

**EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC REGULATIONS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL  
STUDENTS IN KYOTERA TOWN COUNCIL**

**BY**

**NDAGIRE VICTOR**

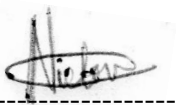
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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A  
DEGREE OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION, PLANNING AND  
ADMINISTRATION OF UGANDA  
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

**20/9/2023**

## **DECLARATION**

I, NDAGIRE VICTOR declare that this is my original work and it has not been presented to any institution for the award of Master of Education (Planning and Administration) or any other educational institution.

Signed: -----

**NDAGIRE VICTOR**

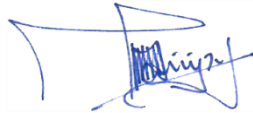
**RJ19M06/028**

Date: 20/ 9/2023

## **APPROVAL**

This Dissertation of NDAGIRE VICTOR (RJ19M06/028) is submitted with my approval as a university supervisor.

Signed :

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Masagazi Joel Yawe', enclosed within a rectangular box.

**DR. MASAGAZI JOEL YAWE**

Date: 22 September 2023

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Jimi and Cristi Cook, Revs. Cornelius and Erone Kateregga , my fiance Kafeero Ronald , Dan and Diane Lewis.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty God for giving me the grace; guidance and strength throughout the whole study period because without Him I would not have been successful. I am forever indebted to Him. I am very grateful to my parents, Jimi and Cristi Cook , Revs. Cornelius and Erone Kateregga, my fiance Kafeero Ronald, my siblings for their enduring love, care, effort, support and financial support throughout to this level of my education. May they live to see the outcomes of their sweat and hard-work. More thanks to Dan and Diane Lewis. Great thanks to Grant Venable and the BTCV team, Sabine Gorg and the EWB team. Thank you for your financial contributions, genuine care, patience, inspirational advice and spiritual growth. I say, trust in God for academic victory and To God Be the Glory.

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I was carrying out this study. Also thanks to all those who contributed to this research in different ways, I am heavily indebted and wish to thank them all. May the good Lord reward them abundantly.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBE	Curriculum Based Establishment
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security
CVI	Content Validity Index
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
HIV	Human Immune Virus
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UCU	Uganda Christian University
UCU-REC	Uganda Christian University Research Ethics Committee
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

## ABSTRACT

The study aimed at exploring the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council, Kyotera District. The study objectives included; to examine the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council, to examine the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council, and to identify the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The study employed a cross-sectional research design, where both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The sample comprised of (5) head teachers, (5) school counselors, (5) deputy head teachers, (25) teachers and (100) students. These were purposively and simple randomly selected. Data was collected through questionnaires and interviews. Data was analyzed quantitatively through the SPSS and thematic content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Study findings revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council ( $r=0.686$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) with a regression  $R^2$  of .471. It revealed that the COVID-19 regulations has contributed to dropout of students, students have limited contact with colleagues, children learning less through distance education been observed, and school closure have affected studying practical subjects. The study also revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council ( $r=.589$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) with a regression  $R^2$  of .346. It revealed that as a result of Covid-19 pandemic regulations, school have been burdened by mental health consequences among students, schools experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs, there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection; there is increasing negative feeling among students, and they have experienced stress, anxiety and depression. The study further revealed that routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus, emphasize of e-learning platforms and lessons; restricted visitors, routine counselling of all students, and need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks, social distancing and regular hand-washing; these are the major students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. Basing on the study findings, it is was therefore concluded that most secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council practice copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. The study recommended that schools should emphasize e-learning; and areas of further research were suggested.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### 1.0 Introduction to the Study

The study aims at exploring the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council, Kyotera District. This chapter one provides the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study and research questions. It also gave highlights on the scope of the study, justification of the study, significance of the study and conceptual framework.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The research study focused on exploring the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council. The background section gives the entailed historical background, theoretical background, conceptual background and contextual background.

##### 1.1.1 Historical Background

World-over, in December 2019, the outbreak of the new coronavirus in Wuhan, China, escalated dramatically into a global health emergency (Goldschmidt, 2020). As a result, it has become an international concern of a public health emergency, earmarking many governments to adopt various COVID-19 pandemic regulations. Adhanom (2020) noted that the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic is a danger not only to economic and social cohesion, but also it has become a threat to training and education systems' growth, stability and sustainability. They have been globally

disrupted as never before. A study conducted in Italy by Argyropoulou., Christina & Markos (2021) dominated by secondary schools found out that, ‘over 100percent of schools were closed during partial lockdown as a result of COVID 19 pandemic; out of them, less than 30percent recently opened and operated efficiently; with 40percent of students with financial related challenges. Jorge & Verlenden (2021) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic caused severe disruption to everyday life around the world. As one of several measures taken to prevent the wider spread of the virus, many governments closed schools for several weeks or months in spring 2020/2021. Although, school closures were considered to be one of the most efficient and effective interventions to curb the spread of the virus, many researchers in Germany (Svenja., Konig., Thomas., & Frey, 2021) estimated that there will be learning inequalities and socio-economic achievement gaps would increase by up to 30%. Additionally, a learning loss of up to 38 points on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scale was estimated, which corresponds to an effect size (Cohen’s *d*) of 0.38 or 0.9 school year.

In African countries, Eleftheria & Theodore (2021) noted that COVID-19 pandemic presented a cumulative total of over 9million cases; and over 1000s deaths by mid-year 2021, of which Nigeria and Ethiopia took the lead. Egypt reported the first German tourist death due to virus on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The increase in the number of cases to more 100 cases by mid-March forced the government to make more rigid regulations (Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021). In this context, governments instituted regulations against freedom to speech, assembly (gathering) and movement, schools were closed down, SOPs emphasized and e-learning were encouraged (WHO, 2021). Specifically, schools

in Rwanda and Kenya closed down under the government or presidential directives. Students were setback homes and teachers allowed to also leave school premises (Brackett & Christina, 2020). However, the closure of schools and other presidential directives on control of COVID-19 pandemic have great impact on their future operation, in addition to education attainment. Students in Kenya were automatically promoted not considering its future academic consequences. Students in Ethiopia lost complete 2 years of their academic study (Sidonia., Ochieng., David., & Waiswa, 2021). Such COVID-19 regulations like school closures are less likely to be effective as a single COVID-19 control measure, but it requires to be matched with other public health response measures outside the school setting.

Additionally, in the wake of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, lockdowns are key to controlling the virus' spread. Although, lockdowns are effective in enforcing social distancing measures and tracing of COVID-19 patients, they are not good for education and the economy (UNESCO, 2020a). The current pandemic has forced government of Uganda to temporarily close educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, impacting over 91% of the Uganda's student population according to UNESCO. Uganda, amidst its economic challenges, the unforeseen situation of the COVID-19 pandemic is another turn of the screw in the education situation of its school-going age population (Tumwesigye, 2021). Uganda was suffering from the dramatic growth in daily-confirmed COVID-19 cases (2rd wave). As of May, June and July 2021, Uganda reported cumulative positive cases, and rising death cases, and the situation in schools were worse (Tumwesigye, 2021). As a result, the government took a rapid actions to secure the

well-being of students and entire citizens from this pandemic. One of these rapid actions was imposing lockdowns and closing the secondary schools, which has had an unprecedented impact on educational systems and the teaching and learning processes (Tumwesigye, 2021). Following the July 2021 Presidential Directives, all education institutions were instructed to suspend the teaching on campus and move to e-learning through synchronous online learning platforms. Students frequently studied few topics or less content through distance learning. Many students shared feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation, and depression, which they linked to the lack of contact with their school community. Students tend to be stressful when they have to study alone, think about their school and friends (Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021). Basing on the above view, this research investigated in details the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

#### 1.1.2 Theoretical background

There is presence of various theories talking about the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students. These ranges from; Social Learning Theory, Transaction Memory Stem Theory and Organizational Learning Theory. But the basis of this research, the researcher concentrated on Social Learning Theory.

**Social Learning Theory:** This theory examines how social behaviors can be acquired or adopted through observing and imitating others as a function of their). Research built on Social Learning Theory has assembled much evidence on how adapt to their environments (Duffield & Dan, 2020). Learning acts both as an underlying assumption in other theories and as a theory on its own, and is used social theory, strategy, and

entrepreneurship or secondary schools. This foundational role means that a reassessment of Social Learning Theory is consequential for the wider field of management, administration and control, not just for scholars specialized in Learning Theory. In other words, the COVID-19 pandemic regulations pose challenges to social Learning Theory.

One may argue that pandemics are rare and unworthy of special attention, but this would be wrong in two ways. First, pandemics are rare. Spanish Flu killed more than 40million 100years ago, HIV/AIDS killed 35 million in 40 years, and Ebola, SARS and MERS are recent pandemics that suddenly halted. Research on each one is significant because pandemics cause fundamental changes to organizations and communities (Duffield & Dan, 2020). In this case, secondary schools have been able to adopt e-learning as an alternative approach to continue teaching-learning process. On the other hand, COVID-10 pandemic(s) reveal assumptions behind our theoretical mechanisms that we rarely question, allowing creation of new theory and integration of new evidence. Students are assigned their own desks, which are spaced 6 feet apart from each other. During recess, children are allowed to play only in small groups. Hand-washing and sanitization are an additional component to school re-opening. Students are asked to wash their hands hourly. Students and staff are asked to wear face masks, and other SOPs which remains expensive to students. Basing on this, the researcher therefore examined this COVID-19 pandemic regulations for its theoretical importance and substantive impact on the secondary school students in secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

### 1.1.3 Conceptual Background

**Pandemic:** According to Sidonia., Ochieng., David & Waiswa (2021), a pandemic refers to a disease prevalent over a whole country or the world. A pandemic is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide, affecting a substantial number of individuals. The researcher in this study considered a pandemic as a disease outbreak that spreads across countries or continents. It affects more people and takes more lives than an epidemic. The WHO declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic when it became that the illness was severe and that it was spreading quickly over a wide area.

**COVID-19 pandemic:** Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an RNA virus, with a typical crown-like appearance under an electron microscope due to the presence of glycoprotein spikes on its envelope (Veronese, 2020). On the other hand, World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) refers to COVID-19 as the disease caused by a new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. WHO first learned of this new virus on 31 December 2019, following a report of a cluster of cases of 'viral pneumonia' in Wuhan, People's Republic of China.

**Regulations:** Regulations is defined as a rule or directive made and maintained by an authority. It is an official rule or the act of controlling something. Regulating is the controlling of an activity or process, usually by means of rules (Duffield & Dan, 2020). The study looked at regulations as rules made by a government or other authority in order to control the way something is done or the way people behave.

**Students:** According to Adhanom (2020), a student refers to a person who studies, investigates, or examines thoughtfully. This study considered student as a person who is studying or pursuing his/her education career at secondary and higher institution of learning.

#### 1.1.4 Contextual Background

As the COVID-19 pandemic snowballs, the day-to-day reality has created a nightmarish situation in developed and developing economies, Uganda inclusive (Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021). And similarly, to the Ebola epidemic in North West Uganda, education has been one of the first casualties. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 addressed the nation on coronavirus. In his address, he noted that zero registered cases in Uganda at the time notwithstanding, the volatility of the virus demanded that we take preventive measures to avoid acquiring and spreading it. To this effect, all Primary and Secondary Schools, as well as all Universities and Tertiary Institutions, were to close by mid-day 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (Ssebwami, 2020). According to the Ministry of Education, 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 is uncertain, affecting reopening of schools and could lead to a very disruptive stop-go period during recovery, with schools reopening and then closing (Ssebwami, 2020). 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 (Tumwesigye, 2021).

In Kyotera District, the Presidential Directive and other measures or policies put in place by government of Uganda to slow the transmission of COVID-19 have led, to a massive demand and supply shock. This has led to significant education disruptions, as indicated by closure of schools, high teenage pregnancy, drop of school, and psychological health consequences to students (Kigozi, Henrik & Matsi, 2020). Exacerbated socio-economic hardships imposed on households by the health crisis in addition of lockdowns had ripple effects as families consider the financial and opportunity cost of education (UNESCO, 2020b). Dwindling incomes due to prolonged lockdown could mean that large numbers of students not 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. The impact was not limited on the educational system, it has also affected the student's learning experience when it comes to accessing research and study materials; for example, students' ability to access textbooks and resources they need to review can be hampered by a lack of copyright limitations and exceptions (Semanda, 2021).

In reality, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic caught secondary schools in Kyotera District and Kyotera Town Council inclusive unaware. Most of schools didn't have enough financial resources to keep managing and controlling daily schools activities (Kafero, 2020). Some of the secondary schools have tried to adopt

online classes (e-learning platforms); however being expensive to them and most of the schools have failed to afford and manage such platforms, thus students losing classes. Student rate of e-learning use during COVID-19 pandemic has remained as low as 15percent (Guma, 2021). In addition, student adoption rates seems to decline from secondary school to school, district to district as lamented by the UNESCO (2020). Limitations such as teaching methods, scheduling, and time have existed since the teacher and the learner are located in different places [Semanda, 2021]. Interestingly, data about the effect of the COVID-19 regulations including school closure, controlling public transport, and adherence to SOPS guidelines on the secondary school students in developed and developing countries are conflicting and equivocal (World Bank, 2020b; Adhanom, 2020; & Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021); and a wide range of impacts of school closures have been reported, from poor to substantial effects (Brackett & Christina, 2020); and no information capture the scenario in developing countries, Uganda inclusive. In view of this inconclusive study information, it was from such available information gap that the researcher explored the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school the students in Kyotera Town Council.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Public health emergencies affect the education and safety of children in several ways. Uganda, amidst its economic challenges, the unforeseen situation of the COVID-19 pandemic is another turn of the screw in the education situation of its school-going age population (Tumwesigye, 2021). Due to the COVID-19 outbreak in Uganda, the government instituted various COVID-19 pandemic regulations as the best alternative to reduce on its spread. The COVID-19 pandemic regulation instituted by the government of Uganda included; temporary closure of schools, restricted movement of people/students, temporary banning of public transport, banning of public gathering, and adherence to SOPs guidelines (Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021). More so, the COVID-19 pandemic forced government of Uganda to temporarily deciding to close schools for several months in 2020/2021 in an attempt to contain the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, impacting over students education attainment. School closures across Kyotera District between 2020 and 2021 made it difficult for the governments, local governments and school heads to find alternative ways to provide continued education, resulting in many students dropping out of school (Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021). Interestingly, with the existing COVID-19 regulations, the government emphasized e-learning for continued education. However, significant education disruptions such as high teenage pregnancy, drop of school, and psychological health consequences to students exists among students in Kyotera Town Council. The large numbers of students did not return to the classroom (Semanda, 2021), leaving a huge gap on government education program. In bridging this gap, the current study explored

the effects and copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

### 1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

#### 1.3.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

#### 1.3.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were;-

1. To examine the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.
2. To examine the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.
3. To identify the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

### 1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:-

- (i). What are the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

(ii). What are the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

(iii). What are the students copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

## 1.5 Scope of the Study

This research study was guided by these content scope, geographical scope, and time scope.

### 1.5.1 Content Scope

The research study concentrated more on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in kyotera town council. The independent variable (the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations) and the dependent variable (students) were examined. Specifically, the research study was limited towards establishing the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students learning in secondary schools, examining the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students wellbeing in secondary schools, and identifying the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in secondary schools.

### 1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The research study confined itself in five (5) selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. In this study, two (2) government secondary schools, two (2) private secondary schools, and one (1) government aided secondary school were considered for this study reasons/purposes. This particular area of the study was chosen for this study purposely because the secondary school students had experienced difficulties in learning and wellbeing to have resulted out of COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Semanda, 2021).

### 1.5.3 Time Scope

The research study covers literature information of four (4) years (from 2019-2022) when there was outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, forcing government to have regulations to reduce the spread of pandemic. This time was also considered convenient in providing enough information for making a robust assessment about the issue in question. More so, the research study considered the timeframe for the period of twelve (12) months, that is, from January 2022 to December 2022; so as to enable the academic researcher accomplish other university requirements within the specified period of time as per institution calendar.

### 1.6 Justification of the Study

Secondary schools in Uganda, and Kyotera District in particular were closed for some period of time during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of mitigation efforts to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2 (Tumwesige, 2021). Currently, the government have fully or partially re-opened schools but with stringent COVID-19 pandemic

regulations, including promoting e-learning, social distancing in classrooms, regulated number of people in public means of transport, compulsory immunization of all secondary school students, restricted parents visitation, and other SOPs guidelines targeting to promote students good health and enhance their academic attainment. Interestingly, secondary school students have continue to experience significant education disruptions such as high teenage pregnancy, drop of school, and psychological health consequences, leaving a huge gap on government education program (Semanda, 2021). The research shall be conducted at the end of the school year 2022, in order to shed light on the experiences of secondary school students in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic regulations under the unprecedented education crisis context, and the strict education protocols that had to be implemented in school life, due to the pandemic in-order to bridge this gap.

### 1.7 Significance of the Study

The results of the research study shall be of value to the following:

**Head-teachers:** Due to the scarcity of relevant contemporary field research, the study findings shall enrich the available literature on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary schools students in Uganda, as well as on the effective management practices and helpful factors that can contribute to students' education attainment amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

**Students:** It is very important to do this research; to show the challenges of the topic, to provide information to secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council in particular, so that this shall guide them in decision making on strategies towards

copying with the COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This shall be achieved by using the study's conclusions and recommendations as a case of reference necessary in identifying the potential gaps.

**The Policy Makers:** The research findings shall be used from local, district and ministry authorities for the proper planning and implementation of interventions, policies and strategies aimed at supporting and empowering secondary school students amidst the presence of COVID-19 pandemic regulations; thus able to formulate programs and to advise school management accordingly.

**The library users:** The research findings shall also be a main source of reference for any other researchers and library users (readers) intending to study more on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on secondary school students in Kyotera District and Uganda at-large.

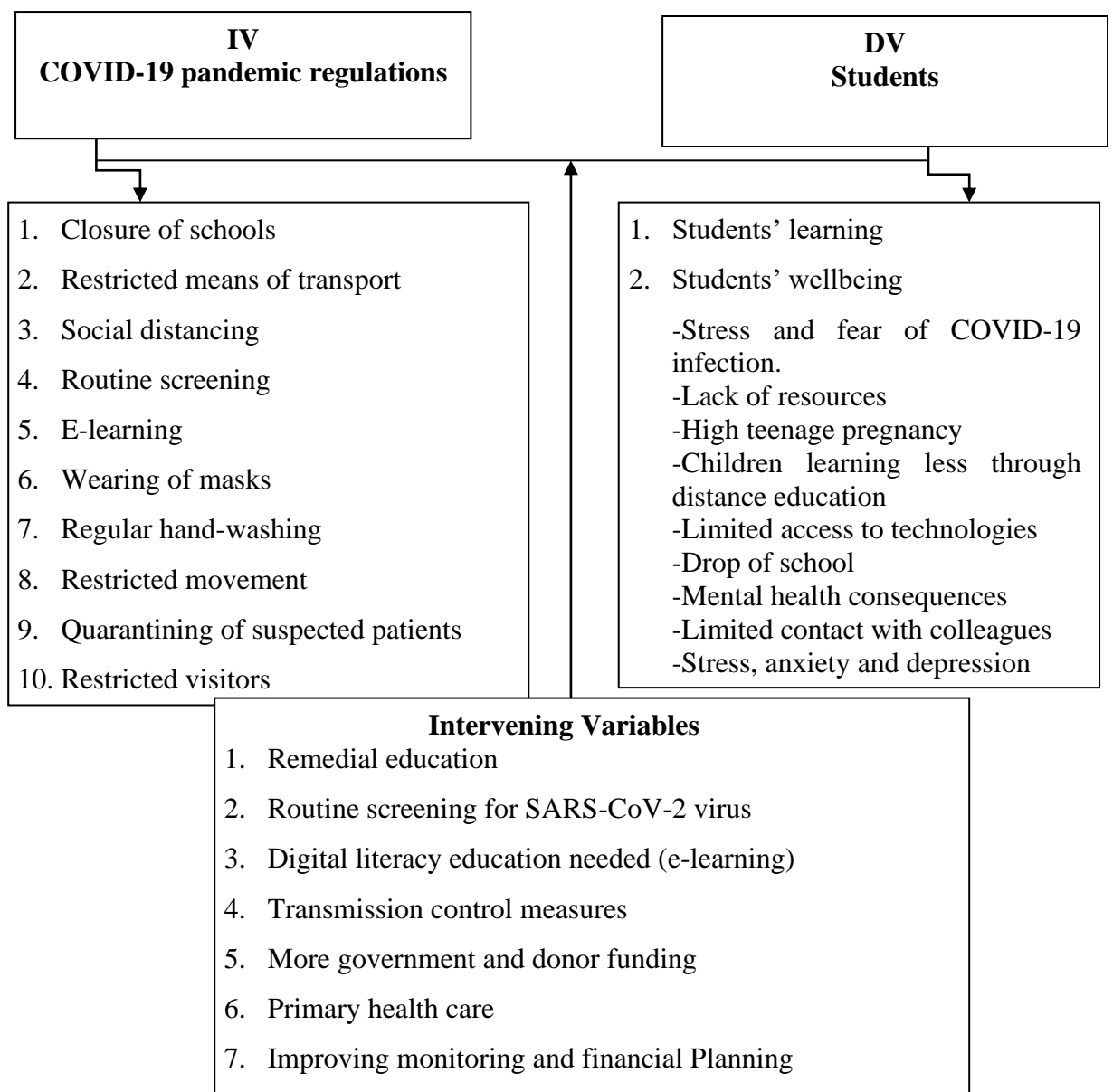
**The Future Researchers:** Like any other research, the study findings shall be used as a source of reference as far as further studies are concerned; and also spark off further research in the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

### 1.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework below indicates the relationship existing between the study variables; and also highlights the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and the secondary school students. Figure 1 below shows the concepts related to the two-study variables namely copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic as independent variable; and

students during the lockdown as a dependent variable. The figure depicts how the independent variables do affect the dependent variable. In the conceptual framework above, it is presumed that the copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic included elements of, closure of schools, restricted means of transport, social distancing, routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus, e-learning, wearing of masks, regular hand-washing, restricted movement, quarantining of suspected patients and restricted visitors. When all these are in place, it can enhance on the secondary school students leaning and wellbeing. Students were indicated by students' learning and wellbeing. All these can be changed with the existing intervening variables in place, and these include; remedial education; routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus; digital literacy education needed (e-learning); transmission control measures; more government and donor funding; primary health care; and improving monitoring and Financial Planning.

**Fig 1: Conceptual Framework**



*Source: Adopted from Duffield & Dan (2020);*

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter contains the related literature that underpins the study. It presents literature relevant to the study giving reference to the study objectives, sub-divided into four sections: the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students learning in secondary schools, the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students wellbeing in secondary schools, and the students copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic during the lockdown in secondary schools. There was a provision for a summary of the review of literature depicting the possible gaps that was identify during this study.

#### **2.1 Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students' Learning**

This area entails studies and reports on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. According to Eleftheria & Theodore (2021), most countries world-wide have implemented localized or national school closures in response to the COVID-19

pandemic, with estimates of >65% of enrolled children globally affected by school closures. Besides, Antara (2020) argue that the COVID-19 pandemic regulations leads children learning less through distance education. Students frequently studied few topics or less content through distance learning, and this has led many students to miss a lot of study content, a likelihood to greatly affect their class performance in the long run. The study took one method research design (quantitative); data was collected by use of questionnaires. Data was analyzed by percentages, mean scores, tables and standard deviation, unlike this study, that used both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Loayza & Pennings (2020) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic have made expensive to become expensive and not affordable by most parents. The introduction of e-learning during the lockdown and school closure has made education not free. Many parents were burdened by costs associated with trying to continue educating their children during school closures. Secondary education in most government and government aided schools is supposed to be for free under USE programme, but it was not the case during the COVID-19 pandemic, as students have to privately hire/pay teachers, and even buy electronic gadgets and data to access e-learning classes. In other-words, Kigozi., Ekenberg. Henrik & Matsi (2020) argued that the regulations as a result of COVID-19 outbreak has led to more schools adopting distance learning which is expected to negatively affect learners' enrolment and achievement. This could be due to the reduction in time they may devote to learning, changing in the way of interacting with fellow classmates (discussions), the decrease in motivation for

secondary school tasks, and the mental burden to learners, that may be caused by quarantine.

Anderson., Sonya & Bradley (2020) noted that there are 2,372,736 learners affected in Jordan by the closing of the educational institutions, of which 320,896 secondary school students. In addition to the above, Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021) revealed that COVID-19 pandemic regulations forced around 15million students in Uganda to go back home when schools were closed down as a measure to reduce the spread of the pandemic. Thus, the dangers associated with COVID-19 regulations especially that one of falling behind both socio-emotionally and cognitively is greater for school going children, students with disabilities and those students from less-advantaged backgrounds. In other words, United Nations (2020) revealed that learning loss “threaten to extend beyond current generation and this may erase decades of progress in developing countries, Uganda inclusive”; thus, could widen the socio-economic gap and inequality. However, the fore going study by Anderson., Sonya & Bradley was carried from outside Uganda, not fully secondary schools based and carried out almost 2 years ago. These constitute gaps namely of conducting a similar study in Uganda, and Kyotera Municipality in particular, thus a justification for this study.

Kigozi., Ekenberg. Henrik & Matsi (2020) noted of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations enhanced digital divide or limited access to technologies by some students in rural communities. A teacher in the Mathematics are informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya said, none of the students have access to internet-enabled smartphones’. In other words, lack of access to radios, television, computers, internet,

and data left many students unable to engage in remote learning. There was lesson offered on social media platforms, television and radios, but many students don't even have access to those devices. Therefore, this contributed to discrimination, since it didn't take all the children into account. Many children lack access to the internet, which is increasingly indispensable for education. On the other hand, Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021) noted that the introduction of e-learning platforms during school closure excited students. E-learning platforms are believed to have the potential to widen access, reduce costs, and to improve the quality of education in Africa, help education institutions meet the demands of a growing student population through technology-enhanced distance learning. E-learning is also known to attend to individual students' needs. However, the above study took a mixed methods research design, data in this study was collected by use of questionnaires, interviews, and focused group discussions. Data was also analyzed by percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and tables, which is similar to this study was conducted among secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

Additionally, Goldschmidt (2020) noted that Sub-Saharan African countries especially Egypt closed schools and universities for months and facilitates online distance electronic learning (e-learning). The pandemic of COVID-19 regulations caused several schools and colleges to remain temporarily closed. Face-to-face education was ended by numerous secondary schools, universities and colleges, which eventually will have negative impacts on educational activities, as social distance is crucial at this stage. Students missed social interactions with fellow students and teachers, missed remedial classes and having private academic discussions with their teaching staff.

This shutdown stimulated the growth of online educational activities so that there would be no interruption to education. Many secondary schools have been involved in how best to offer online course or subject material, involve students, and perform evaluations. Likewise, WHO (2020) conducted a study in Rwanda to find out students in e-learning mode have difficulty doing group projects due to a lack of on-school socialization, as stated by 42.9 percent of those surveyed.

More so, Adhanom (2020) noted that the expected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on education budgets in secondary schools has some similarities with past crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic caught secondary schools especially in developing countries unaware and not ready to fully finance their daily school activities; which explains why students gone for months/years without being contacted by their teachers or able to be taught through online. Besides, Anderson., Sonya & Bradley (2020) added that during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sub-Saharan African countries, public education spending fell sharply both in real terms and as a share of the education budget, falling from 15 to 12 percent of total government or donor spending between 2020 and 2021. However, the impact of the financial crisis in 2021 on education budgets was mixed, including lack of school furnishing, inadequate laboratory equipment and inadequate textbooks have been experienced after reopening of schools.

Antara (2020) further argued that cuts in COVID-19 pandemic regulations can have a detrimental impact on education outcomes. There is limited evidence on the impact of such regulations on education outcomes, particularly in developing countries, Uganda

inclusive. In the US, evidence suggests that the existing COVID-19 pandemic regulations have small negative impacts both on learning and on secondary schools' enrollment rates. Besides, Mwara *et al.*, (2021) argued that like other East African countries, Kenya faced significant challenges in secondary education and transferred its in-person educational system to virtual learning. A particular urgent challenge was for face-to-face secondary subjects to be delivered online, more specifically science subjects practicals to be done in school laboratory. The study took descriptive, analytical and normative approaches to explore the practices of a representative sample of secondary school stakeholders while identifying a number of distinctive intervention strategies that existing theoretical models only limit; however, this study was conducted in Kyotera Town Council applying a mixed method.

In accordance to the Eleftheria & Theodore (2021), students and teaching staff in secondary schools have observed and experienced difficulties in adherence to and implementation trying to achieve and implement Standard Operating Procedures as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations. In general, all the school directors and head teachers have faced with great challenges and difficulties in managing and organizing the secondary schools" according to the government recommended health protocols. In order for such secondary schools in complying with the health contingency measures, and to avoid school/class overcrowding, the directors and head teachers have to make necessary changes to the timetable"; and the familiar routine of the secondary school, which have a direct effect on students academic outcomes. Besides, Antara (2020) noted that the control and management of students and school classes is a difficult task for many school managers, as they had to make provision for

different breaks; small class arrangements; continuous teaching hours and an increase in teachers on-call time. However, this study took one method qualitative research design, data was collected by use of interview guide and analyzed thematically, unlike this study, that used both quantitative and qualitative methods.

In terms of disruption of daily educational and pedagogical work, Adhanom (2020) noted that the majority of secondary school head-teachers and directors pointed out that a lot of energy and time is spent in keeping to the health protocols at the expense of the educational process. Some head-teachers of secondary school, notably, pointed out that “the measures are contrary to pedagogical practices of the secondary school. It is also noted that “stable members/groups in the secondary school make it difficult to carry out the curriculum; and thus, making the implementation of plenum impossible. In another case, secondary schools head-teacher have further expressed her sadness, and this because, according to her words, I cannot hug them (learners) and make them feel safe and loved at school. Moreover, Ssebwami (2020) asserted that most of the school managers further highlighted that the use of mask by students is terribly annoying; they make teaching and learning process to become difficult. More particularly, it is mentioned that there is also difficulty in communicating with learners when wearing a mask as well as bigger effort is required and needed to be understood and to understand, because of the use of mask”. The consequence was that “teaching staff also feel exhausted”, “[...] they are in most cases forced to speak louder; they do not breathe normally due to wearing masks; and when they return home, they feel more exhausted and tired than in previous years”. Another effect that fewer head-teachers pointed out was that “only frontal teaching is now commonly adopted”. It is

even noted that due to the restrictive COVID-19 measures, there is “[...] particular difficulty in conducting the class lesson of gymnastics”. With regards to the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in question, the researcher developed a sense of concern in achieving knowledge on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students’ learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

## 2.2 Outcomes of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students Wellbeing

This area entails studies and reports on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students’ wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. According to Svenja., Konig., Thomas & Frey (2021), mental health services are an ongoing need for many students. In terms of mental health consequences, many students shared feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation, and depression, which they linked to the lack of contact with their school community. Students tend to be stressful when they have to study alone, think about their school and friends. On the other hand, Jorge & Verlenden (2020) argues that more than a year of “staggering” loss, grief, isolation, and uncertainty has taken a toll on many students’ mental health, compounding the challenges students face in the classroom, whether online or in person. However, the study took a mixed methods research design; data were collected by the use of questionnaires, interviews, focused group discussions. Data were analyzed by percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and tables, which was similar to this study conducted among secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

Additionally, Ssebwami (2020) asserts that nearly three in ten parents surveyed in a central Uganda poll said their child was “experiencing harm to [their] emotional or mental health,” with 45% citing the separation from teachers and classmates as a

“major challenge.” Suicidal ideation was also on the rise among increase in negative feelings during the pandemic, as did many of their parents. And throughout the 2020-21 school year, educators, parents, and administrators across the country continued to cite social and emotional wellbeing as major challenges facing their students, especially those learning from home. Besides, Tumwesige (2021) argued that meanwhile many districts and secondary schools, straining under logistical challenges and uncertain budgets, have pointed to staffing shortages as an ongoing challenge in supporting students who are struggling. Nearly 70 percent of school managers who participated in a survey conducted early in 2021 said they could not meet their students’ mental health needs with the staff they had. Concern has also been reported about children facing heightened risks of abuse at home through the pandemic. The findings and suggestions of the studies above are varied but were carried in few parts of Uganda and are not education based in nature. This constitutes a gap of a similar study in Uganda which is education-based, thus a justification for this study to close this gap.

Loayza & Pennings (2020) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic regulations have resulted into a massive income and health shock for many households. The household income of many families declined as rates of unemployment and underemployment rise, which eventually undermine their capability to afford their children school fees. Given the global nature of the economic crisis, even households that rely on remittances are likely to see their incomes go down as a result of the pandemic. More so, Rahman & Matin (2020) further noted that in many households, particularly poor households, these declines in household income shall reduce their investments in

education, and this shall be exacerbated by the health shocks associated with the pandemic. The study by Rahman & Matin took one method research design (quantitative), data was collected by use of questionnaires. Data was analyzed by percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and tables, unlike we used both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Loayza & Pennings (2020) further stated that challenges associated with social distancing in schools/classes as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulation; in addition to students and teachers use of the mask troubled all school managers. A private secondary school head-teachers and their directors characteristically noted that the main challenge or difficulty was the adaptation of our learners to the compulsory use of the mask and more especially to keeping distances outside the classroom. Several heads of private secondary schools cited [...] the young age of learners in managing measures as an obstacle, noting that a lot of energy and time was spent in learning to regular use the mask. Many school directors, of all nature of schools, categories and grades, further noted that the large number of learners per secondary school class which may create a significant difficulty in complying with the health measures. Moreover, Rahman & Matin (2020) revealed that several school managers has faced the refusal to comply with the health measures by some members of the school community; the suspicion towards the instructions, and the doubt about the existence or the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic”, and this have worsened the situation of fear and anxiety among students for the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic within schools; thus study among secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council to ascertain the situation at the ground.

Ssebwami (2020) argued that the school managers and heads of secondary schools also reported that there were “parents and guardians who refused to bring their children to secondary school”. In some cases, there were “disapprovals of teaching staff for the secondary school mode”. The effect of these phenomena is/was, in some cases, the creation of “tension in the relation with guardians, parents, learners and colleagues”. In one case, a head teacher of secondary school based in a Roma community reported that he had to work and deal with the “reaction of the local-school community against the COVID-19 pandemic measures”. Though, some parents completely refused to take their children with asthma for instance back to schools in fear of existing COVID -19 pandemic. However, the above study took a mixed methods research design, data in this study was collected by use of questionnaires, and interview guide, and later analyzed by mean scores and standard deviation, which was similar to this study conducted among secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

Moreover, the current study literature highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic regulations have severely injured students’ sense of security (Adhanom, 2020); putting them at risk for post-traumatic stress and other mental-health problems. This situation has created more fear among learners to join secondary schools with inadequate financial base or resources to cater for the recommended SOPs (Anderson., Sonya & Bradley, 2020). Under this spectrum, the need for open schools, secondary schools inclusive is urgent, and aligns with the measures that specific countries have to take to contain the pandemic (World Bank, 2020b). The available evidence from previous severe epidemics in developing countries, in which restrictive measures have been implemented, underscores the importance of returning to secondary school for many

students; even under different circumstances (Brackett & Christina, 2020). The return of secondary students to their daily routines has contributed to the consolidation of stability and continuity, and is also associated with reduced traumatic fatigue and stress after an epidemic condition. In that sense, the protection of already vulnerable school community members, control or management of students and teachers in schools with possible positive diagnoses, and care to avoid stigma have been given less priorities. Students faced the huge role in coping with a set of strict health protocols, and this happened with basic health measures; including the total use of facemasks, physical distance in classrooms, and regular hand disinfection; and this has been done in order to reduce potential viral transfer among students and other members of the school community.

Rahman & Matin (2020) also argued that the COVID-19 pandemic regulations led the reductions in income and the need for greater health spending, making it difficult for some families to cover education costs. Previous economic shocks in low-income countries have reduced incomes, lowered household education spending, and led to lower rates of school participation (World Bank, 2020b). In Sierra Leone, the COVID-19 pandemic regulations crisis created a significant economic shock that led to a large drop in girls' enrollment rates in school (Adhanom, 2020). The Asian Financial Crisis in 2020 noted that the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations led to a significant decline in household income in many countries. In Indonesia, these reductions in family incomes led to a 17 percent fall in education spending among rural households and a 10 percent fall among urban households as well as a drop in enrollment rates,

particularly for the poorest children (World Bank, 2020b); which was similar to this study conducted among secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

Crawford, *et al.*, (2020) added that secondary school students in secondary schools have stress and fear of COVID-19 infection. In a study conducted in developing countries by Crawford et al., identified a significant number of school directors who mentioned that from the beginning of the school year after COVID-19 pandemic, the management of the anxiety and fear in relation to coronavirus as a major difficulty. A head teacher of a high school characteristically made the following comment: “there were students who were afraid to come in contact with colleagues, and were thinking about how to get to the classroom. And it was normal and this because almost everyone had a problem related to COVID-19 such as: belonging to vulnerable groups themselves or someone of their own, they had elderly parents, a child with a problem, mention them.” Besides, Duffield & Dan (2020) added that some school managers also shared “the personal stress and fear for the health of mine and of my intimates”. Moreover, it is also noted that there is challenges and difficulties regarding the management of sick learners in schools in general. The “ambiguity of what may happen even the same day” has provoked particularly negative perception and feelings to some directors or head teachers, to the point of feel like “[...] laboratory animals” according to one’s words.

Adhanom (2020) also noted that there is a lack of scientific consensus about the consequences of secondary school closures and re-openings on community transmission of SARS-CoV-2. In this regard, there is considerable concern about the indirect impact of secondary school closures on learners and their parents. Most

models of secondary school re-opening also involve reductions of class size, presence of increasing physical distance between learners, and keeping learners in defined groups with limited interaction between groups so as to reduce the ability and potential for wide-scale transmission within school community. World Bank (2020b) also noted that most developing countries that have re-opened schools; have instituted some degree of staggering the start, stop, and break times within the secondary school. In this case, a number of developing countries tend to use alternate shifts (morning or afternoon) or alternate days, while a smaller number of countries have also maintained relatively normal school calendar/schedules. Further, Anderson., Sonya & Bradley (2020) argued that in a number of developing countries, those face masks are required for learners and/or teaching and non-teaching staff in schools. It is thus not clear explains the health related challenges faced by students in Kyotera Town Council in trying to implement standard operating procedures during the COVID-10 pandemic, a concern that this study tried to ascertain.

It is argued that teaching staff are already experiencing the challenge of declining in confidence and enormous stress, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only deepened that reality (Brackett & Cipriano, 2020). Due to the unpredictable nature of these pandemic, and the feeling that there is no end, students and teaching staff are in danger of massively exhibiting an insidious type of burn-out which is a challenge to overcome. Organizing the secondary school according to the protocol (SOPs guidelines) is also particularly expensive and painful process; not only because the daily routine of school had to be alit bit changed, but mainly because they had to care about the adaptation of both teaching staff and learners to these new SOPs measures,

but also for their proper observance. As students' mental health can also affect students' learning ability and progress, as also noted (Crawford *et al.*, 2020), in view of the re-opening of secondary schools in the fall, school managers also urged to focus on the mental health and wellbeing of their students; in addition to finding ways of supporting and maintaining a strong sense of school community, despite the adverse circumstances, and is the focus of this study.

The prevalence of poverty has also increased the risk of exploitation, child neglect, maltreatment and child abuse, and this has occurred during COVID-19 public health emergencies or lockdown (Duffield & Dan, 2020). More so, the quarantine or tight isolation measures that is suddenly taken to mitigate the viral spread and contagion of COVID-19, has continued to violate basic psychological human needs, such as autonomy, competence and affiliation. The COVID-19 pandemic regulation had a serious negative impact on mental health, created fear and exacerbating pre-existing psychopathology (Argyropoulou., *et al.*, 2021). There are valid worry and fears about the increase in anxiety, depression, and substance abuse among students in secondary school students during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. It has been widely documented that students from low socio-economic home environments are at greater risk for poor social, physical, physiological and mental health among secondary students. It is thus not clear explains the effect of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students' health consequences in Kyotera Town Council, a concern that this study tried to ascertain.

### 2.3 The Students Copying Mechanisms of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations

This area entails studies and reports on the students copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools of Kyotera Town Council. According to Antara (2020), there is need to emphasize learning using technologies in Uganda. Innovative and distance approach to education is synonymous to learning using technologies in the 21st century. Learning technologies, that is, print-material, radio, television, video, audio, telephone, computers and the internet-appear to offer an answer to not only enabling learning to continue where education has been disrupted but also to offer opportunities for overcoming geographical access and rigidities of conventional education. Besides, Jorge & Verlenden (2021) argued that the digital literacy education is needed. Digital literacy for students and teachers is increasingly recognized as an indispensable element of children's right to education. There is a window of opportunity to set-up learning systems that could enable the continuation of education through innovative and distance approaches.

Additionally, Svenja.,Thomas & Frey (2021) argues that governments should prepare to immediately get learners back to school once COVID-19 is under control locally-with careful public health planning, in line with World Health Organization guidance, to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19; including by following up individually with children who do not show up for classes and try to re-engage them. This should include support to girls who married or became pregnant or parents during the school closure. In other words, governments should ensure all children and adolescents can access accurate, rights-based, and age-appropriate information about their sexual and reproductive health, through mandatory comprehensive sexuality education, including by distance learning. However, the study took a mixed methods

research design, data was collected by use of questionnaires, interviews, focused group discussions. Data was analyzed by percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and tables, which was similar to this study conducted among secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

According to Brackett & Christina (2020), the compulsory use of facemasks and the social distancing of two meters in schools, especially during breaks, were reported as one of the recommended COVID-19 pandemic regulations. The social distancing and the use of a mask in secondary school greatly disturbed the educational process and the pedagogical work in general. However, being one of the measures to reduce on the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, they referred to these challenges in communication with learners, in delivering lessons in classroom, and in carrying out the curriculum, with frontal teaching as the only possible practice. This fact, combined with the large number of students per stream or class, it made it impossible for the SOPs protocols applied exactly.

Further, Kafero (2020) observed that in countries like Greece, the maximum number of learners per class amounts or dont exceed to 25, with a minimum of 15. Moreover, the majority of the head teachers pointed out that In-terms of transmission control measures, Antara (2020) argued that most countries have instituted some combination of school-based measures intended to reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2 among students and teaching staff. These mostly include the use of face masks (with some variability in age requirements: Belgium, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam); reduced class size (typically 10-15 students or

approximately 50% capacity: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, South Korea, Norway, Scotland proposed, Switzerland). Some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have not reduced class size, many of which are relying on other measures to reduce transmission such as closing secondary schools with confirmed cases and using desktop dividers to increase physical separation between classroom desks and cafeteria seating without increasing physical distance between students (Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda). Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021) noted of the required temperature checks at private secondary school entries have been instituted in some countries. Routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus or antibodies is reported on a small scale in Sub Saharan Africa. Systematic contact tracing in the event that a student or staff tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 or has confirmed COVID-19 pandemic is reported in some African countries, Uganda inclusive.

Guma (2021) argued that COVID-19 mandatory vaccinations for secondary school students and teachers as one of the regulations for COVID-19 pandemic. Mandatory vaccinations for certain workforces are in place for those who stay or work in most vulnerable, are at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19 or being exposed to any new variants. While each student and teaching workforce has its own set of risk factors, vaccination is a vital measure they have in common for reducing infection and transmission. While, most people in these sectors have been already vaccinated, and many have received booster doses, complete protection a cross these sectors is critical to the countrys successful management of COVID-19 pandemic (Semanda, 2021). In Uganda, there was a presidential directive that all teaching staff must be fully

vaccinated, in addition to staying within the school premises as a measure to reduce on COVID-19 spread.

Additionally, schools were closed during partial lockdown as a result of COVID 19 pandemic. Specifically, schools in Uganda, Rwanda and Kenya closed down under the government or presidential directives. Students were setback homes and teachers allowed to also leave school premises. Such COVID-19 pandemic regulations like school closures are less likely to be effective as a single COVID-19 control measure, but it requires to be matched with other public health response measures outside the school setting. On the other hand, WHO (2021) noted that governments instituted regulations against freedom to speech, assembly (gathering) and movement, schools were closed down, SOPs emphasized and e-learning were encouraged. In Uganda, public means of transports was strictly stopped apart for those of cars that belonged to security and essential workers with stickers from the Ministry of Transports and Works.

Brackett, Mark & Scott (2020) noted that e-learning was emphasized. Some secondary schools could have time table for e-learning, government also went ahead to distribute reading materials to students at home (door-to-door) in some parts of the country. There was a proposal distribution of radio per each household, in addition to television per village/parish level to ease e-learning. Antara (2020) argue there is an opportunity to develop digital literacies and more equitable systems. This required all education stakeholders to support efforts to transition from the traditional rote learning approach with very limited scope for the application of concepts to a more practical and

interactive approach that supports critical thinking, creativity and lends itself to a learner-centred instructive approach and electronic learning. With regards to the COVID-19 regulations in question, the researcher developed a sense of concern in achieving knowledge on the existing COVID-19 regulations on secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

More so, Ssebwami (2020) revealed that before schools physically re-open, those offering remote learning should track which students participate, reach out to those not participating, and try to help them re-engage. On the other hand, Sidonia., Ochieng, David & Waiswa (2021) noted that governments should provide remedial education for children who were unable to follow distance education and for children who were out of school due to other causes prior to the pandemic and school closure. Governments should especially focus on children most excluded or at risk; including children with disabilities, children living in poverty, refugee and migrant children; children who work or involved in child labour, children in rural areas, and paying particular attention to girls within these groups.

Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021) argued that governments should protect children education budgets and ensure public education systems are adequately resourced, both to ensure they can adequately respond to existing and emerging needs, procure all required SOPs materials, and to resource their vision for inclusive education. They should ensure that all schools have access to water and sanitation, sufficient numbers of adequately trained teachers, and appropriate, accessible school infrastructure to prevent overcrowding. Besides, Tumwesigye (2021) argues that governments should

perform due diligence to ensure that any technology they recommend for online learning protects children's privacy rights. Governments and schools should include data privacy clauses in any contracts they sign with technology or 'Ed Tech' providers, in order to protect the data collected on children during this time from misuse. Over the longer term, governments should institute data protection laws for children.

UNESCO (2020b) noted that governments recognize that digital literacy and access to the internet are increasingly indispensable for children to realize their rights to education, and should take all possible measures to provide affordable, reliable and accessible internet service for all students. They should take steps to mitigate disproportionate hardships for poor and marginalized populations, including finding ways to provide discounted and free access to data, services and computers. Additionally, Ssebami (2020) argued that any governmental and non-governmental efforts to encourage children to return to school when school reopened should be over-inclusive, that is; should also be directed at children who were excluded from education due to other causes prior to the pandemic. In countries and communities where girls' enrolment or completion of secondary school is lower than boys, governments should consider launching or continuing financial incentives to ensure parents enable girls return to school as soon as it is safe. However, the foregoing study was carried out outside Kyotera District, not fully secondary schools based and carried out almost 2 years ago. These further constitute gaps namely of conducting a similar study in Uganda, thus a justification for this study.

Guma (2021) noted that when schools reopen, governments should ensure that all students have access to free primary health care, and ensure secondary education is accessible and free. As part of their COVID-19 response packages, governments should provide financial support to offset school-related expenses for children whose families suffered economic hardship and would not be able to return to school otherwise. Besides, Kigozi., Ekenberg. Henrik & Matsi (2020) argued that school managers and counsellors need to engage counselling services to those students with psychological or mental health challenges so as to accept the responsibility to implement the COVID-10 regulations.

According to Loayza & Pennings (2020), secondary school head-teachers and directors are involved in solving the COVID-19 pandemic regulations related challenges; and access to required information, school infrastructure and relevant services were major factors that could help the head-teachers to manage crisis effectively, COVID-19 pandemic regulations inclusive. Eleftheria & Theodore (2021) argued clearer health information and guidance through media and other social platforms need to be enhanced to attract students' attention and awareness on issues concerning the COVID-19 pandemic regulations. According to Eleftheria & Theodore (2021), there is need to emphasize schedules. Students should start learning in sessions to avoid congestion and adhere to social distancing. Many secondary schools in different developing countries have staggered start times, break times, and dismissal times to increase physical distancing. Some developing countries have adopted alternative school schedules to accommodate smaller class sizes and to ensure greater social distancing. Approaches include having students attending alternate shifts

(morning and afternoon) or attending alternate days. The ongoing crisis further highlights the need to address these information gaps.

World Bank (2020b) noted that there is funding needs for the COVID-19 Response. Developing effective responses to the pandemic shall place even greater demands on government education budgets. Public funds shall be needed to protect children, to minimize the learning losses associated with school closures, and to meet the challenges related to the eventual re-opening of schools. Besides, Brackett., Mark & Scott (2020, p.8) argued that while schools are closed, it is important to ensure that adequate resources are made available for remote learning and to maintain and expand student support programs. During school closures, funds shall be required to support remote learning that were not included in recent budgets. Moreover, school feeding programs and other student support programs (such as stipends) are likely to become even more needed. Resources to ensure that these programs continue and, where possible, increase their coverage shall be critical for enabling students to continue to learn. For example, in the US, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is providing six-month deferments on student loans and has allocated US\$12.6 billion to higher education institutions, with half of this funding earmarked for providing emergency aid grants for students.

Brackett., Mark & Scott (2020) argued that education institutions shall also require additional funding to implement new health and safety requirements, undertake the outreach activities needed to persuade students to return, and facilitate remedial teaching to minimize learning losses. There is substantial evidence to show that

providing grants to schools is an effective use of funds for reducing the chances that children will drop out (Crawford., Laura., Beth., Jacqui & Imogen, 2020). Since many countries already have these mechanisms in place, governments can use them to get funds to where they are most needed. However, countries whose governments find it impossible to protect their overall levels of spending will need to explore ways to reallocate resources for the pandemic response. For example, as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in Ethiopia, the government waived school fees, which was an essential factor in encouraging children to return to school. In terms of improving monitoring and financial planning of private secondary schools, Kaul , noted that minimizing learning losses due to COVID-19 pandemic regulations and tackling the learning crisis shall require better monitoring. It is thus not clear explains the ways in which secondary school students can be managed with the existing COVID-19 pandemic regulations in Kyotera Town Council, a concern that this study tried to ascertain.

#### 2.4 Summary of Literature Review

In conclusion, the coronavirus pandemic highlights the ongoing need for education to be the first line of defense in crisis -not the first casualty. The more than 15 million children out of school as a result of COVID-19 underline the need for a sustainable solution for education in emergencies through a dedicated resource pool. Education must remain a priority despite the COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Kafero, 2020).

Securing the continued provision of education in secondary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic is not only important, it is a necessity to control the spread of the virus and facilitate the rebuilding process. This is not an easy challenge and the solutions required may seem intractable and overwhelming. Nevertheless, this study serves as a contribution to efforts to highlight the opportunities and key challenges or barriers Uganda faces in trying to diffuse technology-based learning to reach its populace and address issues of poverty and educational access.

The digital divide in Uganda highlights the enormous inequality gap. The difficulty of accessing learning technologies and level of digital literacy skills between privileged and the deprived groups continues to widen the education gap. For the vast majority of learners living in rural Uganda, online learning is but a dream within a dream. The daily realities and struggles to access basic needs, means education is often not a priority (Ssebawami, 2020). As a nation, the current state of technology infrastructure and access in Uganda only allows for electronic measures to serve a few and only provide basic programs, and cannot be comprehensive or long-term solutions.

Uganda cannot afford to continue to look from the sidelines. Talk and discussions on fully embracing ICT in education must be turned into action. Policymakers must continue to seek long-term solutions that allow equitable education for all through consultation processes, learning and interaction with stakeholders. Policymakers should avoid short-term political and emergency-induced solutions that are often short-sighted and are not holistic. Similarly, schools and higher education institutions need to lead the shift to the new ways of teaching and learning. This demands that

institutions ensure that teachers develop the required digital literacy skills, develop effective pedagogical strategies, and develop peer collaborations and support to secure adequate technology and bandwidth.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents research design, area of the study, information sources, study population and sampling techniques, in addition to variables and indicators. It also presents the measurements levels, procedure for data collection, data collection instruments; quality/error control, data processing, analysis and interpretation; ethical consideration and approvals; and methodological considerations.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research study used a cross section survey design, where both quantitative and qualitative approaches adopted. A cross sectional surveys collects data to make inferences about a population of interest (universe) at one point in time. Cross-sectional surveys were repeated periodically (Cohen, 2011). The study was based on cross section survey design where selected secondary schools in Kyotera town council were considered. In this sense, qualitative data was obtained with the help of an interview guide and quantitative data was based on a designed questionnaire.

According to Cohen (2011), research design could be defined as a general plan that gives an outline on how data was collected and data analysis procedures. A cross sectional survey design employed a descriptive and analytical research design due to the need of making inferences about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations on the secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council. This research design was adopted to answer the research questions.

### 3.2 Description of the Study Area

The research study confined itself in five (5) selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. In this study, two (2) government secondary schools, two (2) private secondary schools, and one (1) government aided secondary school were considered for this study reasons/purposes. Kyotera is a Town Council in Kyotera District in Central Uganda. Kyotera district was created in 2015, by Act of Parliament and it became functional on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017. Before, it was part of Rakai District. The district comprises of two constituencies of Kakuuto and Kyotera. The district neighbours Rakai district, Lwengo District, Kalangala District and Masaka District. Directly south of the district is the Missenyi district in the Kagera region of Tanzania. This particular area of the study was chosen for this study purposely because the secondary school students had experienced education attainment and others experiencing psychological health consequences to have resulted out of COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Semanda, 2021).

### 3.3 Source of Information

Creswell (2014) refers to information sources as the available or existing recognized literature whether unpublished or published as long as it has been well documented and accepted by the academic for any organization of good reputation. In this case therefore, the researcher used both secondary and primary sources of data. Primary sources of data are those which were collected afresh from the field for the first time; and this happen to be new in nature, original in character; and these were also collected from target participants through questionnaires and interviewing. On the other hand, secondary data, according to Kothari (2013) is the data is collected and analyzed by someone else, and in most cases published. These included sources like journals, textbooks magazines, research reports, newspapers and other internet sources.

### 3.4 Study Population and Sample Techniques

#### 3.4.1 Population

Kothari (2013) termed population to mean a collection of humans. It is the whole number of inhabitants or people in a country or particular region. The study population size considered in this study to be 165 (Kyotera Town Council Education Report, 2021; 2022). The study population comprised of Head-teachers, deputy head teachers, classroom teachers, school counselors and students. School counselors were selected and used in order to obtain accurate, reliable and valid information relevant for this study. On the other hand, head teachers, deputy head teachers and teachers were also interviewed to get variety of ideas, views and relevant information to make these study findings more accurate, reliable and comprehensive for the benefit of this society.

Students were also selected in order to obtain core, reliable and valid information required for this study.

### 3.4.2 Sample Size Determination

In order to obtain reliable and valid information, a total of three hundred and (100) respondents were obtained from 165 target population by following formula according to Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table, of which five (5) were head teachers (one head teacher from each school), five (5) were school counselors (one counselor from each school); ten (5) deputy head teachers (one from each school), fifty (50) teachers and one hundred (100) students as its indicated in Table 1 below. These categories of respondents gave the researcher valuable and professional views which made the findings more credible. It's imperative to note that all respondents were interviewed and their responses were well captured.

Table 1: Category of Respondents, Sample Size and Selection

<b>Category of Respondents</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Sample selection</b>
Head teachers	05	05	Purposive sampling
Deputy head-teachers	05	05	Purposive Sampling
School counselors	05	05	Purposive Sampling
Classroom teachers	50	25	Simple random
Students	100	60	Simple random
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Source: Guided by Krejcie & Morgan (1970) table (see Appendix 1)**

### 3.4.3 Sampling Techniques

In order to get accurate and better results, the research study employed simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques.

#### 3.4.3.1 Purposive Sampling

Head-teachers, deputy head teachers and school counselors were purposively chosen or selected and these category(s) of respondents were interviewed from their work places, and were further purposively chosen because of the positions they hold in a school. The information from these participants was of great health to analyze the validity of the research problem at hand. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which the researcher has to rely on their own judgment when choosing particular members of the target population to participate in their research study (Cohen, 2011).

#### 3.4.3.2 Simple Random Sampling

Classroom teachers and students were selected by proportionate representation using the stratified random sampling method and this was done to ensure that all of them were equally represented. Two sets of small pieces of paper of the same size were prepared for all the teachers for each school. That is; 100 small pieces of the papers for the teachers carried the writing Yes and the rest carried the writing No. All were placed in a container and each teacher was asked to take only one piece of paper from the container. If the writing on the paper read Yes, the teachers

participated in the study. The same approach was also employed for the students where 100 papers were carried the writing Yes and the other carried the writing No and a representative of each student was asked to pick only one from the container to determine his/her chance of participating in the study. Simple random sampling was used in order to avoid bias and to ensure that each of them had an equal chance of being selected from each of the 5 randomly selected secondary schools. In statistics, a simple random sample is a sub-set of individuals chosen from a larger set. In this sense, each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual had the same probability (Cohen, 2011).

### 3.5 Variables and Indicators

#### 3.5.1 Variables

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2013), a variable is a measurable feature or characteristic that assumes different values among subjects. For the basis of this academic research study, the researcher will concentrate at the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations to be considered as an independent variable; whereas, the students as an dependent variable.

#### 3.5.2 Indicators

The effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations elements of closure of schools, restricted means of transport, social distancing, routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus, e-learning, wearing of masks, regular hand-washing, restricted movement, quarantining of suspected patients and restricted visitors. On the other hand, students during the lockdown was also characterized or included elements of

students' learning and students' wellbeing (i.e stress and fear of COVID-19 infection, lack of resources, high teenage pregnancy, children learning less through distance education, limited access to technologies, drop of school, mental health consequences, limited contact with colleagues, increasing negative feeling, stress, anxiety and depression).

### 3.6 Measurement Levels

Measurement is the process of assigning numbers to various degrees of observations, opinions and attitudes about variables and the level of measurement is a function of the rules under which the numbers are assigned (Kothari, 2013). For the questionnaire, the variables “the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations on the secondary school students” were measured using an ordinal scale of the 5 point-Likert scale format (Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1) adopted from Firdaus (2006) and modified according to the objectives of this study was employed.

The Likert scale technique was used to assign a scale value to statements (indicators of the chosen dimensions of COVID-19 pandemic regulations) then measured the respondents favorableness towards the given point of view. The Likert type scale of measuring variables were chosen because it was easy to construct, takes much less time, it was considered more reliable as under it, respondents answer each statement will include in the questionnaire and it allowed use of statements that did not have a direct relationship to the attitude being studied (Kothari, 2013).

The questionnaire was designed basing on the four-point Likert scale. This provided options for respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement to the question items. The options were generally based on the categorization (see table 2).

Table 2: Scale for interpretation of the mean value range

<b>Mean Range</b>	<b>Response mode</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
4.01 - 5.00	Strongly Agree	Very high effect
3.01 - 4.00	Agree	High effect
2.01- 3.00	Disagree	Low effect
1.01 - 2.00	Strongly Disagree	Very low effect

The questionnaire was divided into sections based on the constructs in the independent variable and the dependent variable. Thus: section A items on personal information, section B items on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools, section C on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in secondary schools, and section D on the students' coping mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools.

In analyzing the responses from the Likert scale of the questionnaire, means and standard deviation were generated through the SPSS package was obtained and an appropriate scale to interpret the means were used. Interpretation of results from the regression analysis was based on the standard regression (0.05). If below the

standard, then the COVID-19 pandemic will have a significant positive effect on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council; and if it was above the standard then it means that the COVID-19 pandemic regulations had no significant effect on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

### 3.7 Procedure for Data Collection

A proposal for the study was developed and approved by the Uganda Christian University Ethical Research Committee as well as School of Education of Uganda Christian University (UCU) to conduct research study (in Appendix VI). All relevant documentation was obtained before visiting the study schools. Furthermore, the head-teachers of the different schools were consulted and give permission to conduct the study in their schools. The researcher met with selected participants from the selected secondary schools and questionnaires were distributed or interviewed. After the respondents had completed filling in the questionnaires, the researcher collected questionnaires that same day ready for analysis. All items of same category was brought together; answered given by respondents were classified into categories and given codes. The researcher ensured the codes were exhausted, mutually exclusive and linked to the objectives of the study. The process also included coding, editing of data and tabulation. Editing was done to remove errors and mistakes and entered into a computer program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for further processing and analysis while an interview guide and FDG (Appendix III, IV & V) were used on students, head-teachers, deputy head teachers and school counselors.

### 3.8 Data Collection Instruments

The research study was guided by the following research instruments:

#### 3.8.1 The Questionnaire

Teachers answered the likert scale designed questionnaires. This form of likert form of questionnaires was structured following the pertinent study objectives. The questionnaire was also had sections with sub-headings reflecting the study objectives and this provided quantitative data. According to Kenyon (2009), questionnaire gives participants' rights and freedom to elicit some relevant information in details, and this was as a result of that open-ended nature of some of the items it consisted of. The questionnaires were used to obtain and collect quantitative data so as to ensure confidentiality. The questionnaires were organized and structured following the pertinent study objectives at hand; and thus, they had sections and sub-sections with headings that reflect the specific study objectives. The questionnaire was designed basing on the four-point Likert scale. This provided options for respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement to the question items. The options were; Strongly Agree (SA) represented by code 4, Agree (A) represented by code 3, Disagree (D) represented by code 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) represented by code 1. The questionnaires were used because they permit anonymity that results in more honest responses and they were the best instruments for quantitative research.

#### 3.8.2 Interview Guides

Head-teachers, deputy head teachers, and school counselors were interviewed and this was done from their place of work or job station. Interviewing involved meeting target participants face-to-face and collecting relevant information from the selected individuals. It also involved and allowed probing which helped the researcher to get the detailed and relevant data from the target respondents. This helped the researcher to get necessary and first hand data since the participants were answering for themselves compared to the questionnaire method.

### 3.8.3 Focus Group Discussion Guide

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were used to get and collect data from the 60 students. FGDs are a method that facilitates the researcher to conversationally establish a dialogue with a group of between 12 respondents (students) from each school in order to obtain their views about the phenomenon under investigation in a convenient, permissive, non-threatening and highly interactive environment. Focus Group Discussions were conducted per school and each one ranges between 10-12 participants.

## 3.9 Data Quality Control

This section dealt with validity and reliability of the instrument.

### 3.9.1 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity, according to Stephanie (2016) refers to the degree to which results obtained from analysis-of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study.

Validity is a test or instrument that accurately measures what its supposed to. Validity of the instrument was ensured through the use of content validity index. Here content experts including the supervisor were given questionnaires to assess whether the items were worthy to measure the variables. After which a content validity index was calculated using the following formula;

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{Number of items rated relevant}}{\text{Total number of items}}$$
$$\frac{30}{35}$$
$$= 0.857$$

Where by CVI= Content Validity Index

The researcher first enumerated the number of relevant items for the study and divided them by the number of items in the instruments. Ten questionnaires were pilot-tested in a secondary school that did not participated in the study. The instrument was valid as far as was above 0.7, the recommended value for validity.

### 3.9.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

According to Park (2008), reliability is termed as the extent to which field results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under research study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study could be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument was considered to be reliable. To test the reliability of the tools, the researcher used the alternate-form reliability test by administering two similar research tools.

Reliability of the instrument on the other hand was ensured through the use of Cronbach's Alpha co-efficient index to be generated by SPSS. The Cronbach's alpha was above 0.7, the recommended reliability value. This showed that the questionnaire is reliable. After pilot testing the instrument, reliability of the instrument, on multi-item variables was tested using the Cronbach's Alpha Method to provide by Statistical Package for the Social Scientists. The results are presented in Table3.

**Table 3: Reliability indices for the questionnaire**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of Items
0.803	0.795	24

The Cronbach's alpha is 0.803 as indicated in Table 3, above 0.7 the recommended reliability value. This showed that the questionnaire was reliable. The reliability of the questions was used to collect data for the analysis of the relationship between study variables. Other researchers in the future can use this questionnaire to carry out research in the same field.

### 3.10 Data Processing, Analysis and Interpretation

Data was quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed:-

#### 3.10.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

Quantitative data was collected or obtained from the teachers who answered the questionnaires. These were examined whether okay, checked and put in the SPSS statistics version 20 (SPSS 20.0) specifically to analyze, descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages were used; in addition to mean and standard deviation; while inferential statistics such as regression analysis and Pearson correlation were also employed. In addition, frequencies and cross tabulations were considered and used. They involved tabulating the lowest and highest values of the study variables for each respondent type and analyzing measures of central tendency and variability.

### 3.10.2 Analysis of Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was obtained from head-teachers, deputy head teachers, students and school counselors who answered an interview guide and focus group discussion respectively. Data was analyzed manually by categorizing data in themes. This was further presented according to study themes; thematically following the chronology of the research objectives. Narrative analysis was also used, personal communication as well as question by population was this. Qualitatively, data analysis further involved translating spoken word and observed actions into text through transcribing interviews and typing up observation notes. At the end of each day, field notes were transcribed. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. Thematic content analysis was used to analysis this data where key findings were transformed into themes for easy analysis and presentation of data. Additionally, narrative reasoning was also used to interpret the findings and was

logically argued out. The respondents' views were quoted verbatim to give their actual feeling about the issues that was raised. This therefore, gave an in-depth insight of the problem under study.

### 3.11 Ethical Consideration and Approvals

Ethics are norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior in research. The ethical consideration, informed consent and participants' confidentiality were considered and looked at as follows:-

#### 3.11.1 Ethical Consideration

Research ethical clearance was sought from Uganda Christian University Ethical Research Committee as well as School of Education, Department of Education of Uganda Christian University to conduct research study. In addition, further permission to carry out the research study in Kyotera Town Council was also sought from the Town Council Education Officer and Head-teachers for the selected secondary schools.

#### 3.11.2 Informed Consent

Informed consent form elaborating the reasons and purpose of the research study was filled by all participants who were willing to participate in this research study. In addition, the researcher designed a consent letter before engaging any respondent. The willing participants consented by signing or thumb print or accepting verbally. The researcher also assured them (participants) that their relevant information was

treated with confidentiality. The researcher further did not ask for their individual names or any form of contact to avoid bias. The participants and respondents were also informed that their participation in the research study was voluntary and they had a right to accept or decline to participate or withdraw from this research study anytime.

### 3.11.3 Participants Confidentiality

The researcher ethically considered the privacy or the secrets of her participants. Their names and responses were not disclosed; and this left both the researcher and the respondents in clear terms and conditions that it allowed smooth research and quick data collection. For instance, in trying to protect participants' confidentiality, each respondent's record was given a unique ID number. Respondents were also given written consent before participating and confidentiality and anonymity were further emphasized. Data identifying individual subjects were restricted to those involved in the study. Participants were adequately informed about the procedures of the data collection and the survey remained anonymous (no provision for identifying the participant on the survey questionnaire to exist). Confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that the reader of the report was not able to identify a particular respondent. Codes such as respondent 1, 2, and 3 were used to refer to teachers observe in the class room and alphabetical letters A, B, C, D & E were used to refer to schools. Names and other identifying information from subjects were obtained for quality assurances purposes only and no individual was identified by any study report.

#### 3.11.4 Gender Consideration

The study considered both male and female respondents. It was not gender biased. Gender sensitive questions were avoided during this study, and both genders were balanced during the study.

#### 3.12 Methodological Constraints

The study was limited by the following obstacles:-

**Un-co-operative respondents:** The researcher met a challenge of facing un-co-operative respondents. This was unwilling to give required information either because of confidentiality reasons or social distancing as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. **Solution:** This was solved by the researcher herself through showing and giving them a copy of an introductory letter from the UCUREC and promising them that the information given was treated confidentially; in addition to emphasizing SOPs (Ministry of Health guidelines) on COVID-19 Pandemic; that is, wearing a mask and maintaining social distance especially during the interviews.

**Limited Research Materials:** The research material accessible and available to the researcher was insufficient or not enough and some up-to-date, thereby limiting the research study. **Solution:** But this was solved by the researcher through visiting internet to get more relevant and up-to-date literature information concerning the research study.

**Time Factor:** The time frame allocated to the research study was not enhance wider coverage; as the researcher had to combine other academic activities, work schedule

and examinations with the research study. **Solution:** This was solved by the researcher through giving more time to the research study was carrying; in addition to trying to balance all the academic work as per planned work schedule.

**Financial Constraints:** The resources and finance available for the research work was not allowed for wider coverage as resources were very limited; as the researcher had other academic bills to cover. **Solution:** This was solved through getting soft loan from friends and relatives to cover up the financial gaps.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS of FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter details with data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The study findings are presented, following the study objectives namely; examining the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council, examining the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council, as well as identifying the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

The study presents descriptive results from questionnaire in form of mean to show the central tendency of responses in the likert scale questions. Interview results were also obtained to explain qualitatively the effects and copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic on the students during the lockdown in form of quotations and narrative statements as per respondents' views in regard to each objective of the study and these supplemented results from the questionnaire.

The study also presents inferential statistics in form of correlations and regressions which show the nature of relationship between variables and the magnitude of effect the independent variables has on dependent variable. The chapter also presents the response rate, which shows the actual number of respondents that participated in the study. The chapter also presents the response rate of respondents who participated in the study.

#### 4.1 Response Rate

The sub section presents the summary of the statistics for the response rates. Details are presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Summary of study response rates**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Targeted respondents</b>	<b>No. actually involved</b>	<b>Percentage of response rate</b>
<b>Questionnaire</b>			
Teachers	50	25	50%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	
<b>Interviews</b>			
Head-teachers	5	5	100%
Deputy head-teachers	5	10	100%
School counselors	5	5	100%
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Focus Group Discussions</b>			
Students	100	60	60%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85%</b>

*Source: Primary data, 2022*

As presented in the Table 4 above, a total number of 2600 respondents were expected to participate in the study (target population), but 335 respondents actually participated to

make a response rate of 77.2%. Others did not participate in interviews sighting reasons for being busy some were reported out of the school for supervision of mocks and national examinations. This response rate is above the 60-70% response rate as recommended by the Guttmacher Institute (2006) for a study to be considered as one with satisfactory results.

#### 4.2 Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students' Learning

The question was posed to examine the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The methods were rated with the extent of agreement or disagreements i.e. strongly agree to strongly disagree. Findings from 76 teachers are indicated in Table 5 below:-

Table 5: The effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council

Statement	Extent of (dis)agreement					Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	NS	D	SDA		
	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)		
In our school, COVID-19 regulations has contributed to dropout of students	70 (92.1)	6 (7.9)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	3.67	1.142
In our school, children learning less through distance education been observed as a result of COVID-19 pandemic	66 (86.8)	7 (9.3)	3 (3.9)	- (0)	- (0)	4.45	.890

regulations							
In our school, school closure have affected us on studying practical subjects	60 (78.9)	8 (10.5)	5 (6.7)	3 (3.9)	- (0)	4.33	.872
In our school, students have limited contact with colleagues as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	52 (68.4)	9 (11.8)	8 (10.5)	4 (5.4)	3 (3.9)	4.41	.805
Reduction on students enrolment have been observed in our school after COVID-19 pandemic regulations	74 (97.4)	2 (2.6)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	3.94	1.129
In our school, we experience lack of study resources as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	66 (86.8)	6 (7.8)	4 (5.4)	- (0)	- (0)	4.63	.615
In our school, COVID-19 pandemic regulations has escalated limited access to technologies by students in remote areas	60 (78.9)	8 (10.5)	5 (6.7)	3 (3.9)	- (0)	4.42	.592
In our school, high teenage pregnancy been experienced as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	46 (60.6)	12 (15.8)	9 (11.8)	6 (7.9)	3 (3.9)	4.21	.576
In our school, there is rising cases of drop of school as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	71 (93.4)	5 (6.6)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	4.25	.647
In our school, we experience	67	5	4	-	-		.724

limited interaction between us and teachers as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	(88.2)	(6.6)	(5.2)	(0)	(0)	4.11	
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*Source: Primary Data, 2022*

Table 5 represents the descriptive statistics on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The results show that 100% of the respondents respectively accepted to the statements that the COVID-19 regulations has contributed to dropout of students (Mean=3.67 and standard deviation 1.142); children learning less through distance education been observed as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Mean=3.94 and standard deviation 1.129); school closure have affected us on studying practical subjects (Mean=4.25 and standard deviation .647); and lastly, students have limited contact with colleagues as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Mean=4.41 and standard deviation .805).

The first objective was also set to examine the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. Interview schedules were used to solicit information from the head teachers, deputy head teachers and school counselors, in addition to focus group discussion information from students. Respondents were involved in answering interviews and focus group discussions. The variable COVID-19 pandemic regulations were looked at in regard to lockdown, social distancing and other SOPs.

However, when they were asked: What is the effect of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

In interviews, it was revealed that a number of schools have witnessed a serious decline in number of students' enrolment after the reopening of schools; in fact one of the head teachers explained that;

*“.....most students have dropout of schools more especially girls as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. The slogan 'stay home stay safe' has aggravated the fear of the parents to send their children out and attend schools....”* **(Head teacher from School C)**

This implies that a third of the children who were in schools when the pandemic began didn't return, and this prove a heavy blow to the future prospects of the new generation in the country with one of the world's youngest populations and already struggling with illiteracy, unemployment and poverty.

The young students who were still enrolled in school suffered from the loss of education. He also had these to say;

*‘From many of students, the costs associated with secondary schooling is already hard to bear, and the school closures may lower their chances of completing secondary school. With many of students due to take public examinations later in the year, there was anxiety about payments needed when schools reopen, whether they could afford repeating years, if they fail or are unable to retake exams; and whether the loss of family income during the crisis would stop them from being able to return to school’. ....”* **(Student from School A)**

This implies that the dropout rate in schools especially in third-world countries have always been a problem issue and the situation has further been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The fear of coronas virus has contributed to more than a million children leaving schools. This concurs with United Nations (2020) report that noted no attendance of schools by the kids and young generation is an issue that is nearly faced by all countries. Thus, no society shall prosper if there exists a considerable amount of illiterate population and a substantial ratio of its children are out of school.

Another deputy head-teacher had these to say;

*'It is vital to remember the extraordinary challenges many learners faced during e-learning, including family illness, job loss, financial insecurity, chronic stress and uncertainty, and losing out on activities and social connections. Schools, parents, teaching staff and students alike all had to scramble to figure out how to 'do' school in quarantine. So, any success of living through a pandemic should be celebrated'.* **(Deputy head-teacher from School B)**

This implies that disparities in digital literacy and online access among students, teachers and parents meant that some students faced big obstacles to just signing on to class. Students from traditionally underserved families or communities, those with learning disabilities, bilingual students, and those with mental health conditions had unique challenges and found less access and support during remote learning.

It was also revealed that school closure has affected students on studying practical subjects; in fact one of the students explained that;

*"....students no longer access school facilities especially science laboratory to have an experience on practical subjects. Practical subjects have greatly experienced difficulties in teaching them thus making students going to sit-*

*down for practical exams without knowledge and skills on practical experiments'. (Student from School E)*

This implies that e-learning is simply education that takes place over the internet, and it presents enormous opportunities that significantly facilitate the effectiveness of delivering the learning contents and gaining access to an immense pool of educational information if appropriately utilized, though has not been the case with teaching and learning of practical subjects that require students to be directly involved in doing experiments. Practical science subjects that require students carrying out experiments cannot effectively handled online without physical presence as ascertained by Loayza & Pennings (2020).

Further, one of the focus group discussion participants noted that;

*'Calendared assessments, notably high-stakes examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels and institutions, are thrown into disarray when schools close'. (Student from School D)*

This implies that strategies to postpone, skip or administer examinations at a distance raise serious concerns about the fairness, especially when access to learning becomes variable. Thus, disruptions to assessments results in stress for students and their families and can trigger disengagement.

Additionally, study noted that students have limited contact with colleagues as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. One of the interviewed participants noted that;

*'Students had limited contacts with their colleagues for academic discussions and social interactions during COVID-19 pandemic. Closure of schools have*

*a considerable effects on students' sense of belonging to schools and their feelings of self-worth, yet these are key for inclusion in education'. (School Counselor of School B)*

This implies that in school closures related to the current COVID-19 pandemic mean that students from diverse backgrounds who are more at risk of increased vulnerability are less likely to receive the support and extra services they deserve, and the gap between students that experience additional barriers and that do not might widen. These students are more likely to lose the most in terms of educational outcomes, and the support provided by schools if countries take insufficient measures to promote educational equity and inclusion as ascertained by Ssebawami (2020).

More so, one of the interviewed participants also noted that;

*'Students have experienced limited or lack of study resources as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. Secondary school students could not get access to instructional facilities especially textbooks for self-studying to enable them grasp the content. Students were not allowed to access school library facilities for self-revision'. (Head teacher of School A)*

This implies that schooling provides essential learning and when schools close, students are deprived opportunities for growth and development. They less access school library to borrow textbooks and pamphlets for self-revision. Thus, the disadvantages are disproportionate for under-privileged students who tend to have fewer educational opportunities beyond school.

Lastly, the study revealed that teachers and students experience limited interaction between us and teachers as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. One of the interviewed deputy head teacher had these to say;

*'Schools are hubs of social activity and human interaction. When schools close, many students miss out of on social contact that is essential for e-learning and development'*. **(Deputy head teacher from School A)**

This implies that e-learning is the delivery of learning materials using internet for student-student and student-teacher interaction, and for distributing educational materials. Engaging with a curriculum that has been transmitted from in person to online is likely to impact how students learn and how they can contextualize that learning into clinical practice.

#### 4.2.2 Correlation Analysis

Results from correlation analysis were run between COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning in selected secondary schools is presented in the Table 6 below.

**Table 6 Correlation between COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning in selected secondary schools**

Correlations		COVID-19 pandemic regulations	Students' learning
COVID-19 pandemic regulations	Pearson Correlation	1	.686 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	76	76
Students' learning	Pearson Correlation	.686 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	76	76

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results in the Table 6 above reveal a significant relationship between COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera

Town Council. The correlation coefficient of .686 (\*\*) with a significance value of .000 explain the nature of the relationship in this situation. This implies that with COVID-19 pandemic regulations, where there is restricted movement, lockdown and school closure, then students learning is likely to be affected as students sometimes cannot afford or manage e-learning.

### 4.3.3 Regression Analysis

A single regression analysis was run between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning, and results are presented in the Table 7 below.

**Table 7: A single regression between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning**

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.725	.116		6.245	.000
	COVID-19 pandemic regulations	.249	.030	.686	8.384	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Students' learning

From the regression analysis as shown in the table 7 above, it indicates the coefficient of determination  $R^2=0.471$  which shows that 47.1% variation in students' learning is

explained by existence of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This implies that presence of COVID-19 regulations would lead to 47.1% chance change in the students' learning. These results depict that the COVID-19 regulations is significantly related with improved students' learning ( $\beta_1 = 0.686$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This supports hypothesis one which stated that "autocratic leadership style significantly influence the quality of teaching in government aided secondary schools". This means that any addition COVID-19 regulation is significantly and positively associated with influencing students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

#### 4.4 The Outcomes of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students' Wellbeing

The question was posed to examine the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The methods were rated with the extent of agreement or disagreements i.e. strongly agree to strongly disagree. Findings from 76 teachers are indicated in Table 8.

Table 8: Effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council

Statement	Extent of (dis)agreement					Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	NS	D	SDA		
	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)		
Our school have been burdened by mental health consequences among students as a result of Covid-19 pandemic regulations	68 (89.5)	8 (10.5)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	3.65	1.083

In our school, we experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs as per COVID-19 pandemic regulations	61 (80.3)	9 (11.8)	6 (7.9)	- (0)	- (0)	4.07	1.132
In our school, there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection as a result of gradual reopening of schools	54 (71.1)	11 (14.5)	7 (9.2)	4 (5.2)	- (0)	4.04	1.163
There is increasing negative feeling among students as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	43 (56.6)	9 (11.8)	10 (13.2)	8 (10.5)	6 (7.9)	4.05	.998
We experience stress, anxiety and depression as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	69 (90.8)	7 (9.2)	- (0)	- (0)	- (0)	4.32	.872
In our school, we experience unwanted pregnancies as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	65 (85.5)	6 (7.9)	5 (6.6)	- (0)	- (0)	4.32	1.042
In our school, we experience poor nutrition as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations	46 (60.5)	8 (10.6)	6 (7.9)	9 (11.8)	7 (9.2)	4.43	.522

Source: Primary Data, 2022

Table 8 represents the descriptive statistics on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The results show that 100% of the respondents accepted to the statements that secondary school have been burdened by mental health consequences among students as a result of Covid-19 pandemic regulations (Mean= 3.65 and standard deviation 1.083). Schools and teachers experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs as per

COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Mean=4.32 and standard deviation .872). More so, there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection as a result of gradual reopening of schools (Mean=3.87 and standard deviation 1.152); and lastly, there is increasing negative feeling among students as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Mean=4.05 and standard deviation .998).

The second objective was also set to examine the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. Interview schedules were used to solicit information from the head teachers, deputy head teachers and school counselors, in addition to students who participated in focus group discussions. The variable COVID-19 pandemic regulations were looked at in regard to fear, stress, anxiety and depression; and results are presented.

However, when they were asked: What are the students' coping mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

In interviews, it was revealed that some schools have been burdened by mental health consequences among learners and this have occurred as a result of Covid-19 pandemic regulations; in fact one of the respondents explained that;

*".....The COVID-19 pandemic has set students around Uganda into lockdown. The living conditions during lockdown had a clear impact on the mental health of students. Students have been one of the vulnerable group that have serious experienced a significant levels of stress, anxiety and depression affecting their mental health". (Deputy head teacher from School C)*

This implies that during this period of life, students face a variety of challenges and are exposed to significant risks affecting their health status. A change in residence, isolation, increased domestic responsibility, peer pressure, e-learning and domestic work scheduling are all sources of psychological difficulties such as stress, depression and anxiety.

It was however revealed that schools and teachers experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs as per COVID-19 pandemic regulations, in fact one of the respondents explained that;

*“....the implementation of the standard operating procedures at schools did not go smoothly as expected, and this because the schools are facing challenges in terms of inadequate financial resources, facilities and workforce. Most of the students are unable to maintain physical distancing and obey the SOPs compliance as well as teachers faced challenges in observing them most of the time.....”* **(School Counselor from School A)**

This implies that after months of planning to reopen the schools, MoES gave guidelines to all schools to ensure compliance with the SOPs set by the Ministry of Health (MoH), as well as the school reopening management guidelines. However, the implementation of SOPs at school did not go smoothly as planned; although, it was expected that all students would adhere to the SOPs as most of them were frustrated because of the e-learning as ascertained by Guma (2021).

The study revealed that there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection as a result of gradual reopening of schools. One of the head teachers in interviews, revealed that;

*'COVID-19 infection led to confusion and stress for teachers and students. When schools close especially unexpectedly and for unknown durations, students and teachers are often unsure of their obligations, and how teachers to maintain connections with students to supports support learning'. (Head teacher from School A)*

This means that teachers and students feared getting COVID-19 virus after the schools were reopened. Thus, transitions to distance learning platforms tend to be messy and frustrating, even in the best circumstances. In many contexts, school closures lead to furloughs or separations for teachers.

The study also revealed that there is increasing negative feeling among students as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. One of the interviewed participants had these to say;

*'Irrational behaviors such as limiting exercise at home due to COVID-19 pandemic could be due to experiencing negative emotions, which distort the meaning of events for the students. That behavior, for instance, was found to be positively associated with various negative feelings'. (Deputy head teacher from School E)*

This implies that the COVID-19 pandemic has posed an intense threat to the mental health of young adults. The COVID-19 pandemic and the enforced restrictions have harshly affected educational sector across the country. The crisis has threatened the teaching and learning processes and the students' emotional health.

Additionally, the study findings revealed that teachers and students experience stress, anxiety and depression as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. One of the focus group discussion participants noted that;

*'During the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, individuals experienced negative emotional responses, such as anxiety and depression symptoms, henceforth, stressful events. Students have also experienced boredom, disappointment, and irritability under the isolation measures. Thus, depression and anxiety are common mental health challenge experienced by secondary students'. (Student from School A)*

This implies that public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 outbreak are potential adverse psychological effects among students that can be expressed as fear, worry, altered quality of sleep and finally altered quality of life. More so, the limited knowledge of the COVID-19 and the overwhelming news also led to anxiety and fear in the public. Being in secondary education associated with many stressors and transitional events, students fall within the age range when common mental health problems are at their development peak. Thus, depression and anxiety can impair students' academic performance and social functioning, causing vital burden at school, and potentially affect their future career opportunities (Antara, 2020).

The study revealed that students experienced unwanted pregnancies as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. One of the interviewed participants noted that;

*'There is an increased exposure to violence and exploitation. When schools shut down, early marriages increase, and sexual exploitation of girls rises, thus teenage pregnancies become more common and child labour grows'. (Head teacher from School B)*

This implies that cases of unwanted pregnancies among secondary students have risen during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Many girls in puberty stage have been pregnant by either family members, guardians and neighbours. In the absence of

alternative options, working parents often left their children alone when schools close and this can lead to risky behaviors, including increased influence of peer pressure, and substance abuse and its related consequences of sexual abuse that have led to an increase in unwanted pregnancies as ascertained by Eleftheria & Theodore (2021).

Lastly, the study revealed that schools experience poor nutrition as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. Many children and youth rely on free or discounted meals provided at schools for food and healthy nutrition. When schools close, nutrition is compromised. Uganda’s strict COVID-19 lockdown pushed many families deeper into poverty as people working odd jobs left without income.

4.4.1 Correlation Analysis

Results from a correlation analysis between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students’ wellbeing are presented in the Table 9.

**Table 9 Correlation between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students’ wellbeing**

<b>Correlations</b>		Students’ wellbeing	COVID-19 pandemic regulations
Quality teaching	Pearson Correlation	1	.589 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	76	76

Students' wellbeing	Pearson Correlation	.589 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	76	76

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Study findings, revealed a significant effect of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The correlation coefficient of .589(\*\*) with a significance value of .000 explain the nature of the relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' wellbeing. Since the p.value is 0.000 higher than 0.01 the relationship is significant. This implies that in the COVID-19 pandemic regulations where there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection, mental health consequences among students, expenses SOPs, then students wellbeing is likely to significantly decline.

#### 4.4.2 Regression Analysis

A single regression analysis was run between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' wellbeing; and results are presented in the Table 10 below.

**Table 10: A single regression analysis**

<b>R= .589</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup> = .346</b>
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Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.989	.110		8.993	.000
	COVID-19 pandemic regulations	.204	.032	.589	6.472	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Students' wellbeing

From the Table 10 above, regression results were obtained with a coefficient of determination  $R^2=0.346$  which shows that 34.6% variation in quality of teaching is explained by changes in democratic leadership style. This implies that any changes in democratic leadership style would lead to 34.6% chance change in quality of teaching if all aspects in democratic leadership style were squarely addressed. In the study results confirm that democratic leadership style is significantly related to improved quality of teaching ( $\beta_1 =0.589$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This supports hypothesis two which stated that “Democratic leadership style significantly influence the quality of teaching in government aided secondary schools”. This implies that improvement in democratic leadership style would lead to improvement in quality of teaching as teachers exercise mutual decision making process, enjoy staff development equally participate in decentralized authority at the school in the decision making process.

#### 4.5 The Students' Copying Mechanisms of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations

The question was posed to identify the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The methods were rated with the extent of agreement or disagreements i.e. strongly agree to strongly disagree. Findings from 76 teachers are indicated in Table 11.

**Table 11: The students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations selected secondary schools**

Statement	Extent of (dis)agreement					Mean	Std. Dev
	SA	A	NS	D	SDA		
	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)		
In our school, routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations	64 (84.2)	5 (6.6)	7 (9.2)	- (0)	- (0)	3.66	1.142
In our school, there is an emphasize of e-learning platforms and lessons	60 (78.9)	8 (10.6)	6 (7.9)	2 (2.6)	- (0)	4.46	.890
In our school, we need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks	55 (72.4)	7 (9.2)	9 (11.8)	5 (6.6)	- (0)	4.32	.872
In our school, there is need for donor funding to increase on school financial base to accommodate students with financial challenges (scholarships)	48 (63.2)	10 (13.2)	7 (9.2)	8 (10.5)	3 (3.9)	4.32	.872
There is continued closure of schools as a the COVID-19 pandemic regulation is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations	67 (88.2)	6 (7.9)	3 (3.9)	- (0)	- (0)	4.63	.617

Restricted visitors is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in our school	59 (77.6)	7 (9.2)	6 (7.9)	4 (5.3)	- (0)	4.07	1.142
In our school, regular hand-washing and social distancing have been made compulsory for the all school members	51 (67.1)	9 (11.8)	10 (13.2)	4 (5.3)	2 (2.6)	4.05	.997
In our school, routine counselling of all students should be encouraged	45 (59.3)	8 (10.5)	9 (11.8)	8 (10.5)	6 (7.9)	4.04	1.122
Our school, social distancing have been emphasized as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations	65 (85.5)	7 (9.2)	- (0)	4 (5.3)	- (0)	3.92	1.138
In our school, restricted movement is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations	60 (78.9)	6 (7.9)	5 (6.6)	5 (6.6)	- (0)	4.10	.809

*Source: Primary Data, 2022*

Table 11 represents the descriptive statistics on the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. The results show that 100% of the respondents accepted to the statements that the routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations (Mean=4.63 and standard deviation 6.17); there is an emphasize of e-learning platforms and lessons in secondary schools (Mean 4.63 and standard deviation .617); secondary schools need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks (Mean 3.93) and standard deviation 1.138); lastly, there is need for donor funding to increase on school financial base to accommodate students with financial challenges (scholarships) (Mean 4.32) and standard deviation .872).

The third objective was also set to identify the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council. Interview schedules were used to solicit information from the head teachers, deputy head teachers and school counselors and students.

However, when they were asked: What are the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

In the study, it was revealed that the routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in secondary schools; as one head teacher explained that;

*“.....routine screening should be regularly done as diagnostic tests to detect current infection with SARS-CoV-2 and thus able to inform an individual's medical care. Testing has been a vital element of the COVID-19 pandemic management. Thus, many schools are currently implementing on-site symptoms screening, testing may become an additional preventive tool depending on how the pandemic progresses ....”* **(Head teacher from School A)**

This implies that school testing for SARS-CoV-2 infection has become a vital policy and planning issue as schools were re-opened of secondary schools. The decisions to test or not to test and, if testing, how many tests, how often and for how long have remained a complex decision that deserve to be taken under uncertainty and conflicting pressures from various stakeholders.

The study also revealed that there is an emphasize of e-learning platforms and lessons, and this was supported by one of the focus group discussion participant who had these to say;

*‘There is a need to improve prevention and to access e-learning or distance education as well as an urgent need for measures to develop healthy coping strategies for students. This is a vital challenge and shall assist in moderating the risk for the development of further distress and mental health concerns’.*

**(Deputy head teacher from School D)**

This implies that e-learning platforms should be provided to students with access to internet and devices especially tablets, phones and computers so as to carry out various learning activities like self-study, access to quiz questions, handle assignments and for messaging services.

Additionally, the study findings also revealed that schools need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks. One of the interviewed school counselor had these to say;

*‘The government should enforce a mask wearing policy for students in secondary schools. There is need for mandated mask wearing in schools for all students, and those students who is failing to comply with the school policy (who is not exempted) shall be indefinitely suspended. Wearing of medical masks in schools shall help to reduce on the COVID-19 virus spread. The appropriate use, storage and cleaning or disposal of masks is essential to ensure that they are as effective as possible and to avoid an increased transmission risk’.* **(School Counselor from School C)**

This implies that the COVID-19 pandemic has gravely affected several aspects of national and global society, including education. Given the risk it poses, the

government of Uganda adopted and recommended face mask use as one of the preventive measures to limit its transmission in schools.

The study also revealed that there is need for donor funding to increase on school financial base to accommodate students with financial challenges (scholarships).

From the interviewed participants, one of them noted that;

*'...the government need to use contingency funds for emergency pandemic response, and these include for education and health needs, such as scholarships to struggling students, establishing testing labs and having regular screening for students in schools.....'.* **(Student from School E)**

This implies that a COVID-19 pandemic is most likely to result in a significant economic shock. Public health systems have a vital burden now due to the spread of COVID-19 virus, and this burden shall only increase as these systems struggle. Restrictions on the distributions of COVID-19 have led to a massive imbalance between supply and demand. Investing in education may become difficult due to trade disruptions, commodity price declines, and a tighter financial environment. Therefore, due to these negative impacts, government and donors should focus more on supporting the school financial base to be able to afford SOPs and other educational requirements (Kituyi & Kyeyune, 2021).

The study further revealed that restricted visitor's is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in secondary schools. The interviewed participant also noted that;

*'School management have put in to practice the measure of restricting visitors especially parents to school premises. Visitors tend to be restricted from entering schools so as to regulate or minimize the chances of virus spread'.* **(Student from School E)**

This implies that there is need to have a regulated or restricted visitation in secondary schools so as to minimize the spread of COVID-19 virus. Therefore, restricted movement is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and can minimize the spread of COVID-19 virus. Thus, there is continued closure of school premises from outsiders as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations among secondary schools.

The study revealed that regular hand-washing has been made compulsory for the all school members. One of the interviewed deputy head-teacher had these to say;

*‘There is a need to emphasize of regular hand-washing with soaps and use of sanitizers so as to reduce on the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most vital steps to keep teaching staff and students in schools is cleaning hands at key times with soap and water for at-least 20 seconds or using an alcohol—based sanitizer with at-least 60percent alcohol if soap and water are not readily available’.* **(School counselor from School A)**

This implies that hand-washing either with soap and water or using hand sanitizers kill the germs that may transmit infections from one person to another. Hand washing not only helps in killing the germs on your hands but also stops their spread.

The study also noted that routine counseling of all students should be encouraged in secondary schools. Interviewed participants also noted that;

*‘The primary motive behind counseling at school level is to address the emotional, social and behavioral needs of the students. Regular counseling shall help students experiencing stress, depression and fatigue as a result COVID-19 pandemic to calm-down and be able to follow the recommended regulations’.* **(School counselor from School A)**

This means that the counselor's work includes individual therapy with struggling students and teachers. These stakeholders have been characterized by fear, stigma and depression as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown related consequences. In other words, routine counseling helps in creating seamless and friendly environment to help each one of them with different approaches.

Lastly, the study revealed that social distancing has been emphasized as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations. One of the interviewed participants had these to say;

*'Social distancing-the requirement to keep a distance from others to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus is vital requirement in those schools. Secondary school managers have encouraged students and teachers to greet without physical contact. Have encourages them to avoid handshakes and hugs while greeting and interacting with colleagues. There is emphasize on increasing awareness around the six-feet or two meters rule from other students when possible'. (Head teacher from School E)*

This implies that limiting social contact with people shall slow down virus transmission and flatten the COVID-19 pandemic curve so that school and country at-large can reduce the number of cases occurring at the peak of the pandemic. It is recommended that one should avoid close contacts with people by maintain a distance of at-least six feet. Student and teachers should stay home if they feel or are sick, and always cover their cough and sneeze with a tissue or sneeze in the elbow.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions of results of the study on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council,

Kyotera District based on the study findings. The discussion of findings is presented basing on the study objectives in chapter one and basing on the results obtained in chapter four of this report.

## 5.1 Discussion of Findings

The discussion of results is done based on the findings presented in chapter four in thematic manner as follows:

### 5.1.1 Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students' Learning

The above study theme of examining the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council; and these ranges from:

Study finding revealed a number of schools have witnessed a serious decline in number of students' enrolment after the reopening of schools. This concurs with Tumwesige (2021) who argued that a third of the children who were in schools when the pandemic began didn't return, and this prove a heavy blow to the future prospects of the new generation in the country with one of the world's youngest populations and already struggling with illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. On the other hand, Rahman & Matin (2020) noted that there has been rise in dropout rates, and this is a challenge to ensure children and youth return and stay in schools when reopen after closures. This is especially true to protracted closures and when economic shocks place pressure on children to work and generate income for financially distressed families. This implies that most students have dropout of schools more especially

girls as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. The slogan 'stay home stay safe' has aggravated the fear of the parents to send their children out and attend schools.

Additionally, the young students who were still enrolled in school suffered from the loss of education. This is in agreement with Ssebami (2020) who argued that the dropout rate in schools especially in third-world countries have always been a problem issue and the situation has further been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The fear of coronas virus has contributed to more than a million children leaving schools. Besides, United Nations (2020) report that noted no attendance of schools by the kids and young generation is an issue that is nearly faced by all countries. Thus, no society shall prosper if there exists a considerable amount of illiterate population and a substantial ratio of its children are out of school. This means that for many of students, the costs associated with secondary schooling is already hard to bear, and the school closures may lower their chances of completing secondary school. With many of students due to take public examinations later in the year, there was anxiety about payments needed when schools reopen, whether they could afford repeating years, if they fail or are unable to retake exams; and whether the loss of family income during the crisis would stop them from being able to return to school.

The study further noted that it is vital to remember the extraordinary challenges many learners faced during e-learning, including family illness, job loss, financial insecurity, chronic stress and uncertainty, and losing out on activities and social connections. This

is in agreement with Anderson noted that there were challenges creating, maintaining, and improving distance learning. Demand for distance learning skyrockets when schools close and often overwhelms existing portals to remote education. Additionally, moving learning from classrooms to homes at scale and in a hurry presents enormous challenges, both human and technical. After almost a year and a half of disrupted schooling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most students headed back to traditional in-person school in the fall of 2021. However, many parents wonder what the impact of distance and/or hybrid learning has been on their children as ascertained by Antara (2020). This implies that students from traditionally underserved families or communities, those with learning disabilities, bilingual students, and those with mental health conditions had unique challenges and found less access and support during remote learning. The disparities in digital literacy and online access among students, teachers and parents meant that some students faced big obstacles to just signing on to class. Schools, parents, teaching staff and students alike all had to scramble to figure out how to 'do' school in quarantine. So, any success of living through a pandemic should be celebrated.

The study also noted that school closure has affected students on studying practical subjects. This is in agreement with Brackett who noted that the closure of educational hubs especially secondary schools has resulted in deleterious effects on the educational system. The closure of schools in Uganda was the longest disruption of education institutions due to the coronavirus pandemic. More so, Loayza & Pennings (2020) argued that e-learning is simply education that takes place over the internet, and it

presents enormous opportunities that significantly facilitate the effectiveness of delivering the learning contents and gaining access to an immense pool of educational information if appropriately utilized, though has not been the case with teaching and learning of practical subjects that require students to be directly involved in doing experiments. Practical science subjects that require students carrying out experiments cannot effectively handled online without physical presence. This implies that students no longer access school facilities especially science laboratory to have an experience on practical subjects. Practical subjects have greatly experienced difficulties in teaching them thus making students going to sit-down for practical exams without knowledge and skills on practical experiments.

Further, the study noted that calendared assessments, notably high-stakes examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels and institutions, are thrown into disarray when schools close. This concurs with Guma (2021) who asserted that strategies to postpone, skip or administer examinations at a distance raise serious concerns about the fairness, especially when access to learning becomes variable. This implies that disruptions to assessments results in stress for students and their families and can trigger disengagement.

Additionally, study noted that students have limited contact with colleagues as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This concurs with Kafero (2020) who asserted that in school closures related to the current COVID-19 pandemic mean that students from diverse backgrounds who are more at risk of increased vulnerability are less likely to receive the support and extra services they deserve, and the gap between

students that experience additional barriers and that do not might widen. These students are more likely to lose the most in terms of educational outcomes, and the support provided by schools if countries take insufficient measures to promote educational equity and inclusion as ascertained by Ssebami (2020). This implies that students had limited contacts with their colleagues for academic discussions and social interactions during COVID-19 pandemic. Closure of schools have a considerable effects on students' sense of belonging to schools and their feelings of self-worth, yet these are key for inclusion in education.

More so, the study noted that students have experienced limited or lack of study resources as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This is in agreement with Jorge & Verlenden (2021) who argued that parents were unprepared for distance and home schooling. When schools close, parents are often asked to facilitate the learning of children at home and had to struggle to perform this task especially buying the required instructional materials; and this especially true for parents with limited education and resources. On the other hand, Ssebami (2020) argued that schooling provides essential learning and when schools close, students are deprived opportunities for growth and development. They less access school library to borrow textbooks and pamphlets for self-revision. Thus, the disadvantages are disproportionate for under-privileged students who tend to have fewer educational opportunities beyond school. This implies that secondary school students could not get access to instructional facilities especially textbooks for self-studying to enable them grasp the content. Students were not allowed to access school library facilities for self-revision.

Lastly, the study revealed that teachers and students experience limited interaction between schools and teachers as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This concurs with Sidonia who argued that e-learning advancement assisted learning, teachers have started using online learning platforms to promote self-directed learning and assessment in students. Thus, using of online education assists in engaging a large group of students at one time, with options of both synchronous and asynchronous learning. Besides, Tumwesige (2021) noted that e-learning is the delivery of learning materials using internet for student-student and student-teacher interaction, and for distributing educational materials. Engaging with a curriculum that has been transmitted from in person to online is likely to impact how students learn and how they can contextualize that learning into clinical practice. This implies that schools are hubs of social activity and human interaction. When schools close, many students miss out of on social contact that is essential for e-learning and development.

#### 5.1.2 The Outcomes of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students' Wellbeing

The above study theme of examining the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council; and these include:

The study noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has set students around Uganda into lockdown. The living conditions during lockdown had a clear impact on the mental health of students. This concurs with Ssebwami (2020) who argued that during this period of life, students face a variety of challenges and are exposed to significant risks

affecting their health status. A change in residence, isolation, increased domestic responsibility, peer pressure, e-learning and domestic work scheduling are all sources of psychological difficulties such as stress, depression and anxiety. This implies that students have been one of the vulnerable group that have serious experienced a significant levels of stress, anxiety and depression affecting their mental health.

The study further noted that schools and teachers experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs as per COVID-19 pandemic regulations; and this is in agreement with Tumwesige (2021) who argued that there were not enough spaces available at school in order to maintain physical distancing and so many teachers were needed in order to observe SOPs compliance by the students. Other than that, the number of students in most schools made the issue become worst as so many students have to wait in queue just to get into the school. On the other hand, Guma (2021) asserted that after months of planning to reopen the schools, MoES gave guidelines to all schools to ensure compliance with the SOPs set by the Ministry of Health (MoH), as well as the school reopening management guidelines. However, the implementation of SOPs at school did not go smoothly as planned; although, it was expected that all students would adhere to the SOPs as most of them were frustrated because of the e-learning. This implies that the implementation of the standard operating procedures at schools did not go smoothly as expected, and this because the schools are facing challenges in terms of inadequate financial resources, facilities and workforce. Most of the students are unable to maintain physical distancing and obey the SOPs compliance as well as teachers faced challenges in observing them most of the time.

The study noted that there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection as a result of gradual reopening of schools. This is in agreement with Svenja., Konig., Thomas & Frey (2021) who argued that teachers and students feared getting COVID-19 virus after the schools were reopened. Thus, transitions to distance learning platforms tend to be messy and frustrating, even in the best circumstances. In many contexts, school closures lead to furloughs or separations for teachers as ascertained by World Bank (2020b). This implies that the COVID-19 infection led to confusion and stress for teachers and students. When schools close especially unexpectedly and for unknown durations, students and teachers are often unsure of their obligations, and how teachers to maintain connections with students to supports support learning.

The study also revealed that there is increasing negative feeling among students as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This is in agreement with Svenja., Konig., Thomas & Frey (2021) who argued that the COVID-19 pandemic has posed an intense threat to the mental health of young adults. The COVID-19 pandemic and the enforced restrictions have harshly affected educational sector across the country. Recent research among Chinese college students reveals that 24.9 percent experienced anxiety because of the COVID-19 outbreak. Another problem during the lockdown concerned the potentially excessive use of the internet. Indeed, in times of social isolation, the internet is an obvious solution to maintain a social link with others. However, students are particularly fond if the internet and may tend to overuse it and this clearly shows that excessive internet use has a negative impact on students' mental health. The crisis has threatened the teaching and learning processes and the students' emotional health

as ascertained by Ssebhwami (2020). This implies that irrational behaviors such as limiting exercise at home due to COVID-19 pandemic could be due to experiencing negative emotions, which distort the meaning of events for the students. That behavior, for instance, was found to be positively associated with various negative feelings.

Additionally, the study findings noted that teachers and students experience stress, anxiety and depression as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This concurs with Loayza & Pennings (2020) who argued that public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 outbreak are potential adverse psychological effects among students that can be expressed as fear, worry, altered quality of sleep and finally altered quality of life. More so, Antara (2020) asserted that the limited knowledge of the COVID-19 and the overwhelming news also led to anxiety and fear in the public. Being in secondary education associated with many stressors and transitional events, students fall within the age range when common mental health problems are at their development peak. Thus, depression and anxiety can impair students' academic performance and social functioning, causing vital burden at school, and potentially affect their future career opportunities. This implies that during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, individuals experienced negative emotional responses, such as anxiety and depression symptoms, henceforth, stressful events. Students have also experienced boredom, disappointment, and irritability under the isolation measures. Thus, depression and anxiety are common mental health challenge experienced by secondary students.

Lastly, the study revealed that students experienced unwanted pregnancies as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This concurs with Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021) who asserted that cases of unwanted pregnancies among secondary students have risen during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Many girls in puberty stage have been pregnant by either family members, guardians and neighbours. On the other hand, Eleftheria & Theodore (2021) argued that in the absence of alternative options, working parents often left their children alone when schools close and this can lead to risky behaviors, including increased influence of peer pressure, and substance abuse and its related consequences of sexual abuse that have led to an increase in unwanted pregnancies. This implies that there is an increased exposure to violence and exploitation. When schools shut down, early marriages increase, and sexual exploitation of girls rises, thus teenage pregnancies become more common and child labour grows.

### 5.1.3 The Students' Copying Mechanisms of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations

The above study theme of identifying the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council; and these ranges from;

Study findings revealed that the routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in secondary schools. This concurs with Liu.,

Cindy., & Stacey (2020) who argued that schools bring together a large number of students with very wide social connections and networks in a closed environment where they share spaces, facilities and equipment. It is argued and expected that reopening and operations of schools may reinforce the virus spread and thus increase the number of cases both in the schools and in the community. Without regular testing and gradual relaxation of social distancing, another wave may occur. On the other hand, Rahman & Matin (2020) argued that school testing for SARS-CoV-2 infection has become a vital policy and planning issue as schools were re-opened of secondary schools. The decisions to test or not to test and, if testing, how many tests, how often and for how long have remained a complex decision that deserve to be taken under uncertainty and conflicting pressures from various stakeholders. This means that routine screening should be regularly done as diagnostic tests to detect current infection with SARS-CoV-2 and thus able to inform an individual's medical care. Testing has been a vital element of the COVID-19 pandemic management. Thus, many schools are currently implementing on-site symptoms screening, testing may become an additional preventive tool depending on how the pandemic progresses.

The study also noted that there is an emphasize to e-learning platforms and lessons. This concurs with Kaul., Maya., Bryan., VanGronigen, & Nicole (2020) who argued that it is a pure e-learning platform in which the curriculum and learning materials are provided to students online without face-to-face meeting between the teacher and the students. The mobile app learning platform delivers the curriculum and learning materials to students online and offline without a face-to-face meeting between the

teachers and the students. More so, Jorge & Verlenden (2021) noted that e-learning allows students to attend classes from any location of their choice. It also allows schools to reach out to a more extensive network of students, instead of being restricted by geographical boundaries. Thus, e-learning platforms should be provided to students with access to internet and devices especially tablets, phones and computers so as to carry out various learning activities like self-study, access to quiz questions, handle assignments and for messaging services as ascertained by Kafero (2020). This implies that there is a need to improve prevention and to access e-learning or distance education as well as an urgent need for measures to develop healthy coping strategies for students. This is a vital challenge and shall assist in moderating the risk for the development of further distress and mental health concerns.

Additionally, the study findings noted that schools need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks. This concurs with Duffield & Dan, O'Hare (2020) noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has gravely affected several aspects of national and global society, including education. Given the risk it poses, the government of Uganda adopted and recommended face mask use as one of the preventive measures to limit its transmission in schools. Besides, Kafero (2020) who asserted that the government should enforce a mask wearing policy for students in secondary schools. There is need for mandated mask wearing in schools for all students, and those students who are failing to comply with the school policy (who is not exempted) shall be indefinitely suspended. This implies that wearing of medical masks in schools

shall help to reduce on the COVID-19 virus spread. The appropriate use, storage and cleaning or disposal of masks is essential to ensure that they are as effective as possible and to avoid an increased transmission risk.

The study also noted that there is need for donor funding to increase on school financial base to accommodate students with financial challenges (scholarships). This concurs with Jorge & Verlenden (2021) who asserted that the COVID-19 pandemic is most likely to result in a significant economic shock. Public health systems have a vital burden now due to the spread of COVID-19 virus, and this burden shall only increase as these systems struggle. Restrictions on the distributions of COVID-19 have led to a massive imbalance between supply and demand. Besides, Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021) argued that investing in education may become difficult due to trade disruptions, commodity price declines, and a tighter financial environment. Therefore, due to these negative impacts, government and donors should focus more on supporting the school financial base to be able to afford SOPs and other educational requirements. This implies that the government needs to use contingency funds for emergency pandemic response, and these include for education and health needs, such as scholarships to struggling students, establishing testing labs and having regular screening for students in schools.

The study further noted that restricted visitor's is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in secondary schools. This is in agreement with Guma (2021) who noted that there is need to have a regulated or restricted visitation in secondary schools so as

to minimize the spread of COVID-19 virus. Therefore, restricted movement is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and can minimize the spread of COVID-19 virus. Thus, there is continued closure of school premises from outsiders as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations among secondary schools as ascertained by Kituyi & Kyeyune (2021). This implies that school management have put in to practice the measure of restricting visitors especially parents to school premises. Visitors tend to be restricted from entering schools so as to regulate or minimize the chances of virus spread.

The study noted that regular hand-washing has been made compulsory for the all school members. This concurs with Loayza & Pennings (2020) who noted that germs from unwashed hands can be transferred to other objects like table tops and handrails, then transferred to another person's hands. Removing germs through hand-washing therefore helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus. On the other hand, Kaul & Nicole (2020) argued that hand-washing either with soap and water or using hand sanitizers kill the germs that may transmit infections from one person to another. Hand washing not only helps in killing the germs on your hands but also stops their spread. This implies that there is a need to emphasize of regular hand-washing with soaps and use of sanitizers so as to reduce on the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most vital steps to keep teaching staff and students in schools is cleaning hands at key times with soap and water for at-least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based sanitizer with at-least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available.

The study also noted that routine counselling of all students should be encouraged in secondary schools. This is in agreement with Sidonia., Ochieng., David., & Waiswa (2021) who argued that the counselor's work includes individual therapy with struggling students and teachers. These stakeholders have been characterized by fear, stigma and depression as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown related consequences. In other words, routine counseling helps in creating seamless and friendly environment to help each one of them with different approaches as ascertained by Eleftheria & Theodore (2021). This implies that the primary motive behind counseling at school level is to address the emotional, social and behavioral needs of the students. Regular counseling shall help students experiencing stress, depression and fatigue as a result COVID-19 pandemic to calm-down and be able to follow the recommended regulations.

Lastly, the study noted that social distancing has been emphasized as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This is in agreement with Liu., Cindy., & Stacey (2020) who argued that limiting social contact with people shall slow down virus transmission and flatten the COVID-19 pandemic curve so that school and country at-large can reduce the number of cases occurring at the peak of the pandemic. It is recommended that one should avoid close contacts with people by maintain a distance of at-least six feet. Student and teachers should stay home if they feel or are sick, and always cover their cough and sneeze with the tissue or sneeze in the elbow as ascertained by Rahman & Matin (2020). This implies that social distancing-the requirement to keep a distance from others to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus

is vital requirement in those schools. Secondary school managers have encouraged students and teachers to greet without physical contact. Have encourages them to avoid handshakes and hugs while greeting and interacting with colleagues. There is emphasize on increasing awareness around the six-feet or two metres rule from other students when possible.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMEDATIONS**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter contains the conclusion of findings and recommendations as derived from the study findings in chapter four and five respectively.

## 6.1 Conclusions

In reference to objective one, there was a positive significant relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council ( $r=0.686$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) with a regression  $R^2$  of .471. It is concluded that the COVID-19 regulations has contributed to dropout of students, students have limited contact with colleagues, children learning less through distance education been observed, and school closure have affected studying practical subjects.

Basing on the objective two, there was a positive significant relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic regulations and students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council ( $r=.589$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) with a regression  $R^2$  of .346. It is concluded that as a result of Covid-19 pandemic regulations, school have been burdened by mental health consequences among students, schools experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs, there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection; there is increasing negative feeling among students, and they have experienced stress, anxiety and depression.

Reference to objective three, it is concluded that routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus, emphasize of e-learning platforms and lessons; restricted visitors, routine counselling of all students, and need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks, social distancing and regular hand-washing; these are the major

students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic during the lockdown in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council.

## 6.2 Recommendations

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

The study recommended that schools should emphasize e-learning. Thus, innovative and distance approach to education is synonymous to learning 'using' technologies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Learning technologies, that is, print-material, radio, television, video, audio, telephone, computers and the internet-appear to offer an answer to not only enabling learning to continue where education has been disrupted but also to offer opportunities for overcoming geographical access and rigidities of conventional education.

The study recommended that secondary schools should adhere to routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations. This should be done at-least once a month to make ensure that all students are safe from the virus.

The study recommended that a clear government response strategy is needed, to ensure adequate attention and protection for the poorest and most vulnerable sections of the population. This shall protect against the negative impact of the pandemic on the health and livelihoods of the most vulnerable.

The study recommended that there is need for donor funding to increase on school financial base to accommodate students with financial challenges (especially lack of resources to buy SOPs and for scholarships purposes)

The study recommended that urban and formal sector learning measures need to be applied in a way that is clear and inclusive with a short- medium- and long-term plan for mitigation, recovery and resilience building. This is the only way to ensure that the damaging impacts of the severe lockdown and other Covid-19 response measures on the economy, people's livelihoods and welfare are properly documented and addressed equitably.

The study also recommended that the FY2021/22 funding allocation to pro-poor sectors, such as education, health and social protection, needs to be revised to reflect sector needs and accommodate additional constraints imposed by Covid-19. This shall enable the government to, for example, fast-track the expansion of its social protection programs and serve as a more direct, sustainable and inclusive mechanism for protecting people living in poverty.

The study recommended that the drawbacks of the restrictive Covid-19 response measures should be documented across sectors and used as lessons for designing responses in future crises. This shall prevent inadvertent loss of many lives from existing and manageable conditions due to poor responses to crises in future.

### 6.3 Limitations of the Study

The researcher was faced with a number of problems among which are; the challenge of busy schedules of the head teachers and the absence of some teachers from school due to the mocks and national examinations that were going when the study was being carried out. As well there was a challenge of inadequate time where it was hard to balance the work place pressure and data collection.

The researcher however overcame the above challenges in the following ways:

In the first place the requested for audience from the head-teachers who had busy schedules but tried to respond though he managed to access all the targeted key informants targeted to interview. For teachers, the researcher moved to some teachers homes later after work and got response to the questionnaires. On the time factor, the researcher asked for permission from the workplace to have a break to conduct a research to fulfill his requirements for the award of a Masters' Degree, which fortunately was granted.

### 6.4 Areas of Further Research

The researcher carried this study in order to examine the “Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations on Secondary School students in Kyotera Town Council ”; but the study was not exhaustive owing to constraints in terms of scope, time and finance.

Further research is therefore needed in areas such as:-

1. The Effects of E-Learning on Syllabus Content Coverage during the Lockdown among Secondary Schools in Uganda.

2. The Effect of School Environment on Management of COVID-19 Pandemic in Secondary School in Uganda.

3. The Head-Teacher Leadership Style and Management of COVID-19 Pandemic in Secondary School in Uganda.

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## APPENDIX I

**Table for Determining Sample Size for a Finite Population**

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

## **APPENDIX II: CONSENT FORM**

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM (individual Interviews)**

**TITLE OF STUDY: EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC REGULATIONS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KYOTERA TOWN COUNCIL**

**Principal investigator: Ndagire Victor (Ms)**

**Institution: Uganda Christian University**

#### **Introduction**

I **NDAGIRE VICTOR (Ms)** +256778956009 is doing research under the supervision of **Dr. Masagazi Joel Yawe**, a lecturer in the School of Education at Uganda Christian University. My study is aimed at fulfilling the requirements for the award of a Masters in Educational Administration and Planning.

The aim of the study is to examine the effect of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students learning, to investigate the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students wellbeing and students copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations.

This informed consent document basically explains the nature of the study to you. In case you have any questions, they will be answered after the study has been explained to you. If you decide to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent document, a copy of which you will be given to keep.

The study is sponsored by the researcher (**NDAGIRE VICTOR**)

#### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

## STUDY PROCEDURES

Your participation in this study will involve a questionnaire which seeks your opinions on certain specific topics regarding the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on secondary school students. The questionnaire will consume about 15-20 minutes of your time as a participant.

Who will participate in the study?

The study will comprise of students, classroom teachers, head-teachers, deputy head-teachers and counselors. At least five (5) were head teachers, five (5) were school directors; and ten (5) deputy head teachers will be interviewed from the five sampled schools and about seventy-two (72) teachers will be asked to fill a questionnaire all of whom will be from Kyotera Town Council.

## RISKS

This study poses no risks to you personally or your institution except for the risk of inconvenience of your time during the interview.

## BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may help schools transcend to the emerging education technologies in order to improve delivery and learning among teachers and learners in schools. The school administrators may request a copy of the final report for reference and in agreement with the principal investigator may request for a presentation to aid knowledge sharing sessions with the school management, teachers and learners.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

For the purposes of this research study, your comments will not be anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

## CONTACT INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Primary Investigator, please contact the Uganda Christian University Research Board on [Tel:+256\(0\)772405357](tel:+256(0)772405357), Email: [pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug](mailto:pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug) and the secretary on [Tel:+256\(0\)775737627](tel:+256(0)775737627), Email: [oahimbisibwe@ucu.ac.ug](mailto:oahimbisibwe@ucu.ac.ug)

## VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After signing the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I ..... grant consent that as a Head teacher, Deputy head teacher, teacher, student and counselor selected on account of my knowledge, experience and willingness to communicate my opinions do accept that the information I share during my interaction may be used by Ndagire Victor (Ms) for research purposes.

I am aware that my discussions maybe audio recorded and grant consent for these audio recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I understand that by signing this form, I do not waive off my legal rights but merely indicate that I have been informed about the research study in which I am voluntarily agreeing to participate.

A copy of this will be provided to me.

Participant's Name : -----

Participant's Signature : -----

Researcher's Name : Ndagire Victor (Ms)

Researcher's Signature : -----

Date : -----

**APPENDIX 111: QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TOPIC: EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC REGULATIONS ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KYOTERA TOWN COUNCIL.**

**Questionnaires for teachers**

**Dear Participant,**

The aim and purpose of this research tool is to have your opinions and views on the above-mentioned academic research topic under study. You have therefore been chosen or selected to fully participate in this study. This is due to the significance of your relevant information in regard to the issues to be investigated in this research. The required relevant information you will give in this study will be confidentially used; indeed, shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Please, feel and answer all these questions to the best of your ability and knowledge.

In advance, I thank you for your cooperation. Thank you once again for your time and accepting to provide me with the relevant answers.

Yrs, -----

**NDAGIRE VICTOR (RJ19M06/028)**

You need to indicate the extent to which you either agree or disagree in relation to the following views/opinions/statements' by ticking the most appropriate number.

<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
<b>(4)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(1)</b>

**Section A: The Effects of covid-19 pandemic Regulations on Students’ Learning in Selected Secondary Schools in Kyotera Town Council.**

In all this part, you are required to tick the appropriate option/response that may corresponds to your degree of disagreement or agreement with each of these statement

<b>No.</b>	<b>Statements/Questions</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
1.	In our school, COVID-19 regulations has contributed to dropout of students				
2.	In our school, children learning less through distance education been observed as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
3.	In our school, school closure have affected us on studying practical subjects				
4.	In our school, students have limited contact with colleagues as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
5.	Reduction on students enrolment have been observed in our school after COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
6.	In our school, we experience lack of study resources as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
7.	In our school, COVID-19 pandemic regulations have escalated limited access to technologies by students in remote areas				
8.	In our school, high teenage pregnancy been experienced as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
9.	In our school, there is rising cases of drop of school as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
10.	In our school, we experience limited interaction between us and				

	teachers as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations				
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**Section B: The Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations on Students' Wellbeing in Selected Secondary Schools in Kyotera Town Council.**

In all this part, you are required to tick the appropriate option/response that may corresponds to your degree of disagreement or agreement with each of these statement

No. Qns	Statements/Questions	5	4	3	2	1
1.	Our school have been burdened by mental health consequences among students as a result of Covid-19 pandemic regulations					
2.	In our school, we experience failure to afford the expenses SOPs as per COVID-19 pandemic regulations					
3.	In our school, there is stress and fear of COVID-19 infection as a result of gradual reopening of schools					
4.	There is increasing negative feeling among students as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations					
5.	We experience stress, anxiety and depression as a result of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in our school					
6.	In our school, we experience unwanted pregnancies as a result of outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic regulations					
7.	Any other (specify)					

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**Section C: The Students' Copying Mechanisms of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations in Selected Secondary Schools in Kyotera Town Council**

In all this part, you are required to tick the appropriate option/response that may corresponds to your degree of disagreement or agreement with each of these statement

No. Qns	Statements/Questions	5	4	3	2	1
1.	In our school, routine screening for SARS-CoV-2 virus as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations					
2.	In our school, there is an emphasize of e-learning platforms and lessons					
3.	In our school, we need to adopt transmission control measures like wearing masks					
4.	In our school, there is need for donor funding to increase on school financial base to accommodate students with financial challenges (scholarships)					
5.	There is continued closure of schools as a the COVID-19 pandemic regulation is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations					
6.	Restricted visitors is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations in our school					
7.	In our school, regular hand-washing and social distancing have been made compulsory for the all school members					
8.	In our school, routine counselling of all students should be encouraged					

9.	Our school, social distancing have been emphasized as part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations					
10.	In our school, restricted movement is part of the COVID-19 pandemic regulations					

*Thank you for your cooperation*

#### APPENDIX IV

#### Interview Guide for Head teachers, Deputy head-teachers, and Counselors

**Guidance for the Interview Guide:** Introduce yourself and briefly describe the research being undertaken to assess the ‘Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations on the secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council, Kyotera District’. Ensure you adhere to the COVID-19 prevention guidelines eg social distance and wear a face mask. Ensure you have a sanitizer for you and probably your respondent where necessary.

**Seeking Consent:** Before the discussion commences, request for the respondent’s consent to be interviewed. Should any of them decline, politely inquire for the reason why and document it before excusing them. To the extent possible, attempts should be made to replace those that decline to take part in the interview.

In addition, explain to the respondent that you will be recording the conversation to allow you make accurate notes (verbatim) after the discussion. In doing so, emphasize to the respondent that their views will be treated with confidentiality and their names will not be recorded against any quotes. **If the respondent declines to be recorded, proceed with the interview without recording it and make accurate notes with direct quotes from their responses where possible.**

**Date of the Interviews** \_\_\_\_\_ **Consent to FG Interview:** Yes/ No

#### Guiding Questions

1. What is the effect of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in your school?
2. What is the outcome of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in your school?
3. What are the students' coping mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in your school?

### **Appendix V:**

#### **FGD Guide for Students**

**Guidance for the FGD:** Introduce yourself and briefly describe the research being undertaken to assess the 'The Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic regulations the secondary school students' in Kyotera Town Council'. Ensure you adhere to the COVID-19 prevention guidelines eg social distance and wear a face mask. Ensure you have a sanitizer for you and probably your respondent where necessary.

**Seeking Consent:** Before the discussion commences, request for the respondent's consent to be interviewed. Should any of them decline, politely inquire for the reason why and document it before excusing them. To the extent possible, attempts should be made to replace those that decline to take part in the interview.

In addition, explain to the respondent that you will be recording the conversation to allow you make accurate notes (verbatim) after the discussion. In doing so, emphasize to the respondent that their views will be treated with confidentiality and their names will not be recorded against any quotes. **If the respondent declines to be recorded, proceed with the interview without recording it and make accurate notes with direct quotes from their responses where possible.**

**Date of the Interviews** \_\_\_\_\_ **Consent to FG Interview:** Yes/ No

#### **Guiding Questions**

1. What are the effect of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' learning in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?
2. What are the outcomes of COVID-19 pandemic regulations on students' wellbeing in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?
3. What are the students' copying mechanisms of COVID-19 pandemic regulations in selected secondary schools in Kyotera Town Council?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

**APPENDIX VI: INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

26<sup>th</sup> May, 2022

Ndagire Victor  
C/o, Uganda Christian University,  
P. O. Box 4, Mukono  
Tel. +256778956009.

#### UG-REC-026 APPROVAL NOTICE

To: Ndagire Victor, Principal Investigator

Re: UCU-REC Application titled; Effects of Covid-19 pandemic regulations on the Secondary school students in Kyotera Town Council.

Application Number: UCU REC-2022-395-12

Version: 4.0

Type:  Initial Review  
 Protocol Amendment  
 Letter of Amendment (LOA)  
 Continuing Review  
 Material Transfer Agreement  
 Other, Specify:



I am please to inform you that the UG-REC-026; UCUREC approved the above referenced application.

Approval of the research is for the period from 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022, to 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2023.

This research is considered minimal risk category.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and additions to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval prior to the activation of the changes.

1 of 2

The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence.

3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or other must be submitted to the REC. New information that becomes available which could change the risk: benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for REC review.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by subjects and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Regulations require review of an approved study not less than once per 12-month period. Therefore, a continuing review application must be submitted to the REC eight weeks prior to the above expiration date of 26th May, 2023 in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study, at which point new participants may not be enrolled and currently enrolled participants must be taken off the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. Your research details have been shared with the Executive secretary of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) and you are not required to get clearance since you are a Masters degree research. Refer to UNCST Research registration and clearance Policy and guidelines (July 2016) in Uganda section 6(e).

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by UG-REC \_026:

	Document Title	Language	Version	Version Date
1.	Research Proposal	English	1.0	2022-01-31
2.	Informed Consent Form	English	2.0	2022-01-31
3.	Data Collection Tools	English	1.0	2022-01-31

Signed and Stamped



Prof. Peter Waiswa,  
UCUREC Chairperson,  
[pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug](mailto:pwaiswa@musph.ac.ug)

