Experiences and Well-being of Ugandan Teachers Working in a Refugee Settlement During the COVID-19 School Closure

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to find out how the Ugandan COVID-19 school closure affected the well-being of Ugandan teachers working in a refugee settlement. Teacher well-being has been recognised as a major driver of quality education and it has received a lot of attention from researchers, but the well-being of teachers working in low-resource, crisis and conflict-affected settings is an under-researched topic, and there is little research on teaching during the COVID-19 school closures in contexts where online learning was not feasible. This study concentrated on the challenges, successes, and stressors that the Ugandan teachers working in a refugee settlement experienced during the first year of the school closure, from March 2020 to March 2021, and whether their job motivation changed during that time.

The data for the study were collected from 20 teachers through a questionnaire with open questions. The study was conducted in cooperation with Finn Church Aid (FCA) that supports schools in Ugandan refugee settlements. Interviews with the FCA education specialists provided valuable background information. The data collection was carried out by FCA personnel in May 2020, and the data were analysed using a qualitative content analysis method.

The findings of the study show that school-level and community-level contextual factors affected the teachers' job satisfaction, job stress and motivation. Insufficient income was the most prominent stress factor for the teachers. Many teachers had found additional sources of income to have their basic needs met, and financial distress was the main reason for decreased job motivation during the school closure. Difficult working conditions affected the teachers' job satisfaction negatively. Factors that supported the studied teachers' well-being were respect and recognition from the community and relationships with the learners and their families. Successes in carrying out their responsibilities, such as raising COVID-19 awareness in the communities and facilitating learning also supported their well-being.

Keywords: teacher well-being, refugee settlement, COVID-19, school closure, Uganda, Finn Church Aid

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1 INTRODUCTION

In 2020, school children, students, and teachers around the world were affected by school closures put in place to contain the spread of a new virus, COVID-19. In most high-income countries, schools were closed for a few months, but learning continued online (UNESCO, UNICEF & World Bank 2020). In contrast, in many low and middle-income countries, schools were completely or partially closed for a year or longer, and children's opportunities to continue learning were limited (UNICEF, 2021). The school closures have affected poorer countries and their poorest populations most, due to the lack of digital devices and connectivity (UNESCO et al. 2020). Even before the pandemic learning results in many low and middle-income countries were alarmingly poor, and the COVID-19 disruptions on education have likely worsened the situation (World Bank, 2021). The prolonged school closures have thus resulted in serious learning losses and a setback regarding Sustainable Development Goal 4, which is aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

In Uganda, schools were closed from March 2020 to January 2022, the longest in the world. The long closure had devastating effects on the 15 million Ugandan children and adolescents of school going age. Only a fraction of them were able to access education online, and many of them had only printed home learning materials and radio lessons to support their learning. In a survey conducted by Forum of African Women Educationalists Uganda (FAWEU), 51 percent of Ugandan children and youth between 10 and 24 years reported that they had had no access to any form of learning during the school closure. Younger learners aged 10 to 14 and learners within rural locations reported even lower access to learning (FAWEU 2021). Hundreds of thousands of children and young people were sent to work to support their families who lost income during the pandemic or were married off to ease the financial burden of their families. A report released by the Ugandan National Planning Authority in August 2021 estimated that 30 percent of Ugandan learners were likely not to return to school when they re-open (NYTimes 2021). According to the report, 3,507 primary and 832 secondary schools are likely to be permanently closed (ibid.). Thousands of teachers, especially those working in private schools, were left unpaid during the school closure, and they had to find alternative sources of income. Many on them will not return to teaching (Guardian 2021).

Teachers play a focal role in delivering quality education, and their work is among the most stressful occupations (Falk, Varni, Finder and Frisoli 2019). The sudden school closures in spring 2020 placed great pressure on teachers around the world. In countries where online teaching was the predominant modality of distance education, teachers had to take on new teaching methods and technologies within days. Teachers' experiences of online teaching during the pandemic have been studied in many countries, e.g. Norway and the USA (Gudmundsdottir & Hathaway 2020),

the UK (Moss et al. 2020; Kim & Asbury 2020), Switzerland (Hascher et al. 2021), and Indonesia (Purwanto et al. 2020). However, very little research on teachers or teaching during the school closure has been published on the African continent. In Uganda, as well as in many other sub-Saharan countries, online teaching and learning were not feasible due to poverty and lack of infrastructure (UNESCO et al. 2020). Instead, television and radio broadcasts and paper-based home-learning materials were the COVID-19 education responses (MoES 2020; IIEP-UNESCO Dakar 2020). The present study aims to offer insights into Ugandan teachers' experiences of the school closure and shed light on how teachers experienced their work in the circumstances where online learning and other modern technologies were not available. Moreover, this study aims to find out how the school closure affected their well-being.

Teacher stress is greater in the contexts of crisis or conflict where resources are scarce, teachers often get little professional development support, and they may be struggling to have their basic needs met (Falk et al. 2019). Teacher well-being has mainly been studied in stable contexts in the global North, while the well-being of teachers working in low-resource, crisis and conflict-affected settings has attracted little attention from researchers (Wolf, Torrente, McCoy, Rasheed & Aber 2015). Therefore, this study is concerned with the well-being of Ugandan primary school teachers working in a refugee settlement, teaching host community children and refugees from different countries.

Schools in Ugandan refugee settlements are often supported by international organisations providing Education in Emergencies (EiE) responses. This study was conducted in cooperation with Finn Church Aid (FCA), the largest development organisation in Finland and a co-lead of the EiE Working Group in Uganda. The respondents were teachers from three FCA supported schools within the refugee settlement Kyaka II in southwestern Uganda. The data of the study were gathered using a questionnaire distributed to the teachers by FCA personnel because travelling to Uganda and to the refugee settlement would have been difficult, if not impossible, in the circumstances where travelling was restricted due to the global pandemic.

1.1 Research problem and questions

The objective of this study is to explore the experiences of Ugandan primary school teachers in a refugee settlement during the first year of the COVID-19 school closure, from March 2020 to March 2021. The study investigates 20 teachers' experiences of the school closure to find out how the experienced challenges and stressors, as well as successes, affected their well-being. Teachers in refugee settlements work in challenging circumstances teaching learners from multiple linguistic and educational backgrounds (Falk et al. 2019). It can be assumed that the unusual working conditions caused by the pandemic added on to the existing challenges.

The research problem is: How was the well-being of the Ugandan teachers working in the refugee settlement affected by the COVID-19 school closure?
The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How did the Ugandan teachers perceive their roles and responsibilities during the school closure?
2. What challenges and successes did the Ugandan teachers experience in their work during the school closure, and how did they try to overcome the challenges?
3. What caused stress to the teachers, and (how) did their job motivation change during the school closure?

Answering the first research question provides an understanding of the studied teachers' work during the school closure. In conflict-affected and displacement settings, teachers often experience a wider range of responsibilities than teachers in stable settings. For example, teachers may be expected to help support children's psychosocial well-being (INEE 2010, cited in Falk et al. 2019, 32). To understand what challenges, successes, and stressors the teachers experienced, it is essential to find out first what the teachers' responsibilities were. The second research question is aimed at the teachers' experiences. Both positive and negative emotions affect teacher well-being, and therefore, it is important to consider successes as well as challenges. Teacher well-being can be described by the relationship of positive and negative factors: the more prominent the positive factors are compared to the negative factors, the higher the perception of well-being (Hascher et al. 2021). The third research question is concerned with job stress and motivation. The level of job stress is commonly used to assess professional well-being. Teachers' job motivation, in turn, has been used as an indicator of well-being particularly in studies concerned with teachers in low-income countries because there is a widely shared concern that teachers in low-income countries are increasingly demotivated (Bennell & Akyeampong 2007; Wolf et al. 2015).

Answering these research questions will answer the research problem and contribute to the discussion on teacher well-being in low-resource, conflict-affected and displacement settings. Moreover, the study will be a contribution to the research on teaching and teachers' experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of the study can be useful when thinking of responses to possible future disruptions of education.

2 RESEARCH CONTEXT

In this chapter, the context of the present study is described. First, Uganda as a country is introduced in the light of commonly used development indicators. Next, an overview of the history of Uganda is presented to provide a background against which the current state of the country can be understood. Thereafter, the development of the Ugandan education system and its challenges are discussed. Sub-chapter 2.3 describes how Uganda responded to the global pandemic and how education was arranged in the refugee settlements during the school closure. Sub-chapter 2.4 looks into the refugee situation in Uganda and the country's refugee policy. The last sub-chapter introduces the field of education in emergencies (EiE) and discusses the role of nongovernmental organisations in supporting Ugandan refugee education. Last, Finn Church Aid as an EiE actor is introduced.

2.1 Uganda

Uganda is a landlocked country in the Great Lakes region in Eastern sub-Saharan Africa. It borders with Democratic Republic of the Congo to the West, South Sudan to the North, Kenya to the East and Tanzania and Rwanda to the South. It is often also included in the Horn of Africa region, with Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, and Kenya. It has a fast-growing population of approximately 47 million people (UNFPA 2021), and in addition, it hosts almost 1.5 million refugees (Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal 2021). There are over 50 spoken languages in Uganda representing the diverse ethnic groups, but English and Kiswahili are the official languages. Uganda is a low-income country with a GNI per capita of $ 2,123 (UNDP 2020). It ranks at 159 out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI). In 2019, its HDI value was 0.544, but when inequalities in life expectancy, mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling are considered, the value falls to 0.399 which is a little above the sub-Saharan average of 0.380 (UNDP 2020).

2.1.1 A brief history of Uganda

Uganda was a protectorate of the British Empire from 1894 until 1962 when it gained independence. Before British colonial rule, the area of present-day Uganda was inhabited by various ethnic groups that had their own systems of governance. There were several kingdoms in the area, e.g. Buganda, Toro, Ankole, Bunyoro, and Busoga, and community-led regions like West Nile, Lango, Acholi, Karamoja, and Madi (Alava et al. 2019, 57–58). The colonial government subjected the different peoples and regions to its rule and drew the borderlines of the country that is now the Republic of Uganda.

The colonial rulers treated the different peoples and regions differently and thus strengthened the ethnic identities and amplified regional divisions (ibid.). The Baganda people were educated and trained to function in the British colonial society, and the colony's administrative center was placed in Buganda, whereas the peoples in northern Uganda were considered less sophisticated and employed as soldiers or laborers (Cheney 2007, 4). Moreover, the traditional power structures were altered, and chiefs were granted much greater power than they had had before. Thus, the seed for conflicts between different ethnic groups and regions within Uganda was sown during the colonial era (Alava et al. 2019, 57–58).

The Republic of Uganda became an independent country in 1962. The post-independence era has been unstable, and there has not been a peaceful transfer of political power in the country's history since its independence (Cheney 2007, 5). The first years were characterised by economic growth and hope, but they were followed by decades of violence and chaos (Alava et al. 2019). In 1966, the prime minister, Milton Obote, declared himself a president with almost unlimited powers and banned all kingdoms within Uganda, which triggered violence between the northern and southern ethnic groups (ibid.). In 1971, the army commander Idi Amin seized power in a military coup and ruled the country with terror and dictatorship for eight years (Alava et al. 2019, 58). In 1979, he was overthrown in a struggle led by Tanzanian forces and exiled Ugandans (ibid.).

Obote regained power in manipulated elections in 1981 which led to a bloody civil war called the Bush War (1981–1986) between Obote's Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) and Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army (NRA) (ibid.). Museveni's troops seized control of the country in 1986 and Museveni has been the president since, for 36 years. However, a civil war between Museveni's National Resistance Army and several rebel groups continued in northern Uganda for twenty years after Museveni came to power (Alava 2019, 13). Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the Acholi region was among the longest lasting of the armed groups, ousted out of the country in 2008 (ibid.). In the northern Ugandan war, up to two million people were forcibly displaced, and tens of thousands of people were killed or abducted (ibid., 14). During Museveni's reign, Ugandan army has also been involved in conflicts and wars in the neighbouring DRC. Uganda supported the rebel groups that occupied North Kivu region to gain financial revenues from the coltan, gold, diamonds, and other natural resources of DRC (Musila 2014, 2). The wars in DRC have displaced millions of Congolese and hundreds of thousands of them have sought refuge in Uganda.

2.1.2 From history to present day

The wars, conflicts, and despotic leaders prevented development in Uganda for over twenty years. During the Amin regime, the economy of the country was shattered due to Amin's economic policies and the decision to expel all ethnic Indians who were

crucial to the country's industry (Cheney 2007). Both Obote and Amin were accused of favouring their own people or certain ethnic groups which fuelled ethnic divisions and conflicts. It is estimated that one million people were killed, one million exiled and one million internally displaced during the reigns of Amin and Obote (Mushanga 2001, cited in Cheney 2007, 6).

When Museveni came to power, there was very little infrastructure or industry in the country as a result of the warfare. Museveni wanted to develop the country's economy and stop ethnic conflict, and he gained the support of the international community because "he could speak the language of international development fluently" (Cheney 2007, 8). While war was still going on in northern Uganda, the south began to develop economically and socially. As a result, the gap between the north and the south grew wider and the regions remain very different to date (Alava et al. 2019).

In the last 30 years, Uganda has developed considerably in the indices of Human Development Index. Between 1990 and 2019, life expectancy increased by 17.5 years, mean years of schooling by 3.4 years, and expected years of schooling by 5.7 years (UNDP 2020). However, there is a great deal of inequality between different regions of the country, the region around Kampala being the most developed. Furthermore, there are large gender-based inequalities regarding health, education, and command over economic resources (ibid.).

Uganda's GNI per capita increased by 138.5 percent between 1990 and 2019 (ibid.). Uganda has received plenty of development assistance. In the first five years of Museveni's reign, the share of official development assistance (ODA) of the country's GNI grew rapidly from 36 percent to almost 96 percent in 1992 (World Bank data). After that, the share of ODA decreased as quickly as it had gone up. In the past twenty years, ODA has been approximately 20–25 percent of Uganda's GNI (ibid.). The annual economic growth rate has fluctuated between approximately 3 percent in 2000 and almost 11 percent in 2006 (Macrotrends 2022).

The economic growth has not benefited all Ugandans equally: 57.2 percent of the population lived in multidimensional poverty in 2019, and 41.3 percent of the population lived below the international $1.90 a day poverty line (UNDP n.d.). The majority of Ugandan people are employed in low productivity agriculture and are highly vulnerable to shocks like floods or droughts (World Bank 2021a). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a great negative impact on the country's economy and on household incomes, leading to increased poverty (World Bank 2021a; UNICEF 2021a). During 2020 alone, the number of Ugandan people living below the national poverty line increased by 1.7 million people (UNICEF 2021a).

Contemporary Uganda is best described as a "hybrid regime" meaning that it has democratic and liberal elements as well as non-democratic or authoritarian methods of governance (Tripp 2010). When Museveni came to power, he banned political parties on the grounds that the country needed to overcome ethnic

sectarianism (Cheney 2007, Alava et al. 2019, 60). Parties were allowed again ten years later but opposition parties are treated as enemies rather than contestants (Alava et al. 2019, 60). Museveni removed presidential age limits in 2019 and he was his party's only candidate in the 2021 presidential elections (ibid.). In the months leading to the elections there was turmoil and violence, and dozens of people were killed. The opposition candidate Bobi Wine was defeated by Museveni in an election that Wine claims rigged.

2.2 Ugandan education system

The current Ugandan education system comprises four levels of education: pre-primary education, primary education, post-primary education and training, and tertiary and university education (MoES 2018, 9). Primary education includes seven years leading to Primary Leaving Examination. Hence, the seventh grade is called the candidate class. The medium of instruction is English from the fourth grade onwards and in the first three grades, the majority language of each district is used in education (Hicks & Maina 2018; Tumwesige 2020, 2–5). Secondary education consists of four years of Ordinary level secondary schooling and two years of Advanced level secondary school (Meinert 2009, 50). Tertiary education includes university studies, teacher training colleges, business colleges and technical schools (ibid.). There is a wide range of private schools at all levels of education and a lot of variation in the quality of schools (Alava et al. 2019, 65). School fees of private schools are too high for most Ugandans, but in spite of this, there are twice as many private schools as government-funded schools on secondary level (MoES n.d.).

2.2.1 Historical development of the Ugandan education system

The education system in Uganda is largely based on the British school system introduced by the colonial administrators and Christian missionaries (Alava et al. 2019, 65). In pre-colonial times, Ugandan education took place in practice and was the responsibility of all adults in the tribe (Ssekamwa 1997, cited in Meinert 2009, 46). In the early colonial period, education in Uganda was the monopoly of the Protestant and the Catholic church (Meinert 2009, 46). Conversion to Christianity, learning English and getting a colonial education were regarded as signs of being "civilised" during the colonial era (Alava et al. 2019, 65). In 1925, the Department of Education was established, and the government took more control over schools, although most of them still had close ties with the church. The structure of the education system was developed according to the British education system (Meinert 2009, 48).

In the 1950's the number of private schools began to increase because the government could not fund enough schools (ibid., 49). As a result, parallel education

systems and standards developed, and Protestants, Catholics and Muslims studied in separate schools. Hence, education did not function to unify the nation but to increase divisions between the different religious communities (Ssekamwa 1997, cited in Meinert 2009, 47). In post-independence years, Obote nationalised schools and brought them under government control, but despite that, the division and rivalry between the private, religious and government schools have continued to this day (Meinert 2009, 49). Furthermore, the division between the educated urban middle class and the less educated rural population is characteristic of the Ugandan society (Alava et al. 2019, 65).

The Ugandan education system has been criticised for being geared toward passing the school-leaving exams and not concentrating enough on practical skills and participation in social and cultural activities (Cheney 2007, 83–84). A "school leaver problem" has been recognised in Uganda as well as many other post-colonial countries: students who finish school are not able to find a job that correspond to their qualifications (Meinert 2009, 49–50). Even though education does not always fulfill expectations, there is a strong popular belief that schooling offers a way out of poverty and entrance into well-paying civil service jobs (Cheney 2007, 84). Parents and children believe that schooling can transform their life trajectories and make their lives better (Meinert 2009, 8).

In 1992, the government of Uganda proposed changes to the educational system to cater for the social and economic needs of the society, but the changes did not materialize (Cheney 2007, 83–84). The reason for Uganda to continue to replicate the British education system is at least partly to be blamed on the international community and its lending institutions that have conditioned their loans on "the acceptance of Western schooling models" (Levinson & Holland 1996, 16, cited in Cheney 2007, 84). The Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) imposed on the Third World countries emphasized investment in primary education to achieve economic growth (Cheney 2007, 84).

2.2.2 Universal Primary Education

The global Education for All movement launched in 1990 and the SAPs put pressure on the Ugandan government to implement Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy. It was introduced in Uganda in 1997 following presidential elections that Museveni had won. UPE had been one of his campaign promises. UPE made primary education free of tuition fees and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) fees and thus aimed to ensure that all children enter and complete primary school (Meinert 2009, Kan & Klasen 2020, 118). Parents welcomed UPE because many had struggled to pay the PTA payments that had been used to finance schools' and teachers' welfare including lunch, stationary, books and transport. Some PTAs had paid teachers allowances to top of their salary, which had helped teachers to get by. When the PTA payments were abolished, teachers' earnings decreased, and many had to take on

additional jobs. Teachers' economic and symbolic positions declined hand in hand, and the formerly "elevated social status of the village teachers" came to an end (Meinert 2009, 56).

Following the introduction of UPE, enrolment rates increased to over 100 percent (Kan & Klasen 2020, 120). This is explained by the fact that learners older than six years, which is the official school enrolment age, were also enrolled in schools (ibid.). Classes became overcrowded, with up to 150 learners per teacher, and teachers' workload increased heavily (Cheney 2007; Meinert 2009, 55). Yet, along with UPE also a more child-centred approach and a focus on practical skills was to be adopted in schools (Meinert 2009, 55). Teachers felt this was impossible because teaching had become "crowd control". At the same time, teacher salary was too small to live on, and salary payments were often delayed. Teachers had to find sources of side income which left them with little time and energy to prepare lessons. In some schools, teachers even had to teach double shifts because there were so many learners. The quality of teaching suffered which made teachers and headteachers worried and frustrated (ibid.)

2.2.3 Challenges of the Ugandan education system

While enrolment rates soared as a result of UPE, also dropout rates increased. Only 23 percent of those who enrolled in first grade in 1997 reached grade seven by 2003 (Bategeka & Okurut, 2006, cited in Kan & Klasen 2020, 120). Abolishing school fees did not have an effect on the years of primary school achievement and did not increase the likelihood of completing primary school (Kan & Klasen 2020). Furthermore, there is only weak evidence that those who did complete primary school were more likely to start secondary school (ibid., 116). Universal Secondary Education (USE) was introduced in Uganda in 2007. However, it does not mean that secondary education is free for all students. Instead, the best students from primary school can continue to secondary school for free (Meinert 2009, 163).

In 2020, primary school dropout rate in Uganda was 64.5 percent (UNDP 2020). The average number of years of education received by women aged 25 or over was only 4.9 years, and by men 7.6 years (ibid.). There are many reasons for dropping out from school, for example socio-economic background, child labour, poverty, pregnancy, violence or sexual harassment at school, lack of latrines and other WASH facilities at school, sickness, and disability (Save the children 2020; Datzberger & Parkes 2021). Although education is meant to be free, there are hidden costs from school uniforms, books and pencils, and exam fees (ibid.).

The government of Uganda aims at providing equitable and quality education with relevant and effective learning outcomes, in alignment with the international targets for education (MoES 2018; Tumwesige 2020). However, it faces major challenges in providing quality education for all. Overcrowding due to a shortage of classrooms and teachers remains one of the problems (Kan & Klasen 2020, 118; MoES

2018, 13). Poor learning results are a major concern, as only about half of the children in grade 6 reached the expected levels in literacy and numeracy assessments in 2015 (MoES 2018, 13). Furthermore, children with disabilities and other vulnerable children are more often than not excluded from education because there are not enough facilities or teachers for special needs. Transition to secondary school is low, especially for girls (MoES 2018, 13). Only about 20 percent of adolescents attend secondary school (UNICEF 2019).

Increasing the number of professionally competent and well-motivated teachers is considered by the Ministry of Education and Sports the key to improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools (Wabule 2017). The government standard pupil to teacher ratio, 53:1, is often exceeded especially in the lower grades of primary school and in refugee hosting districts (Interview FCA; Hicks & Maina 2018). Nearly 7,000 more teachers are needed in refugee hosting districts alone (MoES 2018). However, the government has set limits on the number of teachers who can be on the payroll in each district. Therefore, more teachers cannot be employed although there are certified and trained teachers looking for employment (ibid.). "Teacher ceilings" are put in place because the government has not allocated funds to pay more teachers' salaries (Falk et al. 2019, 34). Although budget allocations for education sector were increased along with UPE, Uganda still spends only 2.5 to 3 percent of its GDP on education, while the average for sub-Saharan countries is 3.5 percent and for OECD 4.9 percent (UNDP 2020; World Bank).

Another reason for teacher shortage in Uganda is that the teaching profession does not attract capable and interested students. Teaching is generally not a desired profession in Uganda. The status of the profession has declined, and young people who enter teacher training colleges feel inferior to those who manage to join higher education (Wabule 2017, 78). The lack of interest has resulted in lower entry standards to teacher training colleges and lower quality of teacher graduates (ibid.). According to a Uganda National Examinations Board report, majority of teachers in upper primary and lower secondary schools did not have adequate skills to teach and assess the subjects they teach (Monitor 2015).

Primary teachers complete two years of basic teacher training after lower secondary school, which grants them a grade 3 primary teacher certificate. If they continue their studies for another two years, they receive a diploma in education. Approximately 80 percent of Ugandan primary school teachers have received teacher training (UNDP 2020). Qualified teachers from refugee and displaced populations cannot be hired as teachers even if they are available to work because their qualifications are often not acknowledged in their new country (Mendenhall, Gomez & Varni 2018). Thus, refugee teachers are employed as assistant teachers in Ugandan schools to help refugees with language issues (Front 2019, 37).

Teacher salary is low, and teachers often have to take on additional jobs to supplement their low salary (Bennell & Akyeampong 2007; Falk et al. 2019). Ugandan

teachers have reported that their salaries were insufficient to meet basic needs, which results in the feeling of not being valued by school leaders, community members, or the Ministry of Education (Falk et al. 2019). Delayed and insufficient payments are a reason for high rates of teacher absenteeism (ibid.). According to UNICEF (2019), over 60 percent of Ugandan teachers are not in the classroom teaching in over half of Ugandan public schools. Corporal punishment is still widely used in schools although it is illegal (UNICEF 2019; Ssenyoga & Hecker 2021). Traditional rote learning approach is prevalent despite several educational reform programmes that have aimed at moving from teacher-centred towards child-centred pedagogy (Tumwesige 2020, 13).

2.3 COVID-19 education responses in Uganda

When the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic in March 2020, the Ugandan government imposed a strict lockdown that closed schools. The restrictions on businesses and gatherings were partially lifted during the summer of 2020, but schools remained closed. To provide continued learning opportunities for the 15 million Ugandan children and adolescents out of school, the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) published a paper-based home-learning material and started national educational radio and television broadcasts in May - June 2020. There were also pre-recorded lessons that could be accessed online. A home-learning package was designed for each grade, containing mainly basic literacy and numeracy for the first three grades and English, Mathematics, Integrated Science, Social Studies, Creative Performing Arts and Physical Education for upper primary grades. The aim was that the home learning packages would be distributed to all learners across the country (MoES 2020).

The school closure was initially expected to last for a few months, and the home learning package was designed to cover content in the first term. MoES framework stated that the developed home learning materials, and audio, video and online materials will be used "for practice even when schools have reopened" (MoES 2020, 2). However, MoES ended up publishing several rounds of home learning packages as the school closure was extended time after time. In the end of 2020, candidate classes were allowed to return to school to prepare for the school-leaving exams (Interview FCA). Detailed plans were made to open schools in March–April 2021, but a new wave of COVID-19 infections resulted in another lockdown and a re-closure of schools in June 2021. Only a small proportion of learners had returned to schools before they closed again. The closure continued until January 2022, making the 83-week long school closure the longest in the world. There was a great deal of

uncertainty and concern throughout the school closure over whether, and when, schools would reopen (Interview FCA).

How learning was continued and supported during the prolonged school closure, depended largely on the region, on the school, and on the socio-economic status of the family. There is large digital divide between the richest and the poorest population. Due to the lack of infrastructure and the high price of internet connections, most Ugandan students, especially in the rural areas, did not have access to the internet. In contrast, the children of urban, wealthy families are connected to the internet and to the world via mobile phones. Many of them were able to continue learning online during the school closure.

During the COVID-19 lockdown and school closure, telephone subscriptions increased steadily, reaching 29.1 million in 2021, which raised the telephone penetration to 69 percent of Ugandans (Uganda Communication Commission 2021, 21). Internet subscriptions reached 22 million in 2021 which means that 52 percent of Ugandans have an active internet connection (ibid., 23). According to a national IT survey, approximately 65 percent of Ugandan households owned a radio, and 22 percent owned a television in 2017 (NITA 2018, cited in Tumwesige 2020, 8). There were large regional differences: In Kampala, the capital of the country, 42 percent of households had a television whereas in West Nile, the area with the largest refugee settlements, only one percent had a television (ibid.).

Across Uganda, radio is the most prevalent medium due to poverty and lack of electricity. People especially in rural areas listen to radio at home, at their neighbours, and at work, and radio has been used for different educational purposes in Uganda earlier, e.g., in the fight against HIV in the 1990's (Tumwesige 2020, 9). The decision of the Ugandan government to publish paper-based home learning materials and to use the radio as the main medium to deliver lessons during the COVID-19 school closure was well justified considering the large regional discrepancies and the fact that the majority of Ugandans live in poverty.

This study concentrates on Ugandan primary teachers working in a refugee settlement where connectivity is poor, all households do not own a radio, and power cuts are commonplace. In the refugee settlements, home-learning packages were printed and distributed to the learners by international organizations like Finn Church Aid. They procured solar-powered radios and delivered them to learners, mostly those in candidate classes, to ensure that learners were able to listen to the nationally aired lessons. Teachers and community-based education committee members helped to distribute the home learning packages and radios to the learners. FCA provided training for teachers on small group learning, COVID-19 prevention, psychosocial support, and child protection. In June – July 2020, teachers started to visit learners in their homes helping them with the exercises in the home learning packages. Later, small group teaching was arranged in community learning centres or outside, observing group size, social distancing, and other safety measures (Interview FCA).

2.4 The refugee context of Uganda

Uganda hosts a growing refugee population of nearly 1.5 million, which makes it the number one host of refugees on the African continent. The majority of the refugees are from South Sudan (61.4%), Democratic Republic of the Congo (29.2%), Burundi (3.4%), and Somalia (3.2%) (Uganda Comprehensive Refugee Response Portal 2021). Children make up about 60 percent of the refugees, and Uganda now hosts over 600,000 refugee children under the age of 18 (Save the Children 2020; UNICEF 2021). The largest concentration of refugees is in the West Nile region located in the north-western part of Uganda, bordering with Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west and South Sudan to the north (RRP, 2020). Another region with a large number of refugees is in southwestern Uganda (ibid.). The refugee settlement where the data for this study were collected, Kyaka II, is located in the Kyegegwa district in the southwest. The areas with most refugees are among the least developed districts in the country and providing services for the growing refugee population is challenging (MoES 2018, 9).

Uganda has adopted an "open-door refugee policy" and it been internationally praised as a generous country with progressive refugee policies and laws (Ahimbisibve 2018; Wambi 2020). The 2006 Refugee Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations state that refugees and Ugandan nationals have equal access to public services, including primary and secondary education and health services (RRP 2020, 7). Uganda allows refugees the freedom of movement and the right to work, establish a business, and own property. Refugees are assigned a plot of land for housing and cultivation within the host community (ibid.). The term "refugee settlement" is thus used instead of "refugee camp". Uganda aims to make refugees less dependent on humanitarian aid, and refugees are included in the National Development Plan (Moyo et al. 2021).

Uganda is facing a number of challenges regarding refugees: rapidly increasing refugee numbers, prolonged refugee situations, limited resources, and little international support (Ahimbisibve, 2018). It has been asked why Uganda maintains the open-door refugee policy although it is struggling to provide basic services and income for Ugandan population. Lomole (2020) argues that the main reasons for the Government of Uganda pursuing its refugee policy is for its perceived political, diplomatic, economic, and rural development benefits (Lomole 2020, 6). Betts (2021) claims that Uganda's refugee policy is closely tied with the system of patronage politics that has been widely used in Ugandan politics and governance since colonial times. Politicians have given gifts and benefits to groups of people to gain personal support and loyalty (Alava et al. 2019, 62; Betts 2021, 248). Betts argues that presidents Obote, Amin and Museveni have used refugee policy to "strengthen patronage and assert authority over strategically important refugee-hosting hinterlands" in the West Nile and southwest regions (ibid., 246). Moreover, he claims that patronage has been essential to the functioning of the international refugee system and that international

donors have been willing to finance patronage to preserve Uganda's progressive refugee policy which has been praised globally as an exemplar "success story" (Betts 2021, 247).

The Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities published in 2018 set out a "realistic and implementable plan to ensure improved learning outcomes for increasing numbers of refugees and host-community children and adolescents across Uganda" and it was meant to guide education responses for the subsequent three years (MoES, 2018). Hundreds of thousands of refugee children were out of education, and classrooms were seriously overcrowded following the influx of refugees in 2016–2017 (MoES 2018; Save the Children 2020). Class sizes in refugee-congested areas averaged more than 100 children, while some classes had even more than 300 children (Hicks & Maina 2018, 6). The aim of the plan was to increase the primary school gross enrolment rate among refugee children from 58 percent to 73 percent. It emphasised the importance of infrastructure development and teacher training and motivation as key improvements needed to increase access to education. As we know now, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education in Uganda in an unprecedented way for two years and exacerbated the challenges that refugee education was facing already in 2018.

2.5 Education in Emergencies

Education in emergencies (EiE) is a concept used to refer to educational interventions supported by nonstate actors and nongovernmental organisations in areas affected by conflict or natural disaster (Burde, Kapit, Wahl, Guven and Skarpeteig 2017, 620). EiE recognizes education as a key element of humanitarian assistance and emphasises the important role of education in children's protection amidst crises (ibid.). The concept emerged in the 1990's after the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 recognized education as a right of every child, and humanitarian action began to include a concern with individual rights beyond basic needs (ibid., 621–622). In 2000, the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) was formed to support education in conflict and disaster-affected countries. The term "emergencies" emphasises the urgency and relevance of education in humanitarian responses (Burde et al. 2017, 622). However, it can be also misleading as it implies a temporary condition. Hence terms "education in crisis" or "education in protracted crises" have also been used (Burde et al. 2017 p. 623).

Funding for education is often included in the support to conflict-affected countries. (Burde et al. 2017, 622). However, education lags behind other sectors and receives only two percent of humanitarian funding (ibid.). Education Cannot Wait (ECW) is a global fund dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises. It was founded in 2016 to draw attention to education as a priority on the

humanitarian agenda and to gain more funding to ensure education to crisis-affected children and youth (Education Cannot Wait). When the COVID-19 pandemic started, ECW released additional funds for its partners to set up relevant remote learning solutions and safe learning environments (Wambi, 2020). In Uganda, ECW allocated USD 1,000,000 in emergency funds to its education partners to support continued learning (ibid.).

International and national nongovernmental organisations and non-state actors that provide EiE responses play a big role in improving refugee children's access to education. In the first half of 2020, EiE partners supported the teaching and learning in 494 primary and secondary schools and early childhood development centres in and around refugee settlements (RRP 2020-21). This enabled 441,850 learners to access education. The education partners supported the construction or rehabilitation of 339 classrooms and paid the wages of 4,205 primary teachers. The pupil to classroom ratio was thus lowered to 131:1 in primary school (ibid.)

The interventions of the EiE partners are valuable and important in improving the access to education of thousands of children, but it is important to acknowledge that the strong presence of international actors in Uganda maintains the division between the global North and South. Although international development discourse and practices have changed significantly in the past decades, from the top-down model towards bottom-up, "country ownership" and "partnership", the assumption is still that the global North has the funds and the expertise. Contu and Girei (2013) have studied the term "partnership" in international development discourse. They argue that despite being characterised as "partnerships", the relations between international and national nongovernmental organisations are in reality "characterised by subordination and oppression" (Contu & Girei 2013, 205). In their study conducted in Uganda, they found that Ugandan NGOs receive most of their funding from INGOs, which leads to asymmetric power relations between national and international actors and the NGOs having to comply with donor conditions (ibid.).

2.5.1 FCA in Uganda

FCA is one of the INGOs that operate in the EiE sector in Uganda. It is a co-lead of the Eie Working Group in Uganda, which means that it leads the education work in the EiE settings in Uganda together with the Ministry of Education and Sports. FCA operates mostly in the refugee settlements where it builds and equips schools, trains teachers, head teachers, and district staff, and pays teachers' salaries, among other things. FCA Uganda country office employs approximately 300 Ugandans and five foreign nationals. In addition, over 1,200 teachers are employed by FCA in the schools in the refugee settlements (Interview FCA).

FCA aims to improve the well-being of teachers and learners by integrating and approach called Community Based Psychosocial Support into its education in emergencies programming. It trains teachers on psychosocial support (PSS) to enable them to support their learners who may have been exposed to crisis in their countries of origin and are facing several hardships when settling and adjusting to a new context. During the COVID-19 school closure, PSS trainings were organised to help teachers themselves cope with the unusual situation and to support their well-being. The FCA definition of psychosocial wellbeing is holistic, including five aspects that affect one another: physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. Most of the teachers working in FCA supported schools in Kyaka II refugee settlement participated in the trainings (Interview FCA).

3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

This study is concerned with the experiences and well-being of Ugandan primary teachers during the COVID-19 school closure. In this chapter, the main concepts of the study, well-being and teacher well-being are defined. After that, previous studies on teacher well-being and motivation in sub-Saharan Africa are introduced. Then, studies on teachers' experiences and well-being during the COVID-19 school closure are presented. After the literature review, a framework for analysing teacher well-being particularly in low-resource, crisis and conflict-affected contexts is introduced, as it forms the basis of the theoretical approach of the present study. This chapter ends with definitions of the concepts used for studying teacher experiences and well-being in this study.

3.1 Well-being as a topic of research

Interest in well-being has grown internationally in the past decades, and studies on well-being have been done in various fields of research. Well-being is also the main concept of the present study, and therefore, this sub-chapter provides a brief overview of how researchers have defined well-being, and what components well-being is seen to consist of. As this study approaches the Ugandan teachers' well-being through their experiences, the approach is that of *subjective well-being*. Subjective well-being refers to evaluations that are experienced internally, as opposed to non-subjective well-being measures such as income, health, or environmental quality (OECD, 2013, 29).

Well-being research was originated in the field of psychology, and Diener (1984) was one of the first researchers to study subjective well-being (Hascher & Waber, 2021, p. 2). Subjective well-being, according to Diener (2006), includes "different valuations people make regarding their lives, the events happening to them, their bodies and minds, and the circumstances in which they live". (Diener 2006, cited in OECD 2013, 29.) Diener conceptualised well-being as a multidimensional construct and his work laid a foundation for later models of well-being. For example, Keyes' (2002) model included the emotional, psychological, and social dimension, and Seligman's (2012) PERMA model consists of positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment (Hascher & Waber 2021, 2). The OECD (2013) defines subjective well-being as "good mental states, including all of the various evaluations, positive and negative, that people make of their lives, and the affective reactions of people to their experiences" (OECD 2013, 29).

Well-being is a subject of growing interest also in international development (White 2009). White lists different ways that the term well-being is used in development. It is used simply "as a new word for development", or subjective wellbeing is used in place of material indicators of development. Sometimes wellbeing

is taken to include everything that development conventionally means, with a subjective satisfaction measure added (White 2009, 4). White's "development re-oriented" model includes some aspects of development approaches, like fighting poverty and inequality, but questions the value given to economic growth and instead, stresses environmental aspects and human fulfilment, especially personal relationships (ibid.).

White and Wellbeing in Development Countries Research Group (WeD) presents "a framework that could be used to operationalise wellbeing at policy, programme and project level" in development practice (White 2009, 3). It integrates three dimensions: the material, the relational and the subjective. The material refers to food, shelter, and physical environment. The relational dimension refers to social interaction, to rules and practices and to connections between people. The subjective dimension includes cultural values, ideologies and beliefs, and a person's own perception of his situation. The dimensions are all interlinked. In the revised model White (2010) the relational dimension is divided into two spheres: the social, and the human. The social dimension includes social relations and access to public goods, and the human dimension comprises capabilities, attitudes to life, and personal relationships (White 2010, 163). Each dimension has objective aspects, which are externally observable, and subjective aspects, which are a person's subjective perceptions and assessments of these (ibid.).

3.2 Teacher well-being

Teacher well-being (TWB) is a concept that refers to teachers' professional well-being, i.e., teachers' well-being related to their work. Sometimes longer expressions, like teacher occupational well-being, or teacher professional well-being", are used, but in this study, the concept "teacher well-being" is used. Teacher well-being is important not only for the teacher himself or herself but for the well-being of students and their learning outcomes, for teaching effectiveness and quality, and teacher retention (Falk et al. 2019; Hascher & Waber 2021). Studies have shown that low levels of TWB may hinder educational reforms and school development and result in higher rates of teacher absenteeism (Hascher et al. 2021, 2). In fact, TWB is considered a major driver of quality education (ibid.). Being a critical issue for schools and societies, TWB has attracted a lot of research. However, conceptualisations and definitions of TWB are as varied as the definitions of well-being in general (Hascher et al. 2021, 2).

Hascher and Waber (2021) carried out a systematic review of research literature on TWB in an attempt to clarify the construct. They conclude that "it seems easier to argue that well-being is the opposite of burnout and stress than to define it" (Hascher & Waber 2021, 2). Despite the difficulty to produce a definition, there is a wide consensus that well-being should be conceptualised as a multidimensional

construct (ibid.). Hascher and Waber suggest that at least affective and cognitive dimensions, positive and negative dimensions, and psychological and physiological dimensions be included in the definition of teacher well-being. They also state that the particular characteristics of the teaching profession, such as high workload and the challenges related to interacting with students, parents, and colleagues, are important to consider in theoretical work related to teacher wellbeing. Social interaction has a crucial role in TWB (Hascher & Waber 2021, 19). Hascher et al. (2021) posit that teacher well-being can be defined by the relationship of positive factors (e.g. positive emotions, satisfaction) and negative factors (e.g. negative emotions, stress). The more dominant the positive factors are compared to the negative factors, the higher the perception of well-being (Hascher et al. 2021, 3).

Schleicher (2018) includes four dimensions in teacher well-being: cognitive, psychological, physiological, and social. Cognitive well-being refers to the skills and abilities teachers need to perform their work well, and psychological well-being refers to their emotions regarding work. Physiological well-being, in turn, includes teachers' health issues connected with working conditions, such as physical exhaustion, or burnout, caused by job demands. Social well-being is related to the level of collaboration and support from colleagues (Schleicher 2018, 94). International level studies have mostly concentrated on the cognitive dimension of TWB, especially on teacher self-efficacy that is concerned with teachers' beliefs in their abilities to manage the classroom, to provide good instruction and to engage students (ibid., 95).

3.3 Studies on teacher well-being in low-income countries

Researchers and education experts have expressed a serious concern over low job motivation of teachers in low-income countries. The situation has been considered alarming enough to amount to a "motivation crisis" (Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007). Teachers' poor motivation shows in absenteeism, lateness, and under-performance and is considered a major factor affecting the quality of education in many sub-Saharan and South Asian countries (ibid.). Teacher quality is the most important single determinant of student learning (Burns & Lawrie, 2015, p. 152). Teachers' low motivation is often a result of low levels of job satisfaction and high levels of stress. Thus, motivation, job satisfaction and job stress are all connected to teacher well-being.

Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) coordinated a research project on teacher motivation and incentives in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and South Asia. It consisted of 12 country case studies including eight SSA countries: Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Zambia. The main finding of the studies was that large proportions of primary school teachers in SSA had low levels of job

motivation and job satisfaction (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007, 25). Despite this, attrition rates were low, which means that dissatisfied teachers stay in the profession demotivated. Eight key factors that affect teacher motivation were identified: teacher and school accountability, security and conflict, the policy environment, teacher competence, vocational commitment and occupational status, salary, working and living conditions, and teacher and system management (ibid.).

Low salary was the most important factor affecting teacher morale and motivation in low-income countries (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007, 32). In most low-income countries teachers earn poverty wages, which means that they do not earn enough to even cover their most basic needs, and teachers have to find additional sources of income. This leads to divided attention and decreases teachers' loyalty to teaching, which affects the quality of schooling (ibid.). Poor living and working conditions are another important factor affecting teacher motivation. It includes workload, general classroom conditions, collegial and management support, location, living arrangements and distance to work. Workloads have grown after the implementation of UPE because teacher recruitment has not kept pace with rapidly increased enrolment rates (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007). As a result, overcrowded classrooms are the norm in all the studied countries. Workloads are even greater in rural schools where it is more difficult to hire staff, as most teachers resist being posted to rural schools. High workloads were a key contributor to low morale in all studied countries (ibid.).

Burns and Lawrie (2015) bring up the adverse impacts of difficult working conditions on teachers' sense of identity and pride in their profession. In addition to overcrowded classrooms and low, and often delayed, salaries, teachers may suffer from sexual harassment or abuse, violence, and intimidation, and receive little respect from school leaders and community members. (Burns & Lawrie 2015, 28). Teachers working in fragile contexts often have no, or little, pre-service training and few opportunities for in-service training. In addition, poor working conditions demotivate teachers, and they may not be willing to make any additional efforts such as take part in professional development (ibid.). The working conditions also impact negatively on teachers' self-efficacy, which may undermine the quality of teaching. Furthermore, teachers who suffer from poor working and living conditions are not open to change and new ideas because their efforts go into survival (ibid., 29).

Wolf et al. (2015) carried out research in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to shed light on why teachers in low-income and conflict-affected countries are increasingly demotivated at their job. They used a cumulative risk approach to assess how different challenges in teachers' lives predict three indices of well-being: motivation, burnout, and job dissatisfaction. As the basis of their work, they used the above-mentioned study by Bennell and Akyeampong (2007). They examined a range of risk factors in teachers' work and personal lives as elements of a cumulative risk index to predict teacher motivation and teacher well-being. The risk factors were

divided into five domains: household hardships (e.g., number of dependent children, household wealth), health and well-being (e.g., physical health, hunger), social isolation (e.g., not born in the community where currently lives), objective work conditions (e.g., number of students in the teacher's classroom, low salary) and subjective work conditions (e.g., problematic school environment, unrealistically high expectations for teachers). The main findings of Wolf et al. were that the more hardships the teacher has to endure, the lower his or her motivation for work and the higher the risk of burnout. This relationship is moderated by years of teaching experience: more experienced teachers experience less burnout than novice teachers (Wolf et al. 2015).

Ssenyonga and Hecker (2021) studied how Ugandan secondary school teachers' perceptions of their job contributed to their stress levels. Teacher stress is associated with various negative consequences like poor teacher-student relationships, conflict with colleagues, students and parents, classroom management problems, isolation, and self-doubt (Ssenyonga and Hecker 2021, 2). Moreover, increased teacher stress contributes to the use of violence, or corporal punishment, which is highly prevalent in Uganda (ibid.). In Ssenyonga & Hecker's study, 291 teachers' attitudes, perceptions of their work conditions and job satisfaction were assessed using two sub-scales: feelings of pressure in the work context, and perceived classroom climate and teaching problems. Teachers were asked to score items like "Personal crises affect my life as a teacher" (true or somehow true for 82.4%), "I become involved in the personal lives of students" (true or somehow true for 85.2%) and "I feel competent in the subjects that I teach" (true or somehow true for 6%).

The results of Ssenyonga and Hecker (2021) show that teachers experienced pressure and teaching problems for many reasons, for example, lack of public funding for the education sector (90%), problems handling disruptive students (83.2%) and not feeling competent in the subjects taught (94%). Teacher stress and burnout were assessed using questions concerning personal-related stress, work-related stress, and student-related stress. Over three quarters (76.3%) of the teachers experienced elevated or high levels of personal-related stress like feeling emotionally or physically exhausted. The majority of the teachers (59%) experienced elevated or high levels of work-related stress like feeling worn out at the end of the working day or burnt out because of work. Approximately half (51.4%) of the teachers experienced student-related stress. The data were analysed quantitatively, and correlations between the variables were examined. Higher levels of work-related stress and student-related stress were connected to the use of violence (Ssenyonga and Hecker 2021).

3.4 Studies on teacher well-being during the COVID-19 school closure

The Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) published a study report on "Effect of Covid-19 pandemic on Teaching and Learning at the primary and secondary education levels" in 2021. For the study, 519 teachers of primary 6 (P6) and 165 teachers of senior 3 (S3) were interviewed at the time when schools re-opened for candidate classes at the end of 2020. Teachers who reported back to school after the lockdown were interviewed about challenges and good things they had experienced during the lockdown. The most common challenges reported by the teachers were financial challenges and the inability to visit friends and relatives. 47% of P6 teachers and 67% of S3 teachers had received no salary or were unable to provide for their family and friends.

The study included teachers of both private and public schools, and teachers in private schools did not receive their salaries when schools were closed. The income of public school teachers, in turn, decreased during the lockdown because they did not receive any allowances. "No allowances" was reported as a challenge by 37% of P6 and 60% of S3 teachers (UNEB 2021, 17). Although with UPE, primary education was made free of PTA payments that were used to top of teachers' salaries prior to UPE, the practice of PTA payments has continued. Considering that the teachers reported the lack of allowances in a study conducted by a government office, the practice is common and there is no need to hide the fact that parents make payments to government schools.

The social challenges the teachers had experienced during lockdown were linked with financial challenges: the main reason for the inability to visit friends and relatives was high transport costs (UNEB 2021, 17). More than half of the teachers (57.6% of P6, 65.5% of S3 teachers) had started income generating activities during the lockdown, and 15 percent of them planned to attend to their business after schools open at times when they are not engaged in school. The rest of the teachers had plans to hire someone to run their business or to hand it over to a family member (UNEB 2021, 19). However, some teachers experienced working in other jobs "psychological torture due to engagement in low class enterprise underrated by community members" (UNEB 2021, 17). This was a challenge experienced by 3.2 percent of P6 teachers and 7.9 percent of S3 teachers. It seems that these teachers felt that the community looked down on them when they had to find alternative work. Among other challenges reported by the teachers were family-related challenges, such as unruly children and marriage breakdowns, idleness and boredom, forgetting subject content and loss of interest in teaching. The study included also interviews of 70 teachers who did not come back to work when schools re-opened. They said that they either had no pay or their pay was inadequate, and they had established other income generating activities that offered a better income than teaching (ibid.).

The most commonly reported good thing about the lockdown was having enough time for family, self, or the community (78% of P6, 73% of S3 teachers). For many teachers "starting income generating activities" (58% of P6, 66% of S3 teachers) and having time for their side business (29% of P6, 31.5% of S3 teachers) were other good things experienced during the lockdown. Becoming creative or innovative (approximately 39% of all respondents) and receiving support from family members, friends, a school authority, the government, or an NGO were also perceived as good things (UNEB 2021, 18).

The results of the above study (UNEB 2021) are interesting from the viewpoint of the present study because it addressed similar issues than this study, challenges and achievements during the school closure or lockdown. However, the UNEB study did not consider the teachers' work-related challenges and achievements. This was most likely because the teachers who worked in government schools and private schools did not, for a large part, teach during the school closure. It is also worth noting that the report of the UNEB study was not available at the time when the data collection of the present study was planned and conducted.

When the research design of the present study was contemplated, several research papers on teachers' experiences of the COVID-19 school closure were examined. A number of studies on teachers' experiences in different countries have been published in the past 18 months, but it was difficult to find any that were published in Uganda, or anywhere else in Africa for that matter. This gap in research makes the study at hand all the more important. The studies that were available at the time were published in countries where teaching took place online, and they concentrated on teachers' experiences of distance teaching. Although the context and the working conditions in Uganda are very different to Europe or North America, the following studies provided viewpoints that were helpful in designing the questionnaire used to collect data for this study.

Hascher et al. (2021) studied Swiss primary school teachers' professional well-being during the 2020 school closure. They wanted to find out how changes in teachers' professional lives affected their professional well-being. The studied teachers reported many negative factors such as workload, social distancing, and feelings of lack of competence and self-efficacy. However, these issues did not seem to hamper their well-being. Despite facing severe challenges, the teachers reported medium to high levels of well-being. Positive experiences with new forms of teaching, feelings of competence and self-efficacy, motivation, and job satisfaction were factors that helped the Swiss teachers to maintain or promote their well-being. Collegial support and social relationships to students and their parents were very important for the well-being of the studied teachers (Hascher et al. 2021).

Moss et al. (2020) carried out a survey of 1,653 primary teachers in England to explore teachers' experiences of the school lockdown in spring 2020. The survey was built on the basis that a teacher's work has two elements: a duty of care and a duty to

teach. The questions were designed to find out how teachers managed the two dimensions, and what they prioritised in their work under the unusual circumstances of COVID-19. The findings of the study show that teachers and headteachers in the UK prioritised pupil welfare. The teachers were concerned about how families were coping in terms of food, health, and emotional needs. Informing the parents about how they can support their children's learning and checking how families were managing with the schoolwork came second in their list of priorities. Furthermore, almost half of the teachers working in the more disadvantaged schools became more aware of how poverty affects their students, and two-thirds of the teachers said they became more aware of how difficult home learning was (Moss et al. 2020).

Kim and Asbury (2020) also explored teachers' experiences of the school lockdown in the UK in spring 2020. They interviewed 24 teachers about three key scenes during the first five to six weeks of lockdown: a low point, a high point, and a turning point. Their findings were in line with those of Moss et al. (2020): worry for the vulnerable pupils became the priority of the studied teachers during the lockdown and caused considerable stress to the teachers. They were concerned about pupils whose families had low or no income and pupils who they feared were not safe in their homes. The teachers felt powerless because they were not able to check up on the disadvantaged children daily, as they were used to in school. Relationships with the pupils and their families, as well as professional support from colleagues, were highly valued by the studied teachers. Some pupils were allowed in the schools during the lockdown, and they were taught in small groups. Having more time to engage with these pupils was mentioned as one of the upsides of the unusual situation (Kim & Asbury, 2020).

Kraft and Simon (2020) surveyed 7,195 teachers in the US in spring 2020. They asked the teachers whether they felt successful at their job during the COVID-19 pandemic when they were teaching from home. The results of the survey showed that supportive working conditions were strongly related to the teachers' sense of success. In Kraft and Simon's study, supportive working conditions meant that the school district and school administrators communicated in a clear and timely way, that school administrators had fair expectations about remote teaching, that teachers' efforts were appreciated, and that teachers were collaborating. Supportive conditions included also providing professional development for teaching remotely and for supporting the students' social-emotional well-being (Kraft & Simon, 2020).

3.5 Teacher well-being in low-resource, crisis, and conflict-affected contexts

Most studies on TWB have been conducted in stable contexts in the global North (Wolf et al. 2015; Falk et al. 2019). As a result, the conceptualisations of TWB often fail consider the contextual factors outside of school that affect teacher well-being. When

studying the well-being of teachers who live and work in crisis contexts such as refugee settlements, it is necessary to take the teachers' living conditions, ability to access basic needs, and other contextual factors into account. Teachers in low-resource, crisis and conflict-affected contexts face many threats to their well-being. For example, they may be struggling to have their own basic needs met while teaching some of the most vulnerable children with different linguistic and educational backgrounds and psychological needs in overcrowded classrooms (Falk et al. 2019, 1–3).

To address the above-mentioned issues, Falk et al. (2019) put forward a conceptual framework for teacher well-being in low-resource, crisis, and conflict-affected contexts. The framework includes well-being factors at the individual level, school level, community level, and national, regional, and global levels. On the individual level it considers gender, displacement status, level of education, coping mechanisms, employment status, teaching experience, content knowledge, and cultural competence. School-level factors include peer relationships, teacher-student relationships, school leadership, and school resources. Community-level factors comprise access to basic needs, respect and recognition, and responsibility and duty. National, regional, and global level factors are policies related to teacher management, certification and right to work, compensation, and teacher professional development. All the factors can be either risk factors or protective factors which means that, depending on the context and on the individual, a factor can either increase a teacher's risk for negative well-being outcomes or enhance the likelihood of positive well-being outcomes (Falk et al. 2019, 8–9).

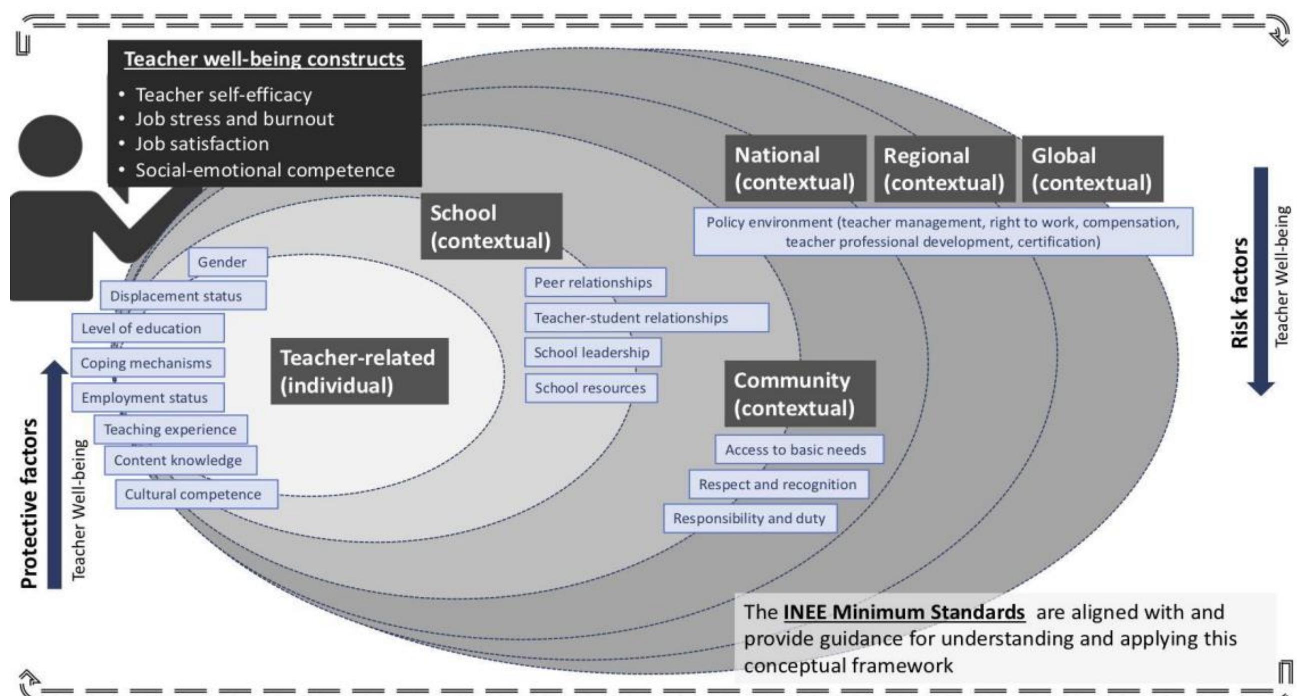

FIGURE 1. Conceptual Framework for Teacher Well-being in Low Resource, Crisis, and Conflict-affected Contexts (Falk et al. 2019, 10).

To reach an understanding of teacher well-being in crisis and conflict-affected settings, it is essential to understand the community context in which the teachers are living (Falk et al. 2019, 29). The most crucial factor of the all the well-being factors is access to basic needs. The ability to meet basic needs for food, water, shelter, transportation, and physical security is necessary for well-being. According to the well-known hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow (1954), basic needs have to be fulfilled before a person can meet his psychological needs and function well in his environment. When basic needs are met, a person can achieve outcomes associated with esteem and self-actualization such as occupational well-being (Poston 2009). Although Maslow's theory has also received criticism, the foundational importance of basic needs is widely accepted. In conflict-affected settings teachers may encounter challenges in accessing clean water and sufficient food, finding adequate shelter, and affording transportation to and from school (Burns & Lawrie 2015).

"Respect and recognition" from the community is another important community-level factor affecting teacher well-being. It can have a positive effect on teacher dignity, professional identity, and motivation (Falk et al. 2019, 31). Teachers in crisis and conflict affected contexts are often viewed as educators for the community as a whole, not just for students (Dembélé and Schwille 2006, cited in Falk et al. 2019, 31). A teacher's well-being and motivation can be negatively affected if relationships between the community and the teacher are difficult, or if the community has negative perceptions of the teacher (Falk et al. 2019, 31). Teachers' pay is an important issue connected to respect and recognition. It will be discussed further in the section on motivation.

"Responsibility and duty" is the third community-level factor affecting teacher well-being according to Falk et al. (2019, 32). Teachers have many responsibilities also outside of school. They may be caregivers or supporters to family or community members. In Africa, teachers typically have at least five direct dependents (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007, 33). Low or delayed salaries may cause stress if the teacher has difficulties to make ends meet (Falk et al. 2019, 32). In conflict-affected and displacement settings, teachers often have various other responsibilities in the community than those directly connected with their job. For example, community members may turn to them for advice in personal issues. Teachers may also have many roles in relation to their students, e.g., the role of a parent or caregiver, responding to the students' psychosocial needs (INEE 2010, cited in Falk et al. 2019, 11, 32).

3.6 Approaches to teacher well-being used in this study

The above framework for teacher well-being in low resource, crisis and conflict-affected contexts forms the theoretical approach of this study. The school-level and

community-level factors are the main focus of the study and of the national-level factors teacher compensation and professional development are considered. Falk et al. (2019) include in the framework four individual-level constructs of teacher well-being that are commonly used to describe and assess teacher wellbeing: teacher self-efficacy, job stress and burnout, job satisfaction, and social-emotional competence. Job stress and job satisfaction are the concepts used to operationalise teacher well-being in the present study. In addition, possible changes in the studied teachers' motivation are used to assess how their well-being was affected by the school closure, although motivation is not included in the framework of Falk et al. (2019). Thus, in this study, teacher well-being is examined using job satisfaction, job stress, and motivation as the main concepts. Next, these concepts are described in more detail.

3.6.1 Job stress

Teaching is, according to research, a highly stressful profession (Wolf et al. 2015; Collie et al. 2012; Falk et al. 2019). Stress emerges when risk factors at the personal, interpersonal, and organizational levels exceed protective factors (Prilleltensky, Neff & Bessell 2016, 104–105). Stress results in negative feelings, behaviours, and thoughts and impacts teacher health and job satisfaction negatively (ibid.). Ssenyoga and Hecker (2021) found in their study of Ugandan secondary teachers that perceived feelings of pressure at work, negative classroom climate and teaching difficulties correlated with teacher stress. When studying teachers in a low-resource context, like a refugee settlement in Uganda, teachers' living conditions have to be considered in addition to the working conditions, as factors of job stress. Wolf et al. (2015) found that the more hardships a teacher has to endure, both at home and at work, the more likely he or she will experience burnout. (Wolf et al. 2015, 718).

In the present study, the teachers were asked what caused stress to them during the school closure. The question did not limit the answer to work-related stressors but allowed the teachers to list any factors that caused stress to them.

3.6.2 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been defined as a sense of fulfilment and gratification as a result of working in a profession (Collie, Shapka & Perry 2012, 1190). Previous studies have established that teachers' job satisfaction is connected to teacher well-being, motivation, and commitment to teaching (ibid.). It is also closely linked with job stress: teachers with high levels of stress are usually less satisfied with their job. Job satisfaction is also associated with teacher self-efficacy, i.e., the belief in one's own abilities to perform well in the classroom: teachers with high self-efficacy experience higher levels of job satisfaction, and vice versa (Falk et al. 2019, 15). A teacher's feeling of dissatisfaction with their job in crisis and displacement settings is often caused by a myriad of challenges (ibid.). In this study the teachers were asked what challenges

and successes they experienced in their work during the school closure. Both positive and negative experiences were likely to affect the teachers' job satisfaction.

3.6.3 Motivation

Work motivation means psychological processes affecting individual behaviour and contributing to achieving personal goals (Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007, p. 3-4). It involves characteristics of the individual as well as external factors (ibid.). Two types of motivation are found: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The first comes from within a person, and the latter is a result of external rewards, e.g., salary or incentives (ibid.). Work motivation is closely linked with job satisfaction. Teachers who are dissatisfied with their job are likely to be demotivated (Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) is often referred to when motivation is discussed. As mentioned earlier, the importance of access to basic needs cannot be overlooked when studying the well-being of teachers in crisis and conflict-affected contexts. When basic needs are not met, and teachers are hungry, tired, or preoccupied with meeting their household's needs, they are unlikely to be motivated for professional development (Bennell and Akyeampong 2007, 4).

Teacher motivation is connected to many community-level and school-level factors. For example, respect and recognition from the community, or recognition from school leaders, may influence teacher motivation positively (Falk et al. 2019, 27-28, 31). A sense of responsibility and duty to the community may also increase teacher motivation (ibid., 32). Poor school resources and infrastructure, or negative community perceptions of teachers, in turn, may affect teacher motivation negatively (ibid., 28-29, 32). In this study, the teachers were asked if their feelings about their work, or their motivation had changed during the school closure. They were also asked to explain why their motivation had increased or decreased.

4 METHODS

In this chapter, the methodological design of the study is introduced, and the methodological choices are discussed. First, the method of data collection is described, and the demographic features of the studied group are presented. After that, the compilation of the questionnaire is described, and the gathered data and its limitations are discussed. Next, the method of analysing the data is depicted. It is followed by ethical considerations and evaluation of the trustworthiness of the study. The chapter ends with a discussion on the researcher's positionality.

4.1 Data collection and the respondents

To investigate Ugandan teachers' experiences of the school closure between March 2020 and March 2021, data were collected in May 2021 using a questionnaire. The respondents were 20 Ugandan primary school teachers working in the refugee settlement Kyaka II in southwestern Uganda. The teachers worked in three different schools supported by FCA and they were on FCA payroll. FCA staff in Uganda distributed the questionnaires to the teachers when visiting the schools in the refugee settlement. The teachers answered the questions on paper and pen, and the answered questionnaires were scanned in the FCA office and sent to me via e-mail. This was considered the most efficient and practical way to collect data in the situation where the COVID-19 pandemic restricted travelling, and a field visit could not have been arranged. In an ideal situation, the data would have been collected through face-to-face interviews. The use of online technology to interview teachers or to distribute questionnaires was not considered feasible due to poor connectivity in the Ugandan refugee settlements. Ugandan teachers generally have a good command of English, and the Ugandan education specialist said that the teachers would be able to answer the questions in writing.

The data collection took place at a time when there was hope for schooling to resume. Ugandan schools had started to re-open in March - April 2021, and some teachers and learners had returned to schools following the guidelines of the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports. However, before schools had started to fully operate, they were closed again following a new outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in June 2021. Because the data were collected before the second period of school closure, this study is limited to the first year when schools were closed.

In selecting the participants for the study, a purposive sampling method was used. Purposive sampling is the most commonly used sampling method in content analysis studies, and it is a suitable method when the "researcher is interested in informants who have the best knowledge concerning the research topic" (Elo et al. 2014, 4). Kyaka II refugee settlement is the nearest refugee settlement to the Ugandan capital city Kampala, and the FCA education specialist was going to Kyaka II around

the time of the data collection. Therefore, it was convenient to carry out the data collection there. FCA personnel in Uganda were in charge of selecting the respondents. The number of respondents was decided in advance at 20 because there were 15 open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the answers were analysed qualitatively. It was assumed that twenty teachers' answers would produce enough data for content analysis. Attention was paid to the gender, age, and teaching experience of the respondents, as well as to the class they taught during the school closure. The aim was that the data would be collected from a varied group of primary teachers from three different schools. Ethical questions regarding the actual selection of the participants will be discussed in section 4.6.

Ten of the respondents are female, and nine are male. One respondent did not specify their gender. The ages of the respondents vary between 23 and 38 years, and their teaching experience varies between 3 and 16 years. 13 teachers reported having grade 3 education and two teachers reported having a diploma in education. The rest of the teachers (4) did not provide information on their level of education. One respondent is an assistant teacher. Assistant teachers are employed in Ugandan refugee settlement schools to help learners whose mother tongue is other than the language used in school. They are often refugees themselves and may have a teachers' qualification from their home country (Front 2019, 37). This qualification is often not recognised in Uganda and therefore, they can only work as assistant teachers (ibid.). The word "teacher" will be used of all the respondents. They are teachers from all seven grades of primary school. The reported numbers of learners in the class varied from 30 up to 199 learners. All teachers did not provide information on which class they taught during the school closure and how many learners they had in their class. This, most likely, reflects the fact that during the time when schools were closed and teaching was arranged in small groups, teachers did not necessarily teach the same learners who were in their own class before the school closure. The background information of the respondents is presented in table 1. (APPENDIX 1).

4.2 The questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of written questions that require written responses (Hesse, 2018, 2). In this study, the questionnaire (APPENDIX 2) was self-administered, which means that the respondents answered the questions without help from the researcher. Self-administered questionnaires differ from structured interviews in two ways: the absence of the interviewer, and the visual presentation of the questions (deLeeuw 2012, 2). The absence of the interviewer can have both positive and negative effects on the data. A good interviewer may convince a reluctant respondent to answer a question that otherwise would be left unanswered, or he or she may provide further instruction or explanations if the question is difficult to answer. On the other hand,

the presence of the interviewer can influence the responses, especially when delicate issues are being discussed (deLeeuw, 2012, 3).

Before constructing the questionnaire, FCA education specialists in Uganda were interviewed to get vital background information and to gain understanding of how education was arranged in the refugee settlements. Because the questionnaires were distributed by people who were not well acquainted with the aims of the study, a great deal of effort was put into formulating the questions so that they could not be understood in a different way than intended and such that they collect enough of relevant data. To make certain that the language use in the questionnaire was appropriate and precise in the Ugandan context, the questions were discussed in detail with the Ugandan FCA personnel, who gave feedback on the questions.

The questions used to elicit the teachers' experiences of the school closure in Uganda were based on the studies on teachers' experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic introduced in chapter 3. Following the example of Moss et al. (2020) the teachers were asked about their priorities during the school closure. The teachers were asked to reflect on their experiences before the school closure and during the school closure and asked if their relationships with their learners and perceptions of their job had changed. Normally, the teachers in the refugee settlements are used to teaching children in very large groups, up to 200 learners in one class. When schools were closed, they taught children in small groups, often in the children's homes. It was anticipated that this shift may have changed the teachers' perceptions of their learners and their job and affected the relationship between teachers and learners.

Reflecting the findings of Kraft and Simon's (2020) study, the teachers were asked about the support they got from the school leadership, from FCA, and from their peers during the school closure. Furthermore, they were inquired whether they would have needed more support and asked to specify what kind of support they would have required. Kim and Asbury (2020) asked the teachers to identify the high point, the low point, and the turning point during the school lockdown in the UK. Given the length of the school closure in Uganda, it would likely have been difficult to identify one high point and one low point. Therefore, the teachers were asked to identify successes they experienced in their work during the school closure and challenges they encountered, and how they tried to overcome the challenges.

Most of the questions in the questionnaire were open-ended, which means that they allowed the respondents to answer the questions in their own words instead of providing predetermined answer alternatives. Open-ended questions are typically used in data collection in qualitative research because they permit the respondent to describe their personal experiences (Albudaiwi 2018, 2-3). The produced data are usually rich and diverse and thus, open-ended questions help the researcher to widen his or her understanding of the topic of the study (ibid.). Personal responses provide a variety of expressions that are used in analysing the data and in supporting the data analysis by quoting the responses (ibid.). The intention of this study was to gain an

understanding of the experiences of the Ugandan teachers, and the data were analysed qualitatively. Thus, the use of open-ended questions was justified.

When constructing a questionnaire, it is important to pay attention to the order of the questions and the overall length of the questionnaire. Warm-up questions are often placed before the actual questions on the topic, and they typically elicit demographic data such as the age, gender, and education of the respondent (Valli 2017, 16). In the questionnaire constructed for this study, the questions on the first page asked for the respondents' age, gender, years of experience in teaching, the class they taught during the school closure, etc. The so-called "question-order effects" mean that earlier questions in the questionnaire may influence the way the respondents answer to the later items (Hesse 2018, 3). Therefore, the order of the questions in the questionnaire was carefully thought through. Finally, the length of the questionnaire and the time it takes to answer it, are important aspects to consider in order to avoid the fatigue effect, i.e. respondents getting tired and leaving questions unanswered (ibid.).

The significance of the topic for the respondents affects their motivation to answer the questions (Valli 2017, 17). The questionnaire had 16 open-ended questions and the background questions, which meant that it required a lot of writing and a considerable amount of time. Nevertheless, because the questions dealt with the teachers' personal experiences and the study was interested in their well-being, it was assumed that that the respondents would regard the topic significant and take the effort to answer all the questions.

Pre-testing is the only way to ensure that the questions in a questionnaire are understood in the intended way, and that they are answerable (deLeeuw 2008, 4–5). Through pre-testing, the researcher may also get valuable feedback on the quality of questions and improvement suggestions (ibid.). Therefore, the questionnaire used in this study was pre-tested with five Ugandan teachers in April 2021. The answers collected in the pre-test were used as feedback on how the questions were understood and what kind of answers they elicited. After the pre-test, the questionnaire was modified with the help of the FCA education specialists in hope of more relevant and more detailed answers to some of the questions. Some additional prompts like "please provide as much detail as possible" were added. The teachers who participated in the pre-test, took 30 to 45 mins to answer the questionnaire, which is a long time to be spent on answering questions in writing, and thus the threat of the fatigue effect was real. Therefore, it was agreed with the education specialists that the teachers would answer the questionnaire during their working hours as that would likely improve their motivation to answer the questions well.

4.3 The data

The collected data consists of 20 Ugandan primary school teachers' written answers to the questionnaire. Overall, the respondents answered the open-ended questions thoroughly and they provided some detail in their answers. There is variation in the responses and the amount of data is suitable for a content analysis method. Had the data been collected through interviews, they would likely be richer in detail, and the total amount of transcribed data would be vast. The fact that the answers were given in writing has the advantage that they are shorter as the answers go "straight to the point". On the downside, some answers are very condensed and may not reflect the respondents' views and experiences comprehensively. It is highly possible that some the respondents have provided a satisfactory, rather than an optimal, answer to the questions.

There are a few characteristics of the data that reduce the amount and the variation in the data. The first such characteristic is that certain words, or collocations, appear repeatedly in the responses of different teachers in an identical form. It seems that they are expressions used in the education discourse and in the COVID-19 discourse. Such collocations reduce the amount of personal expression in the data. Another feature that reduces the amount of data is that some teachers have provided almost identical answers to nearly all the questions. I could detect one group of four teachers, and two pairs, whose answers were very similar to each other throughout the questionnaire. They expressed similar ideas and used almost identical words or expressions. Thus, it seems that some teachers have worked in groups, or in pairs, although the questionnaire was intended to be filled out individually. It is possible that there has been a communication breach at some point because the research procedure was discussed online with the Ugandan FCA specialist who, in turn, instructed the people who went to the schools to conduct the data collection. It may be that the instructions given to the teachers have not been clear enough on answering the questions alone. Another possible explanation is that some teachers have found the questions difficult to understand, or answer, and they have needed help from each other to answer the questions.

The third issue that reduces the amount of data is that a few teachers left some questions unanswered. One respondent left the last five questions unanswered and thus, it seems that they have run out of time, or energy, to answer all questions. Two other respondents left three questions blank, from here and there. This may have been due to time constraint, a difficulty to answer the questions, or lack of motivation. Because I was not present, I do not know what the situation was like. In the discussions with the FCA education specialist we did not agree on a specific time frame given to the respondents to answer the questionnaire. Based on the pre-test, it was assumed that the questionnaire could be answered in 45 minutes, but it seems that some individuals would have needed more time. In retrospect, it would have been wise to

write detailed instructions to the people who carried out the data collection as well as to the respondents. It may have diminished or eliminated some of the issues discussed above.

4.4 The method of data analysis

Several qualitative methods can be used for analysing data and interpreting its meaning (Schreier 2012). Qualitative content analysis (QCA) was chosen to be used in this study because it is systematic and flexible, and it can be used in analysing written, spoken, or visual communication (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 107-108). It is widely used in social sciences (Schreier 2013, 2). There are different versions of qualitative content analysis, and different names have been used by different researchers (ibid.). Elo and Kyngäs (2008) have written an account of the QCA process that was used as a guideline when analysing the data. In addition, Elo et al. (2014) have put forward a comprehensive checklist for researchers to improve the trustworthiness of a content analysis study (Elo et al. 2014, 3). It was used in evaluating the data collection method and the sampling strategy, and in planning the steps of data analysis.

Qualitative content analysis can be done in an inductive or deductive way (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 109), or in combination of the two (Schreier 2013, 19). The inductive analysis process moves from the specific to the general, and the deductive analysis moves in the opposite direction (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 109). A deductive analysis is usually done if an existing theory is being tested, or if it is possible to use an existing theory, or model, to create a categorization matrix (ibid.). The inductive approach is recommended if there is not enough previous research on the phenomenon or if the existing knowledge is fragmented (ibid.). The existing knowledge about TWB in low-resource and crisis contexts is scarce, and there are no previous studies on TWB during a school closure in Africa. Although the framework of teacher well-being of Falk et al. (2019) was used as a theory in this study, the collected data were not extensive enough to test the theory. Therefore, inductive content analysis approach was best suited for this study.

The content analysis process consists of three main phases: preparation, organising and reporting (Elo & Kyngäs 2008; Elo et al. 2014, 1). The preparation phase includes data collection, making sense of the data, and selecting the unit of analysis (ibid.). The aim of "making sense of the data" is to become immersed in the data by reading it through several times (Polit & Beck 2004, cited in Elo & Kyngäs 2008). The organisation phase includes open coding, creating categories, and abstraction (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, Elo et al. 2014, 1).

Open coding means writing notes and headings in the text, and the codes are freely generated by the researcher (ibid.). The idea is to diminish the amount of raw data as the code describes each meaningful unit in short. This phase was fairly

straightforward in the present study because the teachers had answered the questions in writing, often using bullet points and short sentences to answer each question.

The next step in the analysis was grouping the codes that were alike and creating categories and subcategories. This phase was more challenging because sometimes the answers the teachers had provided were very short and did not explain what the teacher meant. For example, "guidance and counselling" could refer to many different issues. When it was not specified, it was difficult to decide in which category it belongs. According to Willig (2013), "interpretation is the challenge at the heart of qualitative research". In other words, qualitative analysis always involves the researcher's interpretation (Willig 2013, 1). However, it is important to be aware of one's own position and to pay careful attention to the attitudes, stereotypes or cultural views that may be reflected in the interpretation (Kapoor 2004).

The last phase of the analysis is abstraction which means generating categories that provide a general description of the researched phenomenon (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 111). The categories are named using words that characterise their content (ibid.).

4.5 Ethical consideration and the trustworthiness of the study

The participants were asked to give their consent for using their responses as research data. There was no incentive for participating in the study, and the teachers answered the questions during working hours. The questionnaires were filled out anonymously and there were no codes that would allow tracing the respondents. All data were treated with confidentiality and respect. Whenever the teachers' responses are quoted, all such detail is left out that might make identifying the respondent or any other person possible. When the study is finalized, the original filled questionnaires as well as any copies, physical or digital, will be destroyed.

Despite sincere attempts to carry out an ethically sound study, the research process included aspects that give rise to ethical considerations. One of these aspects is the participants' consent. At the top of the questionnaire (APPENDIX 2) there was a short introduction to the study which explained that the data were collected for a master thesis study done by a student in Finland. It said that the data would be presented so that individual teachers could not be recognised, and that answering the questions truthfully would not affect the teachers' employment. The teachers were asked to read the text and tick a box to confirm that they had understood the purpose of the study and gave their consent for their answers to be used anonymously in the study. There was also a possibility to opt out by ticking "No, I do not want to take part."

According to Mackenzie, McDowell & Pittaway (2007, 301) "the minimum requirements for informed consent are that participants are fully and adequately

informed about the purposes, methods, risks and benefits of the research and that agreement to participate is fully voluntary." The ethical questions arise from my association with FCA that was not mentioned in the introduction. Looking back, it would have been relevant for the participants to know what the connection was between myself, FCA, and FCA staff in Uganda who carried out the data collection procedure. It would have been fair to tell them that the study report would be written for FCA as much as to the University of Jyväskylä, and that it informs FCA on how teacher well-being could be enhanced in the refugee settlement.

Another problem related to the consent is linked with voluntary participation. It was agreed with the FCA education specialist that the respondents would participate voluntarily. Likewise, it was agreed that the aim was to get as varied group of teachers as possible to answer the questionnaire. However, we did not discuss how the teachers would be selected. As mentioned earlier, the teachers were employees of FCA, and the representatives of FCA who conducted the data collection were likely to be perceived as school leaders, or "bosses" by the teachers. Perhaps the head teachers were also involved in the process of selecting the participants for the study. It is possible that the teachers were asked to take part in the study, and it was not a plausible option for them to decline. This issue has been discussed by Mackenzie et al. (2007) using the concept autonomy of the participants. In refugee camp circumstances refugees and internally displaced populations become dependent and reliant on humanitarian relief agencies (Mackenzie et al. 2007, 302). Ugandan teachers who live in the refugee settlement are also, in many ways, dependent on the support of NGOs like FCA, not least because they are employed by the organisation. Due to power relations, and the teachers' dependency on FCA, the teachers' autonomy in respect to participating in the present study may have been limited. Therefore, it cannot be guaranteed that the respondents took part willingly and gave their consent fully voluntarily.

Another important point to consider, in relation to the autonomy of the teachers, is that the teachers may have provided answers that they thought was expected of them, or answers that they hoped would help them get the things they needed, e.g. means of transportation or a salary increase. They may have also left some things unmentioned, in fear of getting into trouble, or mentioned only things that portray them favourably. The fact that the participants were not fully autonomous should be regarded as a limitation of the study.

Another factor affecting the trustworthiness was caused by the selection of the participants. The head teachers and the FCA representatives may have selected teachers who they perceived suitable to participate in the study. This may have led to some bias in the data, reflecting the experiences of certain kind of teachers. However, attention was paid to the demographic features of the studied group, and the group was varied according to the gender and years of teaching experience of the teachers

(see APPENDIX 1). They represented three different schools which also increased the variation in the group.

4.6 Positionality

The fact that I am a teacher myself and I was born and raised in Finland, is bound to have an effect on the study. My initial idea was to study digitalisation in distance education in a fragile context during the COVID-19 school closure. I was interested in what devices and online platforms were used and what kinds of challenges were met. When the geographical focus of the study was specified to Uganda, and particularly to the refugee settlements, it soon became clear that digitalisation would not play a big role in the study. The focus of the study was shifted to how teaching was organized in a context where, practically, the only means to deliver education remotely was through radio broadcasts and paper and pencil materials. After interviewing the FCA education specialists in Uganda and finding out that teaching small groups of children was the prevalent way of supporting home learning in the refugee settlements, I became interested in how teaching methods and relationships between teachers and learners would be affected when teaching was done in small groups instead of overcrowded classrooms. From a Finnish teacher's point of view, that would offer an opportunity to use more learner-centred teaching methods and to build more personal relationships with the learners.

I refined my research problem and decided to focus on the teaching experiences of the Ugandan teachers during the school closure. The more I came to know about the refugee context of Uganda and teaching in low-resource, crisis contexts, the more I began to see the well-being of both learners and teachers in these contexts as an interesting topic to study. FCA clearly articulated a wish that teachers be the main focus of the study, and therefore, a decision was made that the well-being of the Ugandan teachers would be the focus of the study. The pre-test questionnaire was constructed on the basis of the studies conducted in the UK (Kim& Asbury 2020; Moss et al. 2020) and the US (Kraft & Simon 2020) concerning teachers' experiences of the COVID-19 school closure. Based on my own background and the studies I had read, I had certain expectations of what the teachers would mention in their answers.

However, the pre-test answers showed that the Ugandan teachers had somewhat different priorities and challenges than I had expected. While I thought that "priorities in your work as a teacher" would include making sure that learning was continued and that children were safe in their homes, they mentioned watching international news on COVID-19 and sensitizing their family members and neighbours about COVID-19. I realised that the teachers' responsibilities included many such duties that are not included in teacher's work in Finland, or elsewhere in Europe. In "challenges in your work as teacher" the Ugandan teachers mentioned walking long distances,

bad weather and not having weather protective gear. Personal issues like financial problems and having to find another source of income to support the family were also brought up. It became evident that the greatest challenges were related to basic needs that have to be met before worrying about providing support to learners at different ability levels or being worried about the well-being of the learners. Pre-testing the questionnaire was a good exercise because it made me realise what kind of culturally bound expectations I had. Discussions with my supervisor has helped me to understand that even the formulation of the questions in the questionnaire reflects a western perspective on teaching and teacher's work.

When presenting the findings of the study in the following chapter, I have to be aware of my Western viewpoint, the "baggage I am carrying when encountering the Third World" (Kapoor 2004, 628). Spivak (1988) has called for "a heightened self-reflexivity" when producing representations of marginalised Third World groups, and Kapoor extends the demand for "hyper-self-reflexivity" to academics, researchers, and workers in the field of development (ibid.). Kapoor maintains, based on Spivak and other postcolonial theorists, that when Western researchers write representations of their "subjects" in the global South, they engage in a development discourse where the "North's superiority over the South is taken for granted, and Western-style development is the norm" (Kapoor 2004, 629). Therefore, it is essential to pay careful attention to our own "complicities", the fact that our positioning is reflected in our representations (ibid.).

5 FINDINGS

In this chapter, findings based on the analysis of the collected data are presented in light of the theoretical framework introduced in chapter 3. The findings are supported with direct quotes from the data. The research problem this study aims to answer is: How was the well-being of the Ugandan teachers working in the refugee settlement affected by the COVID-19 school closure? To answer the research problem, three research questions were posed. The findings of the study are presented according to the research questions.

5.1 The roles and responsibilities of the teachers

The first research question was: How did the Ugandan teachers perceive their roles and responsibilities during the school closure? The analysis of the data showed that the teachers had many different roles during the school closure and that their responsibilities extended to such areas that are often not considered teachers' responsibilities. To begin with, it is useful to get an idea of the circumstances in which the teachers worked. The following quotes describe the teachers' physical working conditions during the school closure:

> *"In small group learning we used to sit under the tree and the learners used to copy some work in their home learning package."*
>
> *"It was very different from teaching in normal school. I could meet my learners in their homes, open places, not in classrooms."*
>
> *"I could move on foot helping ten learners a day during home-to-home learning and thereafter we changed to small group learning where I could help 30 learners regularly."*
>
> *"There was no normal lessons like as usual. There was no chalkboard to write. They were studying in small groups not in large numbers like at school."*

There was some variation in the ways teaching was organised during the school closure, even within one refugee settlement. For instance, some teachers taught the learners from their own class, whereas others taught learners from different classes. When asked what modalities of teaching they had used, all teachers replied that they had used home learning materials and small group teaching, and some added door-to-door or home-to-home, teaching. A few teachers had used radio broadcasts, but no one had used digital devices.

The teachers' answers to question "Approximately how many of the learners in your class were you able to reach regularly?" varied between 30 and 70 percent of

learners. For example, one teacher said she reached five learners per day, and 25 learners per week, and she had altogether 109 learners. Another teacher said he met 15 learners per day, and 70 per week, and he had 120 learners. Discrepancies may be due to differences in the distances walked and differences in learners' attendance.

To elicit answers on the roles and responsibilities of the teachers, the teachers were asked to list three priorities in their teaching role during the school closure. It is worth noting that the question restricted the answers to the teachers' teaching role, i.e., to their work as a teacher. Other responsibilities, like taking care of one's own children, were not in the scope of this study. The following examples illustrate the differences in the ways the teachers answered the question:

1. *Sensitising both learners and parents on how covid-19 spread from one person to person.*
2. *Encouraging preventive measures (SOPs).*
3. *Sensitising parents about home learning activities to develop their/ learners' interests in education during covid-19.*

1. *counsellor*
2. *guider*
3. *facilitator*

The first respondent has provided more information and explanations than the latter, making it easier to analyse the answer. Throughout the data, there were similar differences in the amount of detail and explanations.

5.1.1 Teachers as health workers

Teachers had an important role in spreading information about COVID-19 in a refugee settlement where perhaps only few households have access to internet, a television, or even a radio. Teachers visited villages and homes and instructed the community on how to prevent contraction of the virus. Nearly half (n=9) of all the teachers (n=20) mentioned sensitising learners and parents to covid-19 preventive measures as their first priority. Altogether, a vast majority of the teachers (n=15) mentioned encouraging learners to follow SOPs, or spreading information on covid-19 prevention, or something alike, as one of their priorities. In Uganda, the preventive measures are called Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Guidance on general hygiene and health was also given, and teachers advised learners, e.g., on how to use re-usable pads. Therefore, based on the data, the most prominent role the teachers seem to have had during the school closure, was that of a health worker.

5.1.2 Teachers as facilitators

Teaching, or facilitating learning, was the second most commonly mentioned responsibility in the teachers' lists of priorities. Four teachers listed teaching as their first priority. Altogether, over half of the teachers (n=12) mentioned teaching in small groups, helping with the home learning materials, facilitating, or something alike, as one of their priorities. In addition, two teachers mentioned assessing learners. Assessment is a crucial part of teaching, and therefore, these answers were categorised as teaching. Interestingly, some teachers did not consider teaching a small group of learners "real teaching". One teacher wrote, *"In small groups there was only giving support, not doing the real teaching."* Another teacher wrote:

> *"Small group learning was just an assistive support topping up a child's own discovery through self-learning achieved by using home learning materials. Therefore, there was no systematic application of all pedagogical methods."*

These comments shed some light on how Ugandan teachers perceive the notion of teaching. It seems that teaching to them involves a large group, and therefore, small group teaching was perceived rather as facilitating, helping, or supporting. Perhaps another reason why the teachers did not consider the activities during the school closure teaching is that there was not enough time to teach each school subject separately. The home learning package included key primary subjects focusing on literacy and numeracy skills. Lessons were aired on national and local radio and television. Thus, the teachers did not follow the curriculum of each subject and teach the subject content but helped the learners with the exercises in the home learning package. Therefore, the role that the teachers assumed during the school closure is called "the facilitator".

5.1.3 Teachers as education ambassadors

Raising parents' awareness of the importance of education and convincing them to allow their children to participate in small group learning were significant responsibilities of the teachers during the school closure. Many families were struggling to survive, and they needed their children to work outside of home or to help with domestic work. School was thus competing with generating income for the family. Because it was not known when schools would re-open, many families lost hope in education. Hence, many teachers (n=6) listed "*restoring hope for education*" as one of their priorities. It is noteworthy that so many teachers used exactly the same expression. It is presumably a collocation used in the COVID-19 education discourse in Uganda. Some teachers expressed a somewhat similar idea in different words, e.g. "*maintaining learners with positive learning perceptions*". Encouraging learners to keep studying, keeping them motivated, and reassuring them that schools will re-open was

extremely important, as the school closure lasted for so long. The longer children are out of school, the greater the possibility that many of them will not return to school after they re-open. The fact that teachers were seen in the communities had an important symbolic meaning, in addition to other important functions. The teachers can be characterised as "education ambassadors".

5.1.4 Teachers as social workers

Teachers' focal role in guiding and supporting learners and their families in various issues became evident when reading through the data. Children and adolescents, as well as parents, turned to teachers with their problems. "Guidance and counselling" was a commonly used expression in the teachers' answers (n=6). It is an official term that encompasses career guidance and psychosocial counselling including HIV/AIDS mitigation (MoES, n.d.). In the gathered data, guidance and counselling often referred to giving guidance on covid-19 prevention, sensitising parents and learners to the importance of education, and giving psychosocial support. Sometimes, when the collocation appeared without an explanation, it was difficult to know what the respondent meant. Because "teachers as health workers" and "teachers as education ambassadors" are identified as separate roles, other duties under the broad term guidance and counselling are labelled "teachers as social workers". The category includes various responsibilities, for example,

> *"Advising learners to listening and helping their parents at home."*
> *"Sensitizing parents about caring for children."*

In this role, teachers guided parents on parenthood and children in domestic activities. They gave psychosocial support to families and monitored children's well-being and safety. Teachers were perhaps the only officials who saw children regularly during the school closure and thus played an important role in reporting child protection cases to the concerned authorities. They helped learners who faced difficult situations and referred, for example, pregnant girls to health services. Research has shown that the numbers of early marriages and teenage pregnancies went up alarmingly in Uganda during the school closure, as well as the number of children who suffered from abuse or lack of basic needs (Sserwanja, Kawuki & Kim 2021). The following quote illustrates the role of teachers as social workers:

> *"I carried out guidance and counselling. I reported some cases like pregnancy cases to the responsible offices after making enough research and follow-ups."*

5.1.5 Teachers as distributors

Distributing materials to learners appeared in many teachers' list of priorities (n=7). Teachers delivered home learning materials and radios to learners. Some of them

distributed also sanitary materials to the learners' homes. Teachers played an important role as distributors because the learning materials could not have been delivered in any other way to the learners.

5.1.6 Summary of the roles and responsibilities

In answer to the first research question, it can be concluded that teachers had various roles and responsibilities during the school closure. They acted as health workers, facilitators, education ambassadors, social workers, and distributors. According to Falk et al. (2019), various responsibilities may be additional stressors to the teacher, but they can also serve as a protective factor for teacher well-being by increasing the teachers' sense of purpose and thus increasing their job satisfaction (Falk et al. 2019, 33). In the case of the studied teachers, it seems that they were not stressed by the many roles and responsibilities but rather, their sense of purpose increased, and they were empowered by the feedback they got from the community. The teachers' efforts seem to have been mostly appreciated by the community, and the teachers reported, for example, that *"community felt that the teacher showed concern to the community"*. Teachers' work was more visible to the community during the school closure than in normal times, as described by one teacher:

> *"The community felt impressed to see the teachers care and even see the lessons going on unlike at school where they don't always see lessons in progress."*

In this section I have shown that the teachers had multiple roles and responsibilities and that the community recognised the teachers' efforts during the school closure. It is likely that having important roles in the community increased the teachers' sense of purpose and supported their well-being because respect and recognition have been shown in previous research to be important for teacher motivation, teacher dignity and professional identity (Falk et al. 2019, 31).

5.2 Challenges

The second research question was: What kind of challenges and successes did the Ugandan teachers experience in their work during the school closure, and how did they try to overcome the challenges? The findings regarding challenges are presented first, together with the means to overcome the mentioned challenges. The findings on successes are discussed in the next sub-chapter (5.3).

The challenges the teachers mentioned were categorised into four categories: challenges related to reaching the learners, challenges related to the learning

environment, challenges related to the learners and their parents, and challenges related to the COVID-19 virus.

5.2.1 Challenges related to reaching the learners

When the schools were closed, teachers walked long distances to reach their learners. As mentioned earlier, the teachers in the refugee settlement delivered home learning materials to the learners. Rainy or harsh weather, lack of rain gear, lack of transport, poor roads, and long distances were mentioned in almost all teachers' answers. They were perceived as the main challenges encountered in supporting the learners. Although the teachers must be used to the climatic conditions of the country, the fact that they had to walk long distances carrying learning materials in the rain took its toll on the teachers. Many teachers answered that they would have needed weather protective gear or transport to support their learners better. Some reported having bought umbrellas or boots for themselves, but many teachers said they would have needed them but did not have them. Only one teacher had employed a motorcycle for transport, and one teacher had bought a bicycle. Some teachers mentioned taking an early start to reach their learners in time and to tackle the challenge of long distances. Support that they would have required included transport or an allowance for transportation. As for support that they had received, the teachers said that FCA provided them with bags to help them carry the home learning materials to the learners.

These challenges are linked with teachers' low pay: had it been better, the teachers would have been able to buy the gear they needed to protect themselves from rain, or to pay for transportation. Other challenges related to reaching the learners included having too many learners to reach and teach, and consequently, not having enough time per learner. A lot of time was spent walking from village to village, and from house to house. If the teachers had had bicycles or money to pay for transportation, they would have had more time for the learners.

> *"Learners were not given enough time because the teacher used to move from home to home to meet learners individually."*

One solution to the challenges related to reaching the learners was demarcating learning centres that were within reach for both learners and teachers. They were established especially during the rainy season when roads were impassable. Social distancing and other COVID-19 preventive measures were observed in the learning centres.

5.2.2 Challenges related to the learning environment

During the school closure, lessons were held in the learners' homes, in community learning centres, or outside under trees. All of these environments are very different from the usual classroom. Many teachers wrote that the learning environment was unfavourable or not conducive for teaching and learning. The following challenges regarding the learning environment were identified in the data: lack of teaching and learning materials and interruptions caused by noises and weather changes.

Not having a chalkboard and other teaching materials was mentioned as a challenge in many teachers' responses. The teachers said they had to improvise for materials to use in teaching, and some said they had invented new teaching methods, like using the environment for excursions, or group discussions. Some teachers said that there weren't enough of home learning materials for all learners, which was an additional challenge. To overcome this challenge, teachers formed groups of learners who shared the learning material.

In conflict-affected and displacement settings, lack of teaching and learning materials is common, and teachers often have to teach without any materials (Falk et al., p. 29). Lack of school resources is a factor that can undermine teacher well-being especially in settings where classes are oversized, and teachers experience multiple challenges (ibid.). During the school closure, Ugandan teachers faced many new challenges in addition to existing challenges, and they had to do without the blackboard which is perhaps the only teaching material they were used to having in the classroom. From this point of view, it is easy to understand why many teachers mentioned it.

Interruptions and noise bothered teachers and learners and posed challenges on concentration. Interruptions were caused by weather changes, noise from vehicles, or voices of people passing by.

> *"Small groups would meet under tree shades mostly. Weather changes would affect lessons and interruptions from passers-by. The situation was very different."*

Some teachers mentioned that shelters were built to protect school children and teachers from weather changes.

5.2.3 Challenges related to the learners and parents

The challenges related to the learners and parents were categorised into the following sub-categories: irregular or poor attendance of the learners, negative attitudes toward education, learners' changed behaviour, teenage pregnancies, and a language barrier.

Ugandan households were hit hard by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This led to an increase in child labour because parents needed

their children to contribute to family income. There was a nine-percentage increase in young people working for money during the first year of the pandemic (FAWEU 2021, 6). In addition to paid work, many learners were engaged in domestic chores, girls more often than boys. 15.3 percent of girls and young women reported having no time for learning because of household chores compared with 12.6 percent of boys (ibid., 5). In the present study, this was confirmed by many teachers. They reported that attendance was low or irregular because learners were working outside of home, or they were involved in house chores. It was difficult to keep the children focused on schoolwork if they had other responsibilities to take care of.

> *"Some learners had no time to attend to the teacher due to domestic work."*

According to the teachers, there were many parents who did not support their children's schooling, and some parents had a negative attitude towards education. Some parents were even referred to as "harsh" or "hostile". Teachers offered guidance and counselling to the parents and encouraged them to allow their children to take part in small group learning.

> *"There was sensitisation for parents and learners about the importance of home learning program with support from FCA."*

Some teachers reported that their relationship with their learners had been negatively affected by the school closure because they had not been able to reach all of their learners and they met them less often than in normal school. In addition, many of these teachers noted that the learners' behaviour or attitudes had changed, for example:

> *"Children have developed different behaviours from different communities where they stay."*
> *"Learners had adopted other activities and had forgotten learning"*
> *"Learners had developed bad behaviours like abusing, fighting, and raping."*

This unfortunate trend was confirmed in the study by FAWEU: "Children who are not in school are idle for several reasons and tend to roam around, exposing them to increased alcoholism, drug abuse, bad company, and sexual violence." (FAWEU 2021, 3). To tackle the problem, teachers carried out guidance and counselling and sensitised parents to the benefits of education.

The number of child and teenage pregnancies increased dramatically in Uganda during the lockdown. In the age group 10 to 24 years, there was a 22.5 percent increase in pregnancies between March 2020 and June 2020. In the age group 10 to 14 years, there was a 366.5 percent increase (FAWEU 2021, 4). Against that backdrop, the following quote is understandable:

> *"Rapid growth of the learners in terms of size, mostly female pupils. Most female pupils were impregnated and sexual harassed by villagers and guys."*

It seems plausible that the teacher used the word "most" for emphasis, or by mistake, meaning perhaps "many" rather than "most". Nevertheless, pregnancies were feared to be one of the main reasons for girls not to resume education when schools re-open. FAWEU and other organisations were advocating funds to be allocated for a program to re-integrate adolescent mothers into learning institutions after the school closure (FAWEU 2021, 8).

After schools resumed in January 2022, FCA has implemented a girls' empowerment programme in its schools. In the programme, girls learn leadership skills, assertiveness, rights, and mitigation of sexual and gender-based violence. The aim is that the girls become role models who encourage other girls and young mothers to return to school. Designated areas for breast feeding have also been arranged in schools to enable mothers to join school. Cooperation with religious leaders has enhanced the return of young mothers to schools.

Following the guidelines of FCA's education strategy, child protection is mainstreamed into education programming in the refugee settlements where FCA operates. When teachers discover a child protection case, they are advised to contact the FCA child protection focal point of the settlement. The aim is that each identified case is directed to the appropriate actor, depending on the support the child and their family need. For example, pregnant children and teenagers are supported by health and child protection actors. Education actors help in bringing child and teenage mothers back to education. The teacher who reports the case follows it up together with the FCA child protection focal point to ensure that each child and youth receives appropriate care (Interview FCA).

> *"Some cases were reported to the responsible people or offices after encountering them and follow-up was made."*

During the school closure, FCA provided training on Psychosocial Support (PSS) for teachers, and almost all teachers in the studied group (n=18) had participated in the training. In addition, FCA trains teachers on children's rights to enable them to recognise child abuse, neglect, and child labour. In the training, teachers are explained how the referral mechanism functions and how it can be used to protect children from harm. Still, many of the teachers said that they would have needed more training on psychosocial support, guidance and counselling, child protection, and child safeguarding to support their learners better.

Language barrier was brought up as a challenge by a few teachers. Problems resulting from the learners' various linguistic backgrounds are common in refugee education. Therefore, assistant teachers who speak the languages of the refugees are employed in the schools. When assistant teachers were not available, the teachers had to try to overcome the challenge on their own.

5.2.4 Challenges related to COVID-19 virus

Challenges that were related to COVID-19 were also brought up. Some teachers said that the community did not bother to prevent COVID-19, and that sanitation in the homes was poor. According to the teachers, it was difficult to maintain social distancing and other preventive measures in homes due to small spaces. Some teachers said that there was less interaction or conversations with the learners due to following the SOPs. FCA provided the teachers with masks, hand sanitizer, soap, and other sanitary materials to protect them from the virus and to stop the spreading of the virus.

5.2.5 Summary of the challenges

The main finding regarding the challenges is that the teachers in the refugee settlement faced a host of challenges during the school closure. The physical working conditions were demanding and many of the challenges were linked to poverty and lack of resources. Resource scarcity can be a major factor affecting teacher well-being low-resource and crisis settings. It is often related to higher teacher stress and lower motivation (Falk et al. 2019, 29). The reported challenges were mostly conditions that a teacher could do little about. Having limited opportunities to overcome the challenges is likely to have affected their job satisfaction negatively.

When asked what they would have needed to overcome the challenges and to support their learners better, the teachers would have needed better equipment, like raingear or bicycles, or an allowance for transportation. When asked what kind of support they received, the teachers often mentioned material support given by FCA and other NGOs, like masks, sanitizer, bags, t-shirts, and food provisions. Another type of support they commonly mentioned were trainings on child protection and psychosocial support. A few teachers mentioned that they had received psychosocial support but otherwise, they did not mention support from colleagues, which was a little surprising.

The challenges the teachers reported were associated with school-level or community-level contextual factors. The teachers did not report challenges related to individual-level factors, like their level of education, competence, gender, or working experience.

5.3 Successes

To find out what factors supported the Ugandan teachers' well-being during the school closure, the teachers were asked about successes they had experienced in supporting their learners. The successes the teachers mentioned formed the following

categories: closer relationships with the learners and parents, successes in facilitating, improvement in learners' attendance or behaviour, fulfilling one's role, and COVID-19 prevention.

5.3.1 Closer relationships with the learners and parents

Visiting learners' homes and getting to know their families and communities often resulted in closer relationships between the teachers and learners and their parents. Many teachers said that they had guided and counselled both learners and parents. Almost half of the teachers (n=8) said that their relationship with the learners improved, or became closer, due to the interaction with them in their communities. For example:

> *"My relationship has increased due to a close care rendered to the learners. Learners' private concerns have been amicably addressed."*

> *"It increased the relationship between learners and teachers because of knowing their parents and their homes."*

> *"Promotion of parents' close relationship with teachers"*

Many teachers reported that their understanding towards the learners and their circumstances had improved as a result of home-to-home teaching. Sometimes it opened the teachers' eyes to the hardships their learners experience. This can be observed in the following quote:

> *"I managed to understand the difficulties learners encounter at home. I came to understand the distance learners walk from home to school."*

Teacher-student relationships are an important school-level factor affecting teacher well-being (Falk et al. 2019, 23). Research evidence suggests that teacher well-being and job satisfaction improve with good relationships with the students, and that quality relationships satisfy a basic psychological need, relatedness, for teachers (ibid., 24). In crisis and conflict-affected settings, where students often suffer from trauma or stress resulting from a conflict, and children may be orphaned or separated from their parents, teachers may be the only adults supporting the students (Winthrop & Kirk 2005, cited in Falk et al. 2019). Developing closer relationships with the learners during the school closure may have increased the teachers' sense of purpose which, in turn, may have strengthened their motivation and job satisfaction. Having good relationships with the parents is important as well, because difficult relationships with parents and parents' negative perceptions of teachers can undermine teacher well-being.

5.3.2 Successes in facilitating

A few teachers reported successes in their facilitator's role. They were pleased that they were able to reach their learners and that learning continued despite the school closure.

> *"I was able to reach out to my learners and kept them academically up to date."*

The same teacher said he had produced learning packages of his own to support his learners. Another teacher reported:

> *"Visiting and knowing learners' homes and parents, counselling learners. It increased learners' activeness and participation. It improved performance of learners. New methods of handling learners according to their individual differences were learnt."*

One teacher reported that her learners had learnt new skills, like weaving, and that they had learnt to work co-operatively. It seems that despite difficulties encountered in reaching the learners and teaching them in unfavourable learning environments, the teachers also gained some positive experiences in facilitating learning, and learners had positive experiences in participating in small group learning. These experiences were likely to improve the teachers' self-efficacy and thus, job satisfaction.

5.3.3 Improvement in the learners' attendance or behaviour

A few teachers, like the one quoted above, answered that their learners' attendance in small groups had improved, or that children had gained hope for re-opening of schools. Some teachers reported that there was an improvement in the learners' attitudes or behaviour

> *"I managed to reach a number of children daily and change their attitude, which was negative by that time."*
>
> *"Increase in learners' desire of participating in small group learning sessions."*
>
> *"Learners kept hope of going back to school for normal class"*

Some teachers wrote that their learners "*reported back to school in good numbers*". This probably refers to the short period of schools re-opening in March–April 2021, or to the time when candidate classes were allowed back in school in the end of 2020 to prepare for and complete their final exams. The worry that many learners would not return to school was substantial, hence having a good number of learners back at school was a relief and a sign of success to the teachers.

5.3.4 Fulfilling one's role

Many teachers mentioned carrying out their duties as successes. Examples of these include the following:

> *"Learners were guided and counselled."*
> *"Child protection concerns were discovered."*
> *"Supportive learning was provided."*
> *"Learners were given home learning packages."*

The passive voice and the lack of adverbs like "well" or "successfully" give these answers an impersonal sound and an impression that the teachers did not consider the mentioned things achievements but rather, "jobs done". Nevertheless, it is important that they reported them which implies that they consider they have fulfilled their role. Perhaps they felt that they had done their best in the circumstances even if it was not done particularly "successfully". This is likely to have resulted in a sense of accomplishment.

Whereas child safety concerns were mentioned as a challenge by many teachers, having discovered and reported them was reported as a success. Many teachers reported that they had observed learners' well-being in the home settings and discovered child protection cases. Reporting cases of child abuse or pregnancy is likely to have increased the teachers' sense of purpose, hence motivating them.

5.3.5. COVID-19 prevention

Last, many teachers considered it a success that their learners followed SOP's or that they were safe from COVID-19. For example,

> *"All my learners remained safe from covid 19 and had hope for schooling again."*
> *"Most of my learners could follow SOPs."*

As a conclusion on successes, it can be said that the teachers experienced many successes in their work despite the challenges the unusual situation posed. The successes were important in supporting their well-being and in balancing out the experienced challenges. The positive experiences and successes were likely to increase the teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction. The successes perhaps also contributed to their feeling of purpose and resulted in receiving recognition from the community. One teacher wrote *"appreciations from the parents and bosses at work"* as a success which shows that support from school leadership and the community was very important.

5.4 Job stress

The third research question was: What caused stress to the teachers, and (how) did their job motivation change during the school closure? The findings on job stress are presented first, and the findings on job motivation are laid out after that, in 5.5.

Almost all of the respondents (n = 16) had experienced stress during the school closure and gave at least one reason for it. Only three teachers did not experience stress, and one person left the question unanswered. Altogether fifteen different reasons for stress were identified in the data. Some of the reasons were same as the things mentioned as challenges, like moving from house to house and problems with the learners' parents, but most of the teachers mentioned different issues as stressors. The stressors were categorised, and categories were further developed into themes. Below, the findings regarding teacher stress are presented under three themes: fear of future, insufficient income, and difficult working conditions.

5.4.1 Fear of future

Fear of future entails fear of the COVID-19 disease and the uncertainty caused by the pandemic and its effects on the teachers' personal lives and livelihood. Several teachers (n=7) said that fear of COVID-19 caused stress to them, and four teachers mentioned fear of losing job. Some teachers used strong expressions about the disease that show how afraid they were:

> *"I had a fear that I would lose my job. I also feared to be attacked by the pandemic since it was a killer disease."*

One teacher said that *"there was a lot of tension due to fear of the covid-19 disease"*. Although not explicitly stated, the tension may have had to do with people's different opinions and perceptions about the measures to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The data show that the teachers were concerned about their health and safety during home-to-home teaching. Many teachers reported that hygiene in the homes was not good and that communities did not care to prevent the virus. It was also difficult to maintain social distancing in small spaces. Having masks and hand sanitizer and following SOPs helped in coping with this stressor.

Fear of future was accompanied by idleness and loneliness, brought up by some teachers, referring most probably to the lockdown period when the home-to-home teaching and small group teaching had not been started. It is important to bear in mind that the situation in Uganda was very different from that of, e.g. European countries. Most European schools were closed for two months, from mid-March to mid-May 2020, during which period teaching continued online. In Uganda, in the beginning of the pandemic from March 2020 to June, schools were closed, and the society was in a lockdown. There was no teaching in any form and moving around

was restricted. It was only after months that the lockdown was lifted, the home learning packages were ready to be distributed to the learners, and the teachers in the refugee settlements started to work again. This means that there were weeks of idleness and uncertainty about what will happen, which caused stress and had negative effects on teacher well-being. Studies concerning teachers in European countries have also shown that uncertainty and uncontrollability of the situation affected teacher well-being negatively (e.g. Hascher et al. 2021; Kim & Asbury 2020).

5.4.2 Insufficient income

Worry over income was tangible in the studied data. The teachers struggled to support their families, or people they had supported earlier, especially during the lockdown. They even had trouble meeting their basic needs like paying rent or buying food. Two teachers reported having experienced hunger. Many said they had had to cut down on expenses. They relied on FCA and other organisations to help them by providing materials. Many teachers said they received food from the school as a means of support during the school closure. Several teachers had had to come up with alternative or additional sources of income. One teacher said:

> *"My income reduced to zero and I had a family to look after, so there was no further family development."*

Luckily, he had had some money before the lockdown to set up a small stall selling food items. The stall helped him and his family to get through the lockdown period. Another teacher said:

> *"I requested parents to give me some financial support and some accepted."*

Asking money from the learners' parents is not in accordance with the UPE principals that aim to guarantee a free primary education, or with FCA code of conduct. However, the teacher reported very openly that he had prepared learning packages and asked parents to pay for them.

> *"The home learning packages I prepared earned me some money which I would use to provide the most demanded basic needs of life. I used the little saving and collections from packages to start a grocery stall which earned some daily cash."*

As this example shows, financial problems played a prominent role in the teachers' lives during the school closure. Many of the teachers said that they had been stressed about the continuity of their employment and salary payments. The teachers who were afraid of losing their job all said that renewing the contract helped them in alleviating stress. Conversely, all the teachers who did not experience stress reported that FCA managed to continue paying their salary in time.

According to FCA personnel in Uganda, all teachers' contracts were renewed in March 2020 and their monthly salaries were paid throughout the school closure. However, some teachers said that their income had either reduced or been irregular and unreliable. A reason for the reductions in income may have been caused by the lack of allowances mentioned also in the UNEB (2021) study. Perhaps the teachers are used to giving extra tuition or remedial classes to their learners for which they collect payments.

Insufficient income is a reality to teachers in many low-income countries, and teachers often have to find another source of income to support their families (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007). It is common that teachers have many dependents, and in addition to direct dependents, they may be supporting other family or community members financially. During the school closure, many Ugandan teachers did not receive their salary payments. This has been a big problem especially for teachers working in Ugandan private schools, but also some teachers in government schools have received their salaries late, or not at all. According to Mwesigwa (2021), thousands of teachers have had to find new jobs, and many of them may not return to teaching after schools re-open. This will pose a great challenge to Ugandan education system that already suffers from lack of teachers.

The burning issue of teacher salary came up clearly in the teachers' answers throughout the questionnaire. When asked what kind of support they would have needed to support their own well-being, almost half of the teachers (n=9) said that they would have needed financial support. Pay rise was commonly asked for, as in the following:

> *"Salary increment and facilitation fee from FCA to cater for my personal needs such as lunch and breakfast, transport and even airtime to call parents and my fellow teachers for consultation."*

This quote implies that the teacher has had to compromise some of her personal needs and professional needs to satisfy her basic needs. As discussed in the section on challenges, the teachers could not, for instance, afford to pay for transport, or to buy gear that would have protected them from rain. Yet, International Labour Organization ILO includes a fair income in the definition of decent work, which, in turn, is included in the human rights declarations as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (ILO).

Salary increase was a common request put forward in answer to the last question of the questionnaire: "Is there something else you would like to mention or add?" Some teachers suggested that teachers be trained in entrepreneurial skills and allowed to work part-time so that they could earn side income. Disappointment and mistrust in the government's promises were evident in some answers, for example:

> *"The government should always stand with what it says. This is an instance where it deceived teachers to give financial support to them, but we don't know where it ended.*

These findings are very similar to those of the UNEB (2021) study that investigated the challenges Ugandan P6 and S3 teachers had experienced during the lockdown. Approximately 47 percent of the studied P6 teachers had experienced financial distress and more than half of the teachers had started income generating activities during the lockdown. As means to mitigate the financial distress the teachers suggested interest-free loans from the government (UNEB 2021).

5.4.3 Difficult working conditions

The conditions in which the studied Ugandan teachers worked during the school closure were demanding, to say the least. Working conditions here refer to physical, psychological, and social aspects of the working environment. The multiple challenges the teachers faced in supporting their learners were discussed earlier, in 5.2. However, most of the challenges mentioned in 5.2 were not brought up when asked about things that caused stress to the teachers. It may be due to the fact that the teachers did not want to repeat the same things they had already written in response to an earlier question. Challenges were asked in the questionnaire question number 7, and stressors were asked in question number 9, and therefore, the question order may have affected the teachers' answers. On the other hand, it is possible that the challenges at work did not cause stress to the respondents, or that they did not cause as *much* stress as financial problems, uncertainty, and fear of the COVID-19 disease. After all, financial problems undermine a person's access to basic needs, uncertainty threatens his feeling of security, and a serious infectious disease jeopardises his health. All of these are lower-level needs compared with occupational well-being.

However, some respondents experienced stress particularly due to the difficult working conditions. For example, a female teacher, age 25, wrote:

> *"Yes, moving from home to home was not easy. Some of the parents caused stress to me because some of them were very harsh."*

It is not explained how the harshness occurred but judging by how she coped with this problem, i.e., by moving in a group with other teachers, it seems that she felt threatened by some parents. As a young woman, it may have been intimidating to go to people's homes on her own. Maybe some of the parents had consumed alcohol, used harsh language, or perhaps she had experienced sexual harassment. Moving in a group helped her because she got support from her colleagues. Here, peer relationships proved significant in supporting teacher well-being.

Another cause for stress when moving from home to home was the lack of *"something to make me identified in the village"*. It seems that the male teacher who brought up this issue, had had problems to prove that he is a teacher. Some parents did not let their children take part in the small group learning with a teacher they did not recognise. The teacher suggested that a t-shirt, perhaps with a school or FCA logo,

would have helped parents to identify him as a teacher. Some other teachers said that FCA had in fact provided them with t-shirts.

Some teachers said they were stressed about trying to find learners in the villages and trying to make children and parents aware of the small group learning. Creating good relationships with the parents and asking them to pass the information on small group learning to other parents helped in coping with this stress factor.

5.5 Motivation

At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked if their feelings about being a teacher had changed during the school closure, and whether their motivation had changed. The teachers answered as follows: six teachers stated that their motivation or feelings had increased, six teachers said that they had not changed, and five teachers said that their motivation or feelings had decreased. The remaining three answers were unclear or signalled that there was an increase due to some aspects and a decrease due to others. They were not counted in any group. All the teachers who reported that their motivation had decreased said that it was due to personal financial problems, or financial problems of teachers in general. For example,

> *"My motivation was moderated if not decreased due to inability to support myself (basic needs) due to imposition of lockdowns and curfews."*

> *"To a greater extent my feelings have not changed but to a lesser extent it has: it has decreased because many teachers have suffered during the school closure because they spend most of the time at school and so they have limited or no time to make side businesses that can support them in case of school closure. My motivation and feelings about being a teacher have decreased."*

One person answered that his motivation had decreased *"due to having other business which provides income more than teaching.* Yet, he was committed to being a teacher, as the following sentence shows: *"But due to being a profession there will be perseverance."*

Four teachers whose feelings had not changed said that it was because they had continued helping their learners, and two respondents did not provide a reason. The teachers who said that their motivation had increased gave different reasons for the increase. One teacher had enjoyed interacting with the learners, and she valued the support she had received. Three teachers said that they had learnt to work in difficult conditions, which indicates professional development. Appreciation from the community was mentioned by one teacher, and one teacher said that her motivation had increased because it had been easier to handle fewer learners. The following quotes illustrate the different viewpoints:

"Increased because I have been interacting with my learners in small group learning. Increased due to the support that have been rendered by the FCA, other organizations, the school and my colleagues."

"Motivation has increased because I have learnt to work in harsh and different condition that I was not used to."

"Teaching is my profession and my calling. My motivation has increased because people learnt the importance of a teacher during the school closure."

In conclusion of the findings on motivation, financial distress seems to have had the most detrimental effect on job motivation. However, it is noteworthy that only 25 percent of the studied teachers said that their motivation had decreased and in contrast, 30 percent of the teachers reported that their motivation had increased during the school closure. The rest of the teachers said that their opinion about being a teacher, or their motivation, had not been affected by the school closure. Hence the findings of this study do not support the common view that teachers in SSA are increasingly demotivated. However, it does underscore the importance of sufficient income and its effects on well-being.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter, a summary of the findings is presented first. After that, the limitations of the study are discussed. The chapter ends with policy recommendations and a discussion on the contributions of this study.

6.1 Summary of the findings

This study addressed the issue of teacher well-being in a Ugandan refugee settlement during the COVID-19 school closure. The study sought to find out how the challenges, successes and stressors experienced by the studied teachers affected their well-being and job motivation. The conceptual framework for teacher well-being in low-resource, crisis, and conflict-affected contexts (Falk et al. 2019) was used as the main theory against which the collected data were reflected on. The findings of the study indicate that school-level and community-level contextual factors, namely, teacher-student relationships, school leadership, school resources, access to basic needs, respect and recognition, and responsibility and duty, affected the teachers' job satisfaction, job stress and motivation.

Based on the studied data, factors that seem to have supported the studied teachers' well-being were respect and recognition from the community and relationships with the learners and their families. In addition, the teachers experienced successes e.g. in facilitating learning, raising COVID-19 awareness, and supporting their learners in difficult situations. The successes were likely to have supported their well-being. Rather surprisingly, peer relationships did not seem to play a significant role among the studied teachers. In many other studies on teacher well-being during COVID-19, relationships with colleagues have been found an important supportive factor (e.g. Hascher et al. 2021, Kim & Asbury 2020).

In light of the studied data, insufficient income was the most prominent stress factor for the teachers. Approximately half of the studied teachers experienced stress over their financial situation, and some had trouble meeting their basic needs. Some teachers had received food provisions from their school, and many had resorted to additional sources of income to have their basic needs met. Many of the teachers who had experienced financial distress reported that their motivation to be a teacher had decreased during the school closure. These findings are in line with the study conducted by the Ugandan National Examination Board (2021). The results of the study showed that 47 percent of primary 6 teachers experienced financial distress during the lockdown and 58 percent of the P6 teachers had started income generating activities (UNEB 2021).

Fear of future, and particularly job insecurity, were other factors that influenced the studied teachers' well-being negatively, together with the fear of the COVID-19 virus. Working conditions were experienced as challenging hence affecting the teachers' job satisfaction. The teachers walked long distances in bad weather conditions, taught learners in non-conducive learning environments and suffered from lack of teaching and learning materials. In addition, some of them were afraid of contracting the COVID-19 virus when meeting learners and their families. The teachers had many responsibilities including, for example, reporting child protection cases and giving guidance on health issues but the responsibilities did not seem to have caused stress to the teachers. Instead, several teachers reported that the community appreciated their efforts, which supported their well-being.

6.2 Limitations of the study

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data for this study were gathered with the help of FCA personnel in Uganda. This was not an ideal way to collect data because the teachers were employed by FCA. Due to asymmetrical power relations and the teachers' dependency on FCA, it cannot be guaranteed that the respondents took part willingly and gave their consent fully voluntarily. In addition, my association with FCA should have been expressed clearly to the participants. The fact that the data were collected by FCA staff may also have influenced the teachers' answers to some extent.

The data were gathered in a written form, which also limits the study because the written answers were sometimes very short and, at times, difficult to interpret and there was no opportunity to ask for more detail or clarification. There is also a possibility, even a likelihood, that some of the respondents have provided a satisfactory, rather than an optimal, answer to the questions. Hence the data cannot be taken to represent the experiences and views of the teachers comprehensively, or fully. They can be seen as a "snapshot" of the experiences of Ugandan teachers working in a refugee settlement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another aspect that limited the quality and the amount of data is that some of the respondents seem to have answered the questions together and produced similar answers.

While analysing the data, I have tried to practice "hyper-self-reflexivity" as suggested by Kapoor (2004), to avoid producing representations that reflect my own position as a Finnish teacher. Native Ugandan and Uganda based FCA contacts have helped in clarifying some issues and provided a Ugandan perspective. Research literature on Uganda has offered useful insights and knowledge that have helped me to gain understanding of the Ugandan teachers' situation.

The collected data were limited to 20 primary teachers' responses, which is by no means a representative sample of Ugandan primary teachers working in refugee

settlement schools. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised. However, despite the limitations, I believe this study provides valuable insights into Ugandan teachers' experiences and well-being during the exceptional time. I hope the findings are of interest especially to the education in emergencies actors in the country.

6.3 Policy recommendations

Insufficient income was the most prominent single factor that affected the studied teachers' well-being. Because previous research has pointed to the same direction, and it is widely recognised that teacher salary in Uganda is too low to live on, there is reason to believe that salary is an issue of great relevance in Ugandan education.

Insufficient teacher salary has many negative consequences. First and foremost, the free primary education guaranteed by UPE policy is undermined because parents are asked to make payments to PTAs and teachers. Second, teachers have to take on other jobs or run businesses alongside with school to make a sufficient living. This leads to divided attention and lack of time and energy to prepare for lessons or engage in professional development which, in turn, affects teaching quality. Third, low salary is the main reason for teachers' demotivation which results in absenteeism, tardiness, and low performance in class (Bennell & Akyeampong 2007).

To ensure that there will be enough teachers in Uganda in the future, it is essential to raise teacher salaries. Uganda is facing a severe teacher shortage which is a major cause for overcrowded classrooms. Teacher shortage is likely to increase as a result of the school closure because thousands of teachers have moved to other jobs that may be better paid than teaching. Raising teachers' salaries would signal that teachers are appreciated and the importance of their work is recognised. This would help to raise the status of the profession which, in turn, would perhaps attract more young people to join teacher training. Having more applicants to the teacher training colleges would raise entry standards and ensure that teacher graduates are competent to teach. Teacher salary is a national-level issue and therefore, advocacy work and cooperation between education actors and the MoES is needed.

Qualified professional teachers are the key to quality education (SDG 4). Furthermore, teacher well-being is considered a major driver of quality education (Hascher & Waber 2021). Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports has acknowledged the need to increase the number of professionally competent and well-motivated teachers to improve the quality of education. Increasing the number of teachers would ease the workload and stress of the teachers who are regularly teaching up to 150–200 learners at a time. Having smaller classes would likely enhance teacher well-being, which could have positive effects such as diminishing the use of corporal punishment in schools. The use of violence in Ugandan schools is connected to high levels of teacher stress (Ssenyonga & Hecker 2021).

Uganda has a very young population: 45.5 percent of the population are aged 14 years or under (UNFPA 2021). The lockdown and school closure had severe effects on the children and youth: increased poverty, child labour, domestic violence, sexual abuse, early marriages, and teenage pregnancies (Sserwanja et al. 2021). The learning loss resulted from almost two years of missed school days is vast, and it can accumulate over time as children who have fallen behind may be unable to catch up (Angrist et al. 2021). Uganda has decided to move all learners to the next grade although most children had no access to learning during the school closure (FAWEU 2021, Datzberger & Parkes 2021). Therefore, it is important that remedial programs are provided to help children get back on track. There is a great need for qualified teachers who can support the children and youth both academically and psychosocially and keep them engaged in learning. The teachers themselves, too, need to be supported to be able to manage the stress of coping with children who suffer from the many consequences of the lockdown and school closure.

This study contributes to the under-researched topic of teacher well-being in low-resource and displacement settings. Moreover, it sheds light on teaching and teacher well-being in a Ugandan refugee settlement during the COVID-19 school closure. Research on teaching and teachers' experiences of the school closure in Uganda has thus far been scarce. Research evidence of the adverse effects of the school closure on children is building up, but more research is needed on the education responses and practices during the COVID-19 pandemic in Uganda as well as in other countries. It is likely that the COVID-19 school closures will not be the last disruptions of education. Researchers and reports (e.g. UNICEF et al. 2020) suggest that the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 crisis can help in coping with possible future crises and in creating more resilient education systems.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Background information of the respondents

Gender	Age	Education	Years of experience	Grade	Number of learners in class
male	33	Grade 3	9		
male	38	Grade 3	12	6	49
female	24		4	5	50
female	28	Grade 3	5	3	80
female	23	Diploma in Education	4	2	109
female	23	Diploma in Education	5	6	125
female	25		6	1 - 6	
female	26	Grade 3	6	2	150
female	29	Grade 3	9	1	199
male	27	Grade 3	5	7	66
male	30	Grade 3	9	4	32
	27	Assistant Teacher	4	4	90
male	25	Grade 3	4		
male	35	Grade 3	10	7	86
male	24	Grade 3	4	5	30
male	34		15	7	74
male	24	Teacher	3	6	120
female	28	Grade 3	8	1	
female	36	Grade 3	16		
female	29	Grade 3	10		

APPENDIX 2.

Dear respondent,
My name is Tea Saarivuori and I am a student at the University of Jyvaskyla in Finland. I am writing my Master's thesis on Ugandan teachers' experiences of the school closure during the covid-19 pandemic. For the study, I need to collect data. Therefore, I kindly ask you to answer the questions below and on the following pages. The answers will be analysed, and the results will be presented so that individual teachers cannot be recognised. However, direct quotes of your answers may be presented to give examples of the teachers' experiences. Any names or other recognisable items will be hidden from the answers. The data gathered through this questionnaire will be used only for the purpose of the study. Answering the questions truthfully will not affect your employment.
The study focuses on your experiences as a teacher during the covid-19 school closure, between March 2020 and March 2021. Please think back to that time when answering the questions. You may give as long answers as you like. Thank you for your time and invaluable help!
____ Yes, I have understood the purpose of the study and I give my consent for using my answers anonymously in it.

____ No, I do not want to take part in the study. (If you tick this, please return an empty paper.)

Please fill in the blanks or mark the appropriate alternative with a cross (X).

I am male____ / female ____.
I am ______ years old.
My certification/ education: ____
I have worked ______ years as a teacher.
I have a permanent job as a teacher. Yes ____ / No ____.
The class that I taught during the school closure is P_____.
There were _______ learners in my class.
I have participated in a training on psychosocial support.
Yes____ / No ___ If yes, which organization facilitated the training? ____________________

1. What modes of teaching did you use during the school closure? Please tick.

___ radio broadcasts
___ home learning materials
___ digital devices
___ small group learning
___ something else, what? ______________________________________

2. How did you reach your learners? Approximately how many of the learners in your class were you able to reach regularly? (e.g. 50 out of 100)

3. If you taught your learners in their homes or in the community learning centre, how did it feel? Was it different from teaching them in the normal school environment? If yes, how?

4. If you taught your learners in small groups, was it different from teaching a normal class? If yes, how was it different? Did you use different teaching methods?

5. What were your priorities, or most important duties, in your teaching role during the school closure? List three most important duties.

   1.

   2.

   3.

6. What successes did you experience in supporting your learners during the school closure?

7. What challenges did you encounter in supporting your learners during the school closure?

8. How did you overcome, or cope with, the challenges you mentioned above?

9. Did you experience stress during the school closure? If yes, what caused it? Here, you can mention *anything that caused stress*, also things that are not related to your work as a teacher.

10. a. If you experienced stress, what helped you in coping with it?
    b. If you did not experience stress, what helped you to avoid getting stressed?

11. What kind of support or help did you get from your school leaders, from FCA or from your colleagues during the school closure?

12. What kind of support or training would you have required so as to help you in supporting your learners better?

13. What kind of support would you have needed so as to support your own well-being?

14. If you have participated in a training on Psychosocial Support (PSS), please answer the following: Did the training support your own well-being during the school closure? If yes, please give examples of how it helped you to manage stress or cope with difficult situations.

15. Has your relationship with your learners changed during the time of school closure? If yes, how?

16. Have your feelings about being a teacher changed during the school closure? For example, has your motivation increased or decreased? Why?

17. Is there something else you would like to mention or add? Please feel free to write about *any topic that you think the researcher should know about*.