%), 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 there were more females in comparison to the males in the research study area.

4.2.3 Marital status of the respondents

Table 5: The marital status of the respondents.

| Category | Number of respondents | Percentages |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Single | 32 | 33 |
| Widowed | 24 | 24.7 |
| Separated | 19 | 19.6 |
| Married | 17 | 17.5 |
| Divorced | 05 | 5.2 |
| Total | 97 | 100% |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

According to table 5 above, single respondents were represented by 32(33%) and this made the highest response. These were mainly school children. This was followed by widowed respondents who made 24(24.7%). Those who had separated were 19 (19.6). The married were represented by 17(17.5%) and divorced was rated at 5(5.2%). From the table above, it therefore revealed that the majority of the respondents were single and these were children taking on studies at school.

4.2.4 Level of education

Table 6: The level of education of the respondents

| Level of Education | Frequency | Percentages |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Unskilled | 48 | 49.5 |
| Certificate | 30 | 30.9 |
| Degree | 18 | 18.6 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Master | 01 | 1.0 |
| Total | 97 | 100 |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

The findings from the table 6 above indicated that 48(49.5%) were unskilled though had reached secondary. 30(30.9%) had acquired certificates. This is attributed to the fact that having a certificate is one of the requirements to be recruited in the public service as teacher. 18(18.5%) had acquired degrees while 1(1.0%) 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 appointed as a head teacher in secondary schools.

4.2.5 Religion

Table 7: The religious affiliations of the respondents

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

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

In line with table 7 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 secondary schools in Kadama Town Council Kibuku District. The least response came from the Muslims who made 37(38.1%). The low response can be attributed to the fact there were few Muslims generally compared to the Christians counterparts in the region.

4.3 Psychological Influence of COVID- 19 Pandemic in Kadama Town Council

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 8: The Psychological Influence of COVID- 19 pandemic in Kadama Town Council

| 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 | 16 | 16.5 |
| Lockdown restrictions make learners unable to build their talents | 09 | 9.3 |
| Alcohol addiction affects learners' school attendance | 20 | 20.6 |
| Self-denial syndrome leads to poor academic performance | 28 | 28.9 |
| Total | 097 | 100 |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

From the table above, it indicated 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 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).

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 16(16.5%). 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 9(9.3%) 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.

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 were seen drinking alcohol although some countries had 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.

28(28.9) of the respondents also reported that self-denial syndrome leads to poor academic performance among learners in the Town Council 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 Kadama Town Council

After interaction with respondents on different fora’s, they reported various social effects of COVID-19 pandemic academic performance of learners. Table 9 below;

Table 9: The Social effect of COVID-19 on Academic Performance of Learners in Kadama Town Council

| Response | Frequency | Percentages |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Social distancing of learners leads poor classroom participation of learners. | 30 | 30.9 |
| Loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends. | 12 | 12.4 |
| Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance | 16 | 16.5 |
| Domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities. | 11 | 11.4 |
| Peer influence affects learners’ school attendance | 10 | 10.4 |
| Separation from their dear ones affects learners’ school attendance. | 18 | 18.6 |
| Total | 097 | 100 |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

In accordance to table 9 30(30.9%) of the respondents reported that social distancing of learners leads to poor classroom participation. This is in line with Holmes et al., (2020), says that critical aspect of this context is that, 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 Kadama Town Council, 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 digital learning which was introduced by the ministry of education..."

Pasetti, (2020), 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 hide and shun the simple activities in school, a clear portrayal of fear and emotional development.

Loss of freedom was reported by 12(12.4%) 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 Organisation, 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;

"Kadama Town Council and Kibuku District 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 them are locked up in their homes and 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 16(16.5%) 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 Sub-county, 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 emotional development of children is lacking.

Domestic violence was supported by 11(11.4%), 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 Kadama Town Council 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 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 learner's 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 18(18.6%). 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 Strategies to mitigate the 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 secondary schools in Kadama Town Council. The following responses were recorded as shown in the table below.

Table 10: Strategies to mitigate the Psychological and Social effects of COVID- 19

| Responses | Frequency | Percentages |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Use of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy | 32 | 33 |
| Vaccination of children | 09 | 9.3 |
| Psychological assistance to learners | 18 | 18.6 |
| Reporting all forms of domestic violence | 14 | 14.4 |
| Talking / having time with learners | 24 | 24.7 |
| Total | 097 | 100 |

Source: Secondary Field Data (April, 2024)

In accordance with table 10 above, 32(33%) indicated there is need for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as it 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, 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 may result in actual benches in various communities where individuals with mental health issues as a result of the pandemic could go and talk to lay-people who have received training to help them better. As far as Mental Health COVID-19, (2020) is concerned, adolescents with previous psychological mental health disorders may 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 the;

“Most of the school-going learners 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.

Regarding vaccination of children, respondents provided divergent views 09(9.3%) 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 Kadama Town Council and Uganda as a whole, there is no vaccine for almost 90% of the secondary school children. Secondly, the government needed to have special people talking for 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 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).

Psychological assistance accounted for 18(18.6%). 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 are mentally sick and 24 seven, they are sleeping. They have it that education has ended and don't even mind about revision. I think, it's 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).

Reporting domestic violence was supported by majority of the respondents with 14(14.4%). 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 Sub-county go through serious domestic violence which in turn have affected our school going children. This violence, on a sad note is not reported to authorities...”

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 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).

Talking to children was supported by 24(24.7%). 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 sub-county have left their children to, “to whom it may concern.” The way some children behave shows there is 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...”

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.

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 on objective one

Objective one aimed to examine the psychological effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the academic performance of learners in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District. 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 28 (28.9%). This is followed by other factors such as alcohol addiction which was suggested by 20(20.6%), stress which was proposed by 16(16.5%), Depression which was suggested by 14(14.4%), anxiety 10(10.3%) and lockdown restrictions suggested by 09(9.3%) respectively.

Objective two found out that COVID-19 pandemic if not well handled affects the learner's academic performance socially by separation from their dear ones which was suggested by 30(30.9%) of the respondents. Other effects per the findings included social distancing was reported by 18(18.6%), poor parental care with 16(16.5%), loss of freedom which was supported by 12(12.4%), domestic violence was supported by 11(11.4%) and Peer influence affects learners' school attendance which was reported by 10(10.4). This implies that COVID-19 affected over 98% of the learners' academic performance.

Objective three sought to determine the ways of mitigating both the psychological and social effects of COVID-19. Majority of the respondents proposed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy accounted for 32(33%). 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, 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 may result in actual benches in various communities where individuals with mental health issues as a result of the pandemic could go and talk to lay-people who have received training to help them better. As far as Mental Health Covid-19, (2020) is concerned, adolescents with previous psychological mental health disorders may 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 the;

“Most of the school-going learners 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.

Regarding vaccination of children, respondents provided divergent views 09(9.3%) revealing 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 Us the parents fear the vaccine. How then can our children be vaccinated? In Kadama Town Council and Uganda as a whole, there is no vaccine for almost 90% of the secondary school children. Secondly, the government needed to have special people talking for 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 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).

Psychological assistance accounted for 18(18.6%). 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 are mentally sick and 24 seven, they are sleeping. They have it that education has ended and don’t even mind about revision. I think, it’s 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).

Reporting domestic violence was supported by majority of the respondents with 14(14.4%). 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 Sub-county go through serious domestic violence which in turn have affected our school going children. This violence, on a sad note is not reported to authorities...”

This is in agreement with Gunnell et al (2020), who confirm 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).

Talking to children was supported by 24(24.7%). 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 sub-county have left their children to, “to whom it may concern.” The way some children behave shows there is 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...”

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 were reported.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the above findings, it is evident that COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the academic performance of learners in all aspects. Therefore, devising necessary interventions like talking to the learners, guidance and counselling, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, good parental care, psychological assistance, reporting of domestic violence and vaccination would combat challenges associated with academic performance as mandatory.

5.3 Recommendations

Sensitisation of parents and teachers by the healthy 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 allows the constitution of vaccination for all.

Teachers and parents with learners who have COVID-19 pandemic, should try to counsel them and make them understand that the virus 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.

5.5 Areas for further study

- Carrying out a comparative study on the Influence of COVID-19 Pandemic in selected Secondary schools of urban and rural settings.
- Examining the roles of stakeholders in combating the COVID-19 pandemic in Secondary Schools
- Investigating the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on learners' enrolment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Respondent,

I am **Kataike Sarah**; a student of Uganda Christian University is carrying out a study on the “The Influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the Learners’ Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.” As a teacher, you have been selected randomly to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire as per the instruction 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 purpose only.

Thanks.

SECTION A (PERSONAL INFORMATION)

Sex: Male () Female ()

1. Age: 10-16 (), 17-25 (), 26-35 (), 36-45 (), 46-above ()
2. Marital status: Single (), Married (), Widowed (), Separated ()
3. Educational level: Secondary (), Secondary(), College/University ()
4. Occupation: Employed (), Self-employed (), Unemployed ()

SECTION B: Questions on the variables of the study

Please tick what best applies to you.

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

| Psychological effect of COVID-19 pandemic | SA | A | 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 | D | SD |
| 6. Social distancing of learners leads poor classroom participation of learners. | | | | |
| 7. Loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends. | | | | |
| 8. Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance | | | | |
| 9. Domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities. | | | | |
| 10. Separation from their dear ones affects learners' school attendance. | | | | |
| 11. Peer influence affects learners' school attendance | | | | |
| Mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic | SA | A | D | SD |
| 12. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy makes learners perform better in their academics. | | | | |
| 13. Vaccination of children can enable learners to engage in school activities | | | | |
| 14. Psychological assistance makes learners to associate freely with their friends. | | | | |
| 15. Reporting domestic violence cases boosts learners' school attendance | | | | |
| 16. Talking to children aids in classroom participation | | | | |

SECTION C

1. Give other psychosocial influence of COVID-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.

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

3 What other social factors of COVID-19 have influenced the academic performance of learners?

Thank you very much

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Dear Respondent,

I am **Kataike Sarah**; a student of Uganda Christian University is carrying out a study on the “Influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the Learners’ Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.” As a student, you have been selected randomly to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire as per the instruction 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 purpose only.

Thanks.

SECTION :A (PERSONAL INFORMATION)

Sex: Male () Female ()

5. Age: 10-16 (), 17-25 (), 26-35 (), Above 36()

6. Marital status: Single (), Married (), Widowed (), Separated ()

7. Educational level: Secondary(), Secondary ()

8. Occupation: Employed (), Self-employed (), Unemployed ()

SECTION B: Questions on the variables of the study

Please tick what best applies to you.

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

| Psychological effect of COVID-19 pandemic | SA | A | 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 | D | SD |
| 6. Social distancing of learners leads poor classroom participation of learners. | | | | |
| 7. Loss of freedom makes learners to disassociate with their friends. | | | | |
| 8. Poor parental care leads to poor academic performance | | | | |
| 9. Domestic violence makes learners to disengage in school activities. | | | | |
| 10. Separation from their dear ones affects learners' school attendance. | | | | |
| 11. Peer influence affects learners' school attendance | | | | |
| Mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic | SA | A | D | SD |
| 12. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy makes learners perform better in their academics. | | | | |
| 13. Vaccination of children can enable learners to engage in school activities | | | | |
| 14. Psychological assistance makes learners to associate freely with their friends. | | | | |
| 15. Reporting domestic violence cases boosts learners' school attendance | | | | |
| 16. Talking to children aids in classroom participation | | | | |

SECTION C

2. Give other psychosocial influence of COVID-19 pandemic on learners' academic performance in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.

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

5 What other social factors of COVID-19 have influenced the academic performance of learners?

6 To what extent is digital learning an achievement to education sector in relation to learners' academic performance?

Thank you very much

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE CHECKLIST FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Dear Respondent,

I am Kataike Sarah; a student of Uganda Christian University is carrying out a study on the “Influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the Learners’ Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.” As a head teacher, you have been selected randomly to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire as per the instruction 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 purpose only.

Thanks.

1. Briefly comment on the academic performance of learners in selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District
2. How has the COVID-19 pandemic increased absenteeism for teachers and learners in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District?

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 selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District?

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

4. Are there psychological factors of COVID-19 that have affected the academic performance of learners in selected secondary schools in the Town Council?

Prompts: Mention them.

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE CHECKLIST FOR THE CITY EDUCATION OFFICER

Dear Respondent,

I am **Kataike Sarah**; a student of Uganda Christian University is carrying out a study on the “Influence of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Learners’ Academic Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District.” As an education officer you have been selected randomly to participate in the research by completing the questionnaire as per the instruction 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 purpose only.

Thanks.

1. Briefly comment on the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the education system and particularly in the selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District
2. How has the COVID-19 pandemic increased absenteeism for teachers and learners in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District?

Prompt: What is being done to reduce absenteeism?

3. What are some of the social factors of COVID-19 that have led to school dropout of learners in selected secondary schools in Kadama Town Council, Kibuku District?

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

4. Are there psychological factors of COVID-19 that have affected the academic performance of learners in selected secondary schools in the Town Council?

Prompts: Mention them.

5. Is there a way that the government is engaging with responsible agencies to mitigate the spread of the pandemic?

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX V: SAMPLE DETERMINATION TABLE

Table 11: 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

APPENDIX VI: INTRODUCTION LETTER



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

Office of the Academic Registrar

To THE DISTRICT INSPECTOR
OF SCHOOLS, KIBUKU DISTRICT

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Academic Research

Christian greetings!

We are pleased to introduce to you Mr. Mrs. /Miss. KATHLE SADAH

Of Registration Number: R/22/MUC/BA/012 pursuing a Master
Degree/Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's Degree BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Who she is required to carry out an academic research on the topic:

INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE LEARNERS'
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN KASAMA TOWN COUNCIL, KIBUKU DISTRICT

and therefore produce a well bound hard cover research report (MAROON) in three
undergraduate and three (BLACK) copies for Postgraduate students as a course
requirement for the award of a degree/diploma in the academic discipline that he/she
pursues.

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

Thank you.

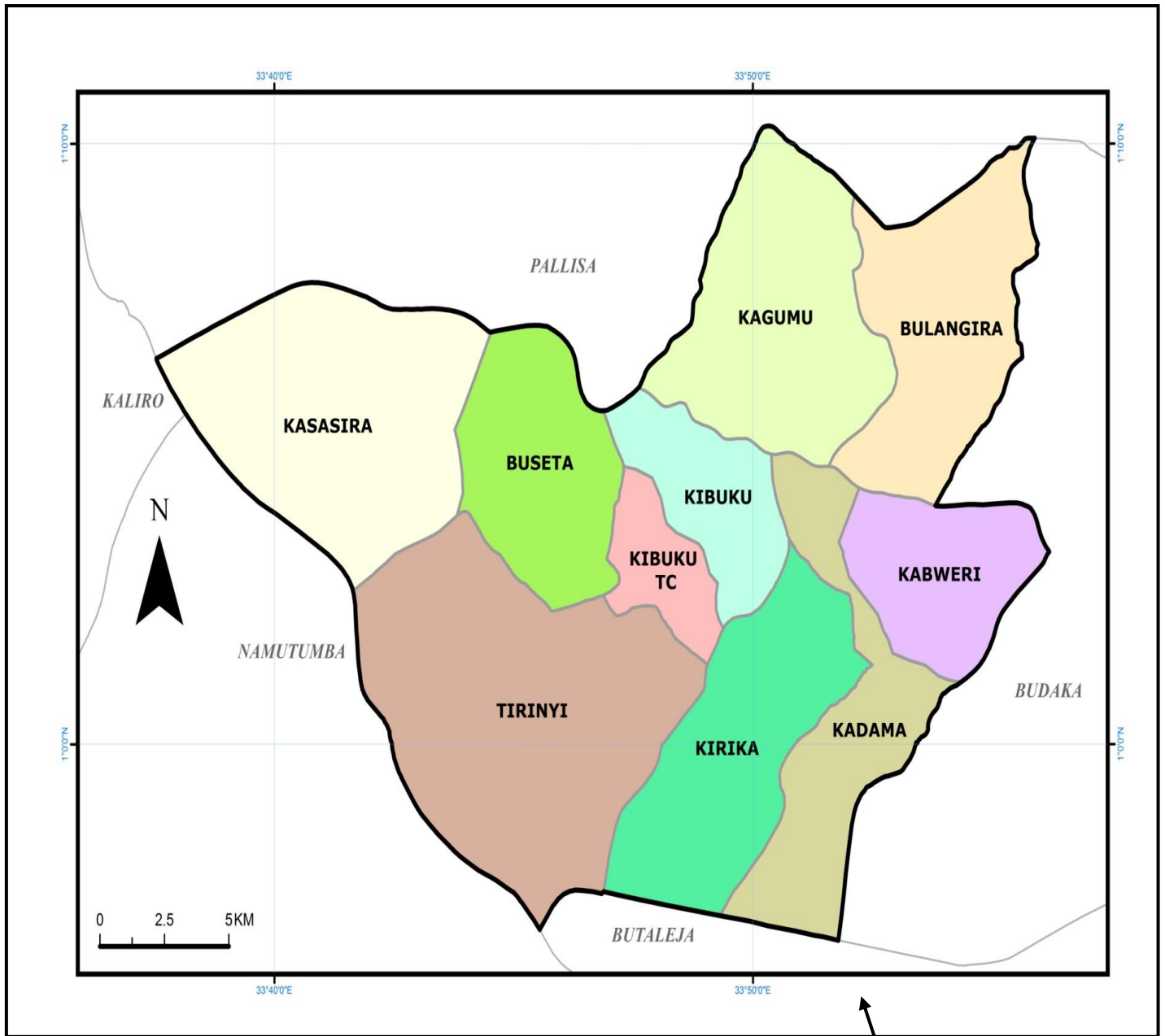
Yours faithfully,

Mr. Aswapirwa Timothy
Academic Registrar

18 FEB 2024

18 FEB 2024

APPENDIX VII: A MAP OF KIBUKU DISTRICT SHOWING THE AREA OF STUDY



Area of study