

## The effect of COVID-19 pandemic on emotional wellbeing of education instructors: A perspective of Kenya's private schools

Hillary Busolo \*  <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-4632-3613>

Caren Jerop  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5662-1493>

Carolyn Omulando  <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7105-0393>

*School of Education and Social Sciences, Alupe University, Kenya*

### ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon generated inordinate strain and experiences across a wide range of sectors in Kenya, with the education segment introduced to its own set of unique challenges. Some instructors in private learning institutions joined the job seeking market once again as several schools indefinitely closed down. This often-needed reskilling and turned out to be frustrating as the job opportunities kept shrinking rapidly. This study looked at the effect of COVID-19 pandemic education disruption on emotional wellbeing of education instructors, with a focus on private schools' teachers in Kenya. Data was collected from 367 respondents who completed a closed ended questionnaire and quantitative analysis was undertaken. The results revealed that there is a significant effect of COVID-19 pandemic education disruption on private school teachers' emotional wellbeing. The prediction equation based on the unstandardized coefficients was statistically significant,  $F_{1,365} = 46.035$ ,  $p < 0.001$  and accounted for approximately 11.2% of the variance of emotional wellbeing ( $R^2 = 0.112$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.110$ ). Therefore, hypothesis stated as COVID-19 pandemic education disruption has no significant effect on Kenyan private school teachers' emotional wellbeing was not supported. The moderating effect of emotional and physical support did not significantly account for more variance with  $R^2$  Change = .009,  $p > .024$ . The findings supported the hypothesis that emotional and physical support does not moderate the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing.

*This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-NC 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license.*



### ARTICLE INFO

#### **Keywords:**

COVID-19 pandemic;  
education instructors;  
emotional wellbeing;  
Kenya's private schools

#### **Article History:**

Received: 05 August 2023  
Revised: 10 February 2024  
Accepted: 21 February 2024  
Published: 27 February 2024


#### **How to Cite in APA Style:**

Busolo, H., Jerop, C., & Omulando, C. (2023). The effect of COVID-19 pandemic on emotional wellbeing of education instructors: A perspective of Kenya's private schools. *Journal of Educational Management and Instruction*, 3(2), 72-85.

### Introduction

Understanding precisely the entire spectra of the impact of Covid-19 pandemic will take considerable time as the novel disease presents new revelations time after time. Attempts have been made to examine its impact from health perspective to economic, geographic, social and political disposition, whilst hazily investigating its emotional strain on private school teachers in Kenya. There is an assumption that since teachers come from the community, they are affected in the same way as everyone else.

\* Corresponding author: Hillary Busolo  [hillvob@gmail.com](mailto:hillvob@gmail.com)

 <https://doi.org/10.22515/jemin.v3i2.7445>

This may hold true until you pay slightly more attention to their work as teachers, their work stations (schools) and their environment (home and school).

Gondim and Borges-Andrade (2009) argue that, the free expression of negative emotions can vary according to social and cultural contexts but on the contrary, Rocha (2015) stresses that emotional response does not follow a given fixed pattern as there exists some modulation strategies individuals can employ knowingly or unintentionally to modify their experiences, expressions and physiology of their emotional reactions (Boyes, Hasking, & Martin, 2016; Webb, Miles, & Sheeran, 2012). This process significantly controls when and how the emotions are felt by an individual (Ehring, Tuschen-Caffier, Schunulle, Fischer, & Gross, 2010; Gross 1998; Gross & John 2003). It's therefore expected that a variation in private school teachers emotional wellbeing exists.

A teacher plays a range of complex roles both in school as well as in the larger community. They are surrogate parents to some students, role models, confidants, mentors, and educators –agents of social change and community leaders to the larger society. They therefore have emotional attachments to students they handle and activities they engage with, in the community. It is even more troubling as people over the age of sixty years are at a high risk of contracting the disease and fatal death from it. This category comprises teachers as well as other community members, which in effect militates against them being involved in physically interactive community based activities. Their exclusion causes anxiety and invokes responses that will ultimately cause instability in their emotional wellbeing.

On 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the first case of Covid-19 was announced in Kenya and the government moved swiftly introducing measures to curb the spread of the novel disease, including closure of schools on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (GoK Covid-19 Response Plan, May 2020). Introduction of 'dusk to dawn' curfew and ban of public gathering curtailed teachers work at the community level and extra coaching of students away from school locations that has been common especially with private schools' teachers. Generally, the livelihoods of these teachers have been impacted by crippling restrictions imposed by government, making them upset and vulnerable to emotional challenges. Reaction to upsets varies greatly from the way individuals control their behaviour to how depressed they get (Vanhove, Herian, Perez, Harms & Lester, 2016). The physiological expression of emotions generated due to upsets may be difficult to discern particularly in scenarios where societal expectations of individual's behaviour leads to conformation, consequently masking the real feelings. Teachers in the larger society are examples of this vulnerable group.

Just like the students who suffer from stress, anxiety, isolation and depression when they study on their own, and are unable to reach their school counselors during Covid-19 pandemic face to face learning cessation, teachers equally experience mental health challenges (Human Rights Watch, 2020). They are deprived of counseling services and the existing support systems (family, friends and religious group initiatives) are weak, unstructured and neglected by the very teachers who would benefit from them. Covid-19 led to disruption of school face to face learning and teachers had to adopt to new instructional platforms they were ill equipped to use, yet learning had to continue. This generated a fair share of depressing challenges (Jeremy & Pamela 2014; Conway, Craske, Zinbarg & Mineka 2016) and worst case scenario, some private schools in Kenya sent teachers on unpaid compulsory leave, exacerbating pre-existing strained emotional wellbeing. Threat of massive layoffs of teachers in the Kenyan private schools has led to a sense of hopelessness and compelling some teachers to look for alternative employment that has often needed retooling and reskilling. Turning to new vocations to earn a living at a time when job opportunities are rapidly shrinking, can turn out to be frustrating and key contributor of emotional breakdown. Though education sector has received attention since advent of Covid-19 (Kishara & Ngunyi, 2020; Areba, 2020) and suggestions (UN Policy Brief, August 2020) made on the best way to address impasses caused by the novel disease, exclusive investigations on emotional wellbeing of teachers are lacking. The

emerging trends indicate teachers, particularly in private schools (primary and secondary) seem to have been disengaged, forgotten and/or ignored, undermining their quality of life, making them vulnerable to anxiety and emotional instability as they face a bleak future. Thus, this study investigated the effect of Covid-19 Pandemic education disruption on emotional wellbeing of education instructors with the focus on Kenya's private school teachers.

Drawing on the background, this study has two primary objectives: (1) to examine the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing and (2) to investigate emotional and physical support moderation of the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing. Based on the objectives, the present study formulates the following hypotheses: (1) there is no significant effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing and (2) emotional and physical support does not moderate the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing.

This study has several implications. Emotional wellbeing for teachers is vital for revamping of the education sector that will have to set slightly more ambitious recovery goals when normalcy is reinstated. Teachers will play a crucial role in reorienting learners back in school setups and promoting learners' social wellbeing in school as well as progressive and meaningful learning. The teachers' emotional wellbeing must therefore be evaluated to guarantee smooth and effective reinstating face to face learning. Emotional wellbeing is an indicator of mental state of an individual, which when well known, offers an opportunity to adequate structured support systems particularly to those reasonably deemed to be having challenges. The emotional wellbeing of teachers is important for their productivity especially when face to face learning resumes. It is also helpful in determining ideal emotional support systems to put in place as well as scaling up proven support systems. In addition, this study will contribute information that can be used give a glimpse of where our teachers in private schools are in terms of their emotional wellbeing.

The study was conducted in Nakuru, Busia, Uasin Gishu, Baringo and Trans-Nzoia Counties. The effect of Covid-19 Pandemic education disruption on emotional wellbeing of education instructors with the focus on Kenya's private schools' teachers formed the basis of investigation. Their emotional reactions to upsets were examined and emotional feelings explored. The effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruptors on the private schools' teachers' emotion coping mechanism was determined. The emotional and physical support available were interrogated as well as how much they trusted source of Covid-19 related health information. The study was conducted between July and September 2020.

### ***Literature review***

Education is an important source of economic and social development in any country. To ensure that the children get the best education, most of the parents enroll their children to private schools. Private schools have smaller classroom sizes which allow students to receive more personalized attention from the teachers, giving rise to so many private schools – creating job opportunities to about 120,000 teachers.

With intrusion of COVID-19, organizations agree that the Pandemic has created a tremendous impact on society, both in the short and in the long term (ILO, 2020; Remuzzi & Remuzzi, 2020). Covid-19 pandemic has caused the largest disruption in the history of education worldwide and Kenya's 18 million school plus tertiary institutions' students are unable to continue with their studies (GoK Covid-19 Response Plan, May 2020). This global impact has hit hard especially on the private schools' who mostly rely on the students to pay school fees that caters for operational costs. The only schools that survived for a while in the new environment are the ones who embraced digital learning

and had ability to disrupt their traditional delivery systems. Among the disruptions were economic, social and emotional.

#### *Economic burden*

COVID-19 effects stretch beyond the sphere of healthcare to economic social and psychological. The ripple economic effect caused by COVID-19 is too vast to understand. The global economy and labor market was affected. Countries went to lockdown paralyzing most of the activities. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2020), annual global GDP growth is projected to drop by 6% in 2020, with average unemployment in OECD countries rising to 9.2%, from 5.4% in 2019. This has a great implication on the education sector which depends largely on the government funding. UNESCO report states, the educational budgets may be affected by the current crisis (IIEPUNESCO, 2020).

The impact of world economic recession is wide spread in the education sector. Due to this effect the stakeholders in education sector were forced to make tough decisions so as to balance their budgets and continue meeting the needs of those who depend on them (Ogunode, 2020). Some of the private schools stopped paying teachers while others paid half salary.

#### *Psychological effect*

With the teachers' economic disruptions deepening, the challenges shifted to emotional and psychological problems. Any unexpected or sudden change of event triggers emotional change. People feel nervous and insecure when there are sudden environmental changes. According to Keltner *et al* (2014) emotions play a role of adaptive coordination creating a range of response such as psychological, behavioral, physiological, communication and experience. This enables an individual to adjust or react to the encountered accordingly. Alson (2019), adds that, everyone feels stressed when facing certain situation and environmental stressors are perceived to be a threat to survival.

Being a teacher usually has its own set of anxieties and stressors but in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, students and teachers are experiencing traumatic situations. The level of anxiety increased ominously when COVID-19 was reported. Ren *et al.* (2020) postulates that rumors develop and close-minded attitudes eventuate when an infectious disease outbreaks out, and the cause, progression and outcomes are unclear. The rumours and sudden changes increased vulnerability to the fragile state of teachers. Some of the teachers were required to switch from teaching under familiar circumstances to online teaching with no warning, preparation, and barely, if any, training (MacIntyre *et al* 2020). The assumption that teachers will simply adapt and continue causes them more stress. Other authors have termed it as 'emergency online homeschooling' (Milligan, 2020; Lehmann, 2020; Guzdial, 2020). Madhav *et al.* (2017) and advice – the Government and Health officials address misinformation, and rumours to reduce public anxiety. This also helps in mitigating the adversarial effects of stigmatization, providing protection to vulnerable groups (DeBruin *et al.* 2012). Apportioning blame in any circumstance damages everyone involved and can reduce individual and community resilience both in the short and long term (Murden *et al.* 2018).

#### *Adjusting to the new norm*

Coping is the process of categorizing a situation, and its aspects, in relation to its significance for wellbeing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The teachers in private schools have had to find a way to make ends meet. COVID-19 highlights the essential need to rethink and adapt to the new norm. The situation triggered the thought for new opportunities. Teaching institutions shifted to online learning with parents being asked to pay a small fee to sustain the teachers. To also support teachers during this pandemic, Teachers Thematic Group, World Bank (2020) came up with various coping principles.

### *Transactional theory*

Transactional theory states that stress is the outcome of an interaction between an individual and the environment which could possibly strain the resources hence threatening their wellbeing (Lazarus, 1986; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Individuals filter potentially emotional experiences by appraising the extent to which they believe they can reduce loss, minimize harm, or address challenge and engage in behaviors that specifically affect outcomes. How individuals evaluate the interaction gives a fundamental pathway in understanding the underlying psychological and physiological factors which contribute to the overall process and experience of stress (Lazarus *et al.* 2001).

This theory aids in understanding the reaction of teachers after schools' closure due to Covid-19 pandemic. Based on the theory, the reaction to job loss due to Covid-19 is dependent on an individual. According to Prem *et al.* (2017) the appraisal of people's demand and capability is influenced by several factors among them, previous experiences, personality, time, ability to cope and the existing stress being experienced. Through multidisciplinary review it is clear that, how an individual perceives and evaluates the stressors will determine their effects (Ganster & Rosen, 2013). In addition, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) emphasize that the interaction of primary appraisals and secondary appraisals create the stress response and the emotional reaction. When an individual perceives a situation as a threat, s/he is more likely to engage in emotion-focused forms of coping strategy, whereas when s/he evaluates a situation as a challenge, s/he is more likely to engage in problem-focused approaches of coping strategy.

These experiences are often accompanied by efforts to cope with the existing challenges and by changes in psychological functioning and behavioural function (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Guppy & Weatherstone, 1997). The coping mechanisms are instigated after the cognitive judgments and the psycho-physiological experience of this potentially stressful event. How the teachers will cope will majorly depend on how they perceive and experience the pandemic.

### *Action-readiness theory*

To compliment transactional theory, action-readiness theory was used. It postulates – emotions are aroused by events. Frijda's theory holds that emotions are built from four components: cognition, feeling, evaluation or motivation and behaviour (Ben-Ze'ev, 2000; Frijda, 1986). It explains how emotions and action relate. Emotions also act as information guide on how to interact with the ever-changing environment.

The actions of the teachers during Covid-19 pandemic are dependent on their emotions which constitute influential and pervasive drivers to decision making. Action-readiness theory argues that emotions can restrict or widen behaviors of an individual according to the situation. In addition, emotions serve an adaptive coordination role that triggers a range of responses (physiology, behavior, experience, and communication) that enable individuals to deal quickly with encountered problems or opportunities (Keltner *et al.* 2014). This explains how teachers in private schools have navigated through the Covid-19 challenges.

## **Method**

Cross sectional research design was adopted in investigating the effect of Covid-19 Pandemic education disruption on emotional wellbeing of education instructors with the Kenya's private schools' teachers as the target population. The sampling frame consisted of teachers in private schools in both primary and secondary schools in Nakuru, Busia, Uasin Gishu, Baringo and Trans-Nzoia Counties. Krejcie *et al.*, (1970) approach on determination of sample size was employed to determine the number of private school teachers who formed the sample. Snowballing, purposive and random sampling

techniques were employed in selecting 384 respondents. A close ended questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used as a quality indicator of the scale items and reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.842. This was acceptable as it was beyond 0.7 (Pallant, 2011). As part of ensuring study trustworthiness, ethical considerations were observed. Data analysis involved three major steps, in the following order; preliminary analysis, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.

## Results

### Respondents

The demographic data of the respondents in this study is presented in Table 1. The distribution of the respondents by gender showed that 65% of the respondents who completed the questionnaires were male, while female constituted 35%. This shows that private schools hire more male teachers than female teachers. Furthermore, most teachers in private schools are of ages 26-30 years (41%) and 31-35 years (33%). By implication – private school employers are keen on hiring and keeping teachers who are relatively young and still in their most productive stage. Only 8% of the teachers in private schools have high school education, 47% have Diploma qualification, 42% have university bachelor degrees and 3% have post graduate degree. The marital status showed that 43% are single, never married, 46% are married while 11% divorced. Most of the respondents had teaching experience of 4-6 years (48%) and generally the entire respondent group spread out from private school in urban areas (78%) and rural areas (22%).

Table 1. Demographic data of the respondents

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	237	65
	Female	130	35
School	Primary	180	49
	Secondary	187	51
Age	18-25 years	18	5
	26 – 30 years	150	41
	31-35 years	119	33
	36-40 years	22	6
	41-45 years	23	6
	46-50 years	23	6
	51-55 years	12	3
	56-60 years	0	0
Academic Level	61 years and above	0	0
	Secondary education level	0	0
	High school education	30	8
	College Diploma	173	47
	University Bachelor's Degree	153	42
Marital Status	Post Graduate Degree	11	3
	Never married	158	43
	Married	168	46
	Divorced	41	11
	Separated	0	0
	Widowed	0	0
School Position	Teacher	279	77
	Head of Subject	37	10
	Head of Department	40	11
	Others	6	2

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching Experience	1-3 years	35	10
	4-6 years	178	48
	7-9 years	75	20
	10 years and above	79	22
Work location	Urban	286	78
	Rural	81	22

The study sought to find out if the respondents had worked in more than one private school and 67% agreed that they had worked in more than a single private school while 29% indicated they had not. 12% had worked in at least one other private school, 45% in at least two other private schools while 43% in at least three other private schools. This implies, private school teachers are likely to move from one school to another. 67% of the respondents had some kind of health care coverage plan by government of employers, while 33% lacked. While 71% of the respondents had reported in person to their school in the last three months. 44% have taken up some work away from teaching in the last three months while 56% have not. 75% have dependents in their household while 25% did not.

The study investigated how hard it has been for the respondents to pay for the basic needs like food, housing and medical care. 26% indicated that it was very hard, 48% hard, 18% somewhat hard and 30% not very hard. How they described the money situation in their households was also interrogated and they indicated that they were comfortable with extra (2%), enough but not extra (12%), have to cut back (40%) and cannot make ends meet (46%). The cutting back and failure to make ends meet could be a source of stress and anxiety in the household.

### ***Hypotheses testing results***

Normality of variables was assessed and the relationships between variables were investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analysis was undertaken to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity existed. Moderate associations existed between Covid-19 pandemic education disruption and emotional wellbeing ( $r = 0.34, p < .001$ ) while it's a weak with total emotional and physical support ( $r = -0.002, p < .0001$ ). The association between total emotional and physical support and emotional wellbeing was moderate ( $r = 0.47, p < .001$ ). Results using five variables in this study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Pearson product-moment correlation among variables

Variables	1	2	3
1 Covid19 Pandemic Education Disruption (Cvd19PED)	–		
2 Total Emotional & Physical Support (TtlEmPhySupt)	-.002	–	
3 Emotional wellbeing (EmtlWB)	.335**	.466**	–

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Furthermore, hypotheses were tested using hierarchical multiple regression analyses to determine whether the hypothesized Covid-19 pandemic education disruption significantly predicted private school teacher emotional wellbeing, and if emotional and physical support moderated the relationship.

### ***The effect of COVID-19 pandemic on Kenya's private school teachers' emotional wellbeing***

The first hypothesis, that Covid-19 pandemic education disruption has no significant effect on Kenyan private school teachers' emotional wellbeing, was tested using multiple linear regression analysis with emotional wellbeing as the treatment factor. The regression model was theorized as follows:

$$EmltWB = \beta_0 + \beta_1Cvd19PED + \varepsilon \text{ ----- (Eq -1)}$$

Where; - EmltWB – Emotional Wellbeing, Cvd19PED – Covid-19 Pandemic Education Disruption,  $\beta_1$  – Estimated parameters and  $\varepsilon$  - the error term

Moreover, the goodness of fit was assessed to determine how much of emotional wellbeing is determined by predictor variable (Covid-19 Pandemic Education Disruption). The findings of assessment of goodness of fit indicate that model 1 accounted for 11.2% variance ( $R^2 = 0.112$ ) and the outcome is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Variance in emotional wellbeing (model summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.335 <sup>a</sup>	.112	.110	.48625

The low  $R^2$  value may be explained by the Affective Events theory assertion that emotional experiences are multidimensional (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), a fact that makes Covid-19 pandemic contribute to individuals' emotions among other events. Also, coping mechanism an individual has enable reduction of an emotional event impacting an individual's emotional wellbeing overtime.

The outcomes presented in Table 4 by the final model 1 reveal that the prediction model was statistically significant with  $F_{1,365} = 46.035, p < 0.001$ . The model was therefore a significant fit to the data.

Table 4. Significance of the overall emotional wellbeing model (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.884	1	10.884	46.035	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	86.299	365	.236		
	Total	97.183	366			

A determination of the significance of the predictor variable in the model was then conducted. The findings as presented by the model 1 in Table 5 suggest that Covid-19 pandemic education disruption was statistically significant in the model with  $\beta = 0.384, p < 0.001$ . The VIF ratio was less than 4 suggesting absences of multicollinearity (Pan *et al.*, 2008).

Table 5. Significance of COVID-19PED effect on emotional wellbeing (coefficients)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.436	.168		8.565	.000		
	Covid19PED	.384	.057	.335	6.785	.000	1.000	1.000

The prediction equation as presented below based on the unstandardized coefficients was statistically significant,  $F_{1,365} = 46.035, p < 0.001$  and accounted for approximately 11.2% of the variance of EmltWB ( $R^2 = 0.112, Adjusted R^2 = 0.110$ ). Figure



1 shows a unified relationship. The outcome revealed that there is a significant effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on private school teachers’ emotional wellbeing. Therefore, hypothesis stated as Covid-19 pandemic education disruption has no significant effect on Kenyan private school teachers’ emotional wellbeing was not supported.

$$EmltWB = 1.436 + 0.384Cvd19PED$$

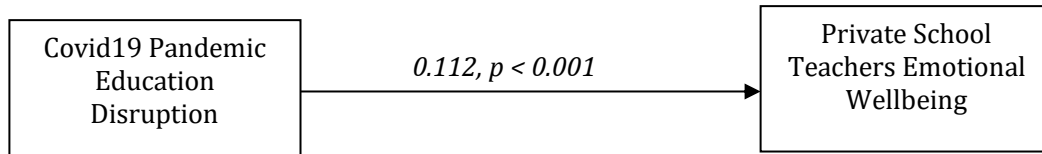


Figure 1. Relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and teachers’ emotional wellbeing

*Emotional and physical moderation of the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on teachers’ emotional wellbeing*

The second hypothesis, that emotional and physical support does not moderate the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruptors on Kenya private school teachers’ emotional wellbeing, was also tested using hierarchical multiple regression analysis with a dummy variable introduced to assess the moderation of emotional and physical support. The regression model was theorized as follows: -

$$EmltWB = \beta_0 + \beta_1Cvd19PED + \beta_2 TtlEmPhySupt + \varepsilon \text{ ----- (Eq -2)}$$

$$EmltWB = \beta_0 + \beta_1Cvd19PED + \beta_2 TtlEmPhySupt + \beta_3ModCV+ \varepsilon \text{ ----- (Eq -3)}$$

Where; - EmltWB – Emotional Wellbeing, Cvd19PED – Covid-19 Pandemic Education Disruption, TtlEmPhySupt – Total Emotional and Physical Support, ModCV – Moderating Centred Variable ( $\beta_1, \beta_2$ ) – Estimated parameters and  $\varepsilon$  - the error term

The goodness of fit was assessed to determine how much of emotional wellbeing is determined by predictor variable (Covid-19 Pandemic Education Disruption) with moderation of emotional and physical support. The findings of assessment of goodness of fit indicate that model 2 accounted for 33.0% variance ( $R^2 = 0.330$ ) and the outcome is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Variance in emotional wellbeing with moderation of emotional and physical support (model summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	.575 <sup>a</sup>	.330	.326	.42290

The moderate  $R^2$  value shows that with the introduction of the moderating variable with uncentered interaction, the contribution effect to the amount of variance accounted is 33.0%. Further interrogation of significance of the model whose outcome is presented in table 7, by the final model 2 reveal that the prediction model was statistically significant with  $F_{2,364} = 89.693, p < 0.001$ . The model was therefore a significant fit to the data.

Table 7. Significance of the overall emotional wellbeing model (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	32.083	2	16.041	89.693	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	65.100	364	.179		
	Total	97.183	366			

To test for the moderation effect, a moderating dummy variable (centered variable) was introduced i.e. ModCV (CvdPED\*TtlEmPhySupt). The assessment of goodness of fit indicated that model 3 accounted for 33.9% variance ( $R^2 = 0.339$ ) while model 2 had accounted for 33.0% ( $R^2 = 0.330$ ). Table 8 shows the output.

Table 8. Variance in emotional wellbeing with moderation of emotional and physical support (model summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	.575 <sup>a</sup>	.330	.326	.42290
3	.583 <sup>c</sup>	.339	.334	.42053

Further interrogation of significance of the model 3 revealed that the prediction model was statistically significant with  $F_{3,363} = 62.177$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . Both model 2 (without interaction) with  $F_{2,364} = 89.693$ ,  $p < 0.001$  and model 3 (with interaction) were significant. Table 9 presents the results.

Table 9. Significance of the overall emotional wellbeing model with moderation interaction (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	32.083	2	16.041	89.693	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	65.100	364	.179		
	Total	97.183	366			
3	Regression	32.988	3	10.996	62.177	.000 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	64.196	363	.177		
	Total	97.183	366			

Model 3 (with interaction) did not significantly accounted for more variance with  $R^2$  Change = .009,  $p > .024$ . Table 10 shows the output. The findings supported the hypothesis that emotional and physical support does not moderate the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing.

Table 10. Change statistic as a result of moderation interaction (model summary)

Model	R Square Change	F Change	Df 1	df 2	Sig.F Change
1	.112	46.035	1	365	.000
2	.218	118.529	1	364	.000
3	.009	5.116	1	363	.024

## Discussion

The study investigated the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on private school teachers' emotional wellbeing. Cumulatively the private school teachers

neither agreed nor disagreed (85%) that Covid-19 pandemic caused disruption in education at primary and secondary schools, 13% disagreed while 2% agreed. The findings depart from the thoughts of the various unions who categorically stated in their presentation entitled *Effects of Coronavirus Pandemic on Education – Mitigation Measures, Analysis and Recommendations on Reopening of Schools, Colleges & Universities*, on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020, that the novel disease disrupted the education sector and raised questions on the government approach in addressing the challenges caused by the pandemic.

Also, a report by Human Rights Watch submitted to The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 35<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session, on 31<sup>st</sup> August – 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020, indicated that there was less learning as schools migrated to distance learning, others were not taught, parents assumed the role of teachers marking revision papers sent via WhatsApp, girls disproportionately affected as boys could visit some teachers houses, and some students suffered mental health, among other challenges. All these put together constitute a disruption. Other studies revealed cessation of public library, unequal access to digital education resources and materials, and co-curricular activities affected (Areba, 2020); disparity in education regionally with affluent regions continuing learning (Kishara & Ngunyi, 2020), and anxiety and depression among learners (Lugonzo, 2020).

The results depict either a confusion or lack of adequate information on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on education by the private school teachers. It may also be attributed to the fact that some private schools continued teaching remotely after complete cessation of teaching and learning activities. This makes teachers to feel that disruption of teaching and learning, and generally education, may not be attributed to Covid-19 pandemic. This could also be the reason of a low significance value (11.2%) of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption effect on emotional wellbeing of private school teachers,  $R^2 = 0.112$ ,  $P < .001$ .

Emotional wellbeing of private school teachers was assessed based on their reaction to upsets, feelings in a couple of months and coping mechanism. 53% of the teachers indicated that about half the time they react to upset, 41% stated that sometimes they react, 5% indicated they almost never react and only 1% stated most of the time they react. It's expected that teachers would be anxious, sad, develop fears and stressed when their employers stop paying salaries, which was experienced widely in private schools in Kenya, when teaching and learning was halted due to Covid-19 pandemic. The transactional theory holds that stress is the result of interplay between the individual and the environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The reaction to upsets by private school teachers could be explained by the prevailing circumstances in their environments for the period of time they started progressively witnessing changes attributed to Covid-19. The teachers are more likely to be irritated easily, stressed and depressed.

On the teachers' feelings over a couple of months, a range of statements were responded to; 54% indicated several days in a couple of months they had a range of feelings, 19% were not sure, 14% not at all, while 13% more than half of the days. The feelings ranged from being nervous, anxious, worrying, restless, irritable, hopelessness, troubled sleep, loss of appetite, loss of energy, lack of concentration and thoughts that they would be better off dead. The structure of questions was in line with action-readiness theory as private school teachers were expected to appraise their feelings over the past three months. The findings revealed expression of behaviour (action-readiness) that manifested over a couple of months motivated by changes associated with Covid-19. Therefore, these results support the view that emotions can be regarded both as experiences of forms of expressions as well as states of action readiness and overly emotions are indicators of interactions and probable disposition (action readiness) to anticipations to changes in our environment. In the case of private school teachers Covid-19 pandemic presents a phenomenon that heralds action readiness.

Statements on coping mechanism were in positive affirmation of their ability to cope with difficult situations, control their reactions and deal with losses they encounter

in life. 47% of the respondents indicated the statements described them well, 28% did not describe them, 19% were not sure while 6% the statement did not describe them at all. The availability of numerous coping strategies when in difficult stressful situations may be the reason why almost half of the respondents (47%) indicated positively to the coping mechanism (Heffer, 2017; Yikealo & Tareke, 2018). The teachers seemed to have some coping strategies that enable them to emotionally remain stable in the pandemic era. The Covid-19 pandemic education disruptions as much as they could be intimidating, private school teachers (85%) neither agreed or disagreed that indeed it disrupted education. This could also explain the figures of coping mechanism registered.

The emotional and physical support teachers receive moderated the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on their emotional wellbeing. The support came from family, friends and religious groupings that formed social networks for the teachers. 21% strongly disagreed that they received some emotional and physical support, 3% disagreed, 28% were not sure, 45% agreed and only 3% strongly agreed that they received support. The inferential analysis revealed that emotional and physical support does not moderate the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on Kenya private school teachers' emotional wellbeing. This could be explained by the fact that private school teachers did not squarely agree that Covid-19 pandemic disrupted education in Kenya. Therefore, it's likely that existing emotional and physical support systems were not sought for (21%) and 28% were not sure.

## Conclusion

The investigation provides valuable insight into the private school teachers views on the effect of Covid-19 pandemic education disruption on their emotional wellbeing. It has presented critical information on how private school teachers relate Covid-19 pandemic with their emotional wellbeing especially in line with education matters. An understanding on whether Covid-19 pandemic disrupted education has not concretely formed among private school teachers. Also, private school teachers seem not to seek emotional and physical help to deal with challenges associated with Covid-19 education disruption. This can be understood from the fact that they are not sure it disrupted education. Finally, the private schools' teachers seem to be emotionally well, capable of coping with emotional challenges associated with Covid-19 education disruptions.

## Funding

This research was supported by Alupe University Research Grant (2021).

## References

- Alson, J. (2019). Stress Among Public School Teachers. *Journal of Research Initiatives*, 4(2). <https://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/jri/vol4/iss2/3>
- Areba G. N. (2020). COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Kenyan Education Sector: Learner Challenges and Mitigations. *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 4(2), 128-139.
- Aspinwall, L. G. and Taylor, S. E. (1997). A Stitch in Time: Self-Regulation and Proactive Coping. *Psychological Bulletin*, 121(3), 417-436. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.121.3.417>.
- Boyes, M. E., Hasking, P. A., & Martin, G. (2016). Adverse life experience and psychological distress in adolescence: Moderating and mediating effects of emotion regulation and rumination. *Stress and Health*, 32(4), 402-410. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.2635>
- Conway, C. C., Craske, M. G., Zinbarg, R. E., & Mineka, S. (2016). Pathological personality traits and the naturalistic course of internalizing disorders among high-risk young adults. *Depression and Anxiety*, 33, 84-93. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/da.22404>

- Ehring, T., Tuschen-Caffier, B., Schnülle, J., Fischer, S., & Gross, J. J. (2010). Emotion regulation and vulnerability to depression: spontaneous versus instructed use of emotion suppression and reappraisal. *Emotion*, 10(4), 563-572. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019010>.
- Ganster, D. C., & Rosen, C. C. (2013). Work stress and employee health: A multidisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 39, 1085-1122. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206313475815>
- Gondim, S. M. G., & Borges-Andrade, J. E. (2009). Regulação emocional no trabalho: um estudo de caso após desastre aéreo. *Psicologia: Ciência e Profissão*, 29, 512-533.
- Gross, J. J. (1998). Antecedent- and response-focused emotion regulation: Divergent consequences for experience, expression, and physiology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 224-237. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.74.1.224>.
- Gross, J. J., & John, O. P. (2003). Individual differences in two emotion regulation processes: Implications for affect, relationships, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 348-362. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.2.348>.
- Gross, J. J., & Thompson, R. (2007). Emotion regulation, conceptual foundations. In: J. J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (pp. 3-24). New York: Guilford Press.
- Guppy, A. and Weatherstone, L. (1997). Coping Strategies, Dysfunctional Attitudes and Psychological Well-being in White-Collar Public-Sector Employees. *Work & Stress*, 11 (1), 58-67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02678379708256822>
- Guzdial M. (2020). So much to learn about emergency remote teaching, but so little to claim about online learning.
- Heffer T, Willoughby T. (2017). A count of coping strategies: A longitudinal study investigating an alternative method to understanding coping and adjustment. *PLoS ONE*, 12(10): e0186057. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0186057>
- IIEP-UNESCO (2020), What price will education pay for COVID-19?, International Institute for Educational Planning website. <http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/what-price-will-education-pay-covid-19-13366>.
- ILO. (2020). ILO Monitor 2nd edition: COVID-19 and the world of work. Geneva: International Labor Office.
- Jeremy, D., Mackey & Pamela L. Perrew (2014). The AAA (appraisals, attributions, adaptation) model of job stress: The critical role of self-regulation. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 4(3), 258-278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386614525072>
- Keltner D, Oatley K, Jenkins J.M. (2014). Understanding emotions. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley
- Kishara W. & Ngunyi N. (2020). Covid-19 and Inequalities in Primary and Secondary Education in Africa: The Case of Kenya. *African Leadership Centre COVID-19 Research OP-ED Series*, 12(5).
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). Stress, appraisal, and coping. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Lehmann C. (2020). Doing school in the time of coronavirus. <http://practicaltheory.org/blog/2020/03/26/doing-school-in-the-time-of-coronavirus/>
- Lugonzo H. M. (2020). A theoretical study of the impact of corona virus crisis on learners' social interaction in Kenyan learning institutions. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 3(5), 1-9. <https://gphjournal.org/index.php/er/article/view/278>
- MacIntyre, C. R. (2020). Global spread of COVID-19 and pandemic potential. *Global Biosecurity*, 1(3). <https://doi.org/10.31646/gbio.55>
- Madhav, N., Oppenheim, B., Gallivan, M., Mulembakani, P. Rubin, E. & Wolfe, N. (2017). Pandemics: risks, impacts, and mitigation. In: Jamison, D.T, Gelband, H., Horton S., Jha, P., Laxminarayan, R., Mock, C.N. & Nugent, R. (Eds). *Disease Control Priorities: Improving Health and Reducing Poverty*, 3rd edn. Washington, D.C.: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

- Milligan I. (2020). Emergency remote teaching: A post-secondary reality check. <https://www.ianmilligan.ca/post/emergency-remote-teaching-a-post-secondary-reality-check/>
- Murden, F., Bailey, D., Mackenzie, F., Oeppen, R. S. & Brennan, P. A. (2018). The impact and effect of emotional resilience on performance: an overview for surgeons and other healthcare professionals. *British Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, 56, 786–790. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bjoms.2018.08.012>
- OECD (2020), OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2020 Issue 1, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/0d1d1e2e-en>.
- Ogunode, N. J. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic School Close Down on the Research Programme of Higher Institutions. *International Journal of Advances in Data and Information Systems*, 1(1), 40-49. <https://doi.org/10.25008/ijadis.v1i1.18940>
- Prem, R., Ohly, S., Kubicek, B., and Korunka, C. (2017). Thriving on Challenge Stressors? Exploring Time Pressure and Learning Demands as Antecedents of Thriving at Work. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 38(1), 108-123. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2115>
- Remuzzi, A. & Remuzzi, G. (2020). COVID-19 and Italy: what next? *The Lancet* 20: 1-4. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)30627-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30627-9)
- Ren, S.-Y., Gao, R.-D. & Chen, Y.-L. (2020). Fear can be more harmful than the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 in controlling the corona virus disease 2019 epidemic. *World Journal of Clinical Cases*, 8(4), 652–657. <https://doi.org/10.12998/wjcc.v8.i4.652>
- Rocha, T. I. C. (2015). O papel moderador de algumas características sócio - demográficas na relação entre a regulação emocional e o bem-estar: um estudo com trabalhadores portugueses (Dissertação de Mestrado não publicada). Universidade de Coimbra, Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação, Coimbra, Portugal.
- Vanhove, A. J., Herian, M. N., Perez, A. L. U., Harms, P. D., and Lester, P. B. (2016). Can resilience be developed at work? A meta-analytic review of resilience-building programme effectiveness. *Journal of Occup Organ Psychol*. 89, 278–307. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12123>
- Webb, T. L., Miles, E., & Sheeran, P. (2012). Dealing with feeling: a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of strategies derived from the process model of emotion regulation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(4), 775-808. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027600>
- Yikealo, D., & Tareke, W. (2018). Stress coping strategies among college students: A case in the college of education, Eritrea Institute of Technology. *Open Science Journal*, 3(3), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.23954/osj.v3i3.1689>