



# Effects of Covid-19 Pandemic on Education Management Practices in Zimbabwe: A Case of Hallingbury Primary School, Harare, Zimbabwe

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**ABSTRACT:** The Covid-19 pandemic undeniably disturbed socio-economic activities, not sparing the educational system across the globe at whirlwind speed. It impacted the educational systems negatively to a larger extent. By mid-April in 2020, the pandemic had disrupted the formal education of approximately 1.6 billion learners in 192 nations. It also interrupted education in Africa and the effects will be alluded to by the study in one of the area. The study revealed that there is great need for educational system 21st modernisations. The nations went through a tough time to maintain the educational activities as the immune systems of most school children among adults, and other learners was weak, thereby affecting their health. The Pandemic did not affect the educational system alone, it also had negative effects on lives of the citizenry and on the business organisations; and it influenced the supply chain due to global lockdowns. The study investigated on the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management, as well as end of year results, and to proffer ways of managing education in future pandemic times. For this purpose, data were gathered through primary sources; questionnaires and interviews by 246 respondents comprising of teachers, learners, parents, school administration, and ministry of education officials. Some observations were also made for the purposes of observing social distancing practices in class and some other practices of containing the spread of the pandemic such as masking up, sanitizing and temperature checks on school entrance. Secondary sources such as published journals, thesis, textbooks, reports, newspaper articles and the internet were used, that enabled the investigator to understand better the effects of the pandemic on education. Respondents were selected using both probability and non-

probability sampling. Purposive sampling was employed to select respondents at the school admin and ministry of education to enable the investigator to generalise findings from people on the ground, who have the real information required, who are knowledgeable for the study's aim. Stratified and snowball techniques were used to select parents and pupils. The investigator used the mixed method research design, where the study combined quantitative and qualitative research.

**KEYWORDS:** Education, Education management, Covid-19 Pandemic, Online Education and Learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 whirlwind has interrupted the educational system globally. Its emergence and swift spread had to put counties to a halt. The novel coronavirus disease has significantly impacted economies; hence this study seeks to unpack the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management practices at Hallingbury Primary School in Harare, Zimbabwe. As part of the needful investigation of education management in Zimbabwe during the pandemic, the study endeavours to investigate the current education management practices at the above-mentioned school, to find out grade seven results of previous years before the emergence of Covid-19, and the results during the pandemic time, then suggest ways of managing education in such times.

The educational system has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as face-to-face classroom activities were stopped due to global closure. The spread of coronavirus increased and had significant impacts on educational and economic activities. The study investigates the effects of Covid-19 pandemic also highlighted by Memory Rumbidzai V. Mandikiana et al, (2021). The world faced



significant issues as a result of the pandemic that influenced social, economic, and people's lifestyles in general. The study focuses on effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management practices at Hallingbury Primary School in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The pandemic has effects not only in the education field but in the health sector as well, as mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, which is also in contrast with goal number three of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that speaks to good health and well-being. In other words, the pandemic has negative effects on education and economies in general. Mukute et al. (2020) highlighted that Covid-19 is also viewed as a health issue with significant repercussions on education, hence the need for this investigation. Objectives of the research are as follows

- To identify education management practices at Hallingbury Primary School.
- To assess whether the management practices are adequate or not.
- To find effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management at the school, as well as comparing the grade seven pass rate years before and during the pandemic.
- To proffer best ways of managing education during pandemic times.

#### a. Theoretical Framework

Several education theories were propounded by different scholars on education, some of the theories concern education during pandemics, some are concerned with the introduction of online education during crisis times, the researcher classifies Covid-19 pandemic as one of crisis. Hence, the investigation will be guided by theories that were developed previously by other researchers and have stimulated more research on the subject in question. The theories include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), and the Self Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan.

Maslow (as cited in Mandikiana, 2020) categorizes human needs in a pyramid with five categories. The bottom of the pyramid resembles the very basic of needs (physiological) that must be satisfied. These basic needs consist of water, food, health, shelter, and air. Safety follows, then social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs at the apex.

Hapompwe, Kukano and Siwale (2020) postulated that Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) pays attention to what is learnt by students through working together and seeing class mates. This is equated to a bridge that links behaviorist and

cognitive educational philosophies or theories since it integrates both motivation and attention. Bandura's theory emphasizes on social modeling as it is effective and dependable when it comes to education. Hapompwe et al. (2020) highlighted that the theory suggests that learning processes are effective in good social settings, where students interact in a conducive environment that suits individual behaviour.

Chiu (2021) submitted that the Social Determination Theory (SDT) proposed by Deci and Ryan in 1985 is observed as a macro-level human motivation theory which intends to expound human need dynamics, wellbeing, and motivation in social contexts. The theory implies that people possess three universal and psychological needs that includes autonomy (self-endorsed and self-governed feeling), competence (feeling effective and competent), and relatedness (love, interaction, connection). These needs determine the "act" or "not to act" in individuals. Learners experience better psychological well-being through satisfaction of the above psychological needs.

#### b. Conceptual Framework

The investigation will be focused on Covid-19 pandemic as an independent variable and education management practices as dependent variables. Induced physical school closure, reducing face to face lessons (less learning time), engaging in online lessons, imposing social distancing and compulsory parental involvement in online lessons assistance depend on the existence of Covid-19 pandemic.

The emergence of Covid-19 pandemic caused induced school closure, reduced face to face lessons/less learning time, symptoms of stress, imposition of social distancing and induced parental involvement in online learning. The above point was alluded to by Cooper and Schindler (2014), when they highlighted that, with causal assumptions, a change in, or the emergence of one variable leads or causes a change in the other variable(s). Hence, the causal variable is naturally the independent, and the variable that is caused is the dependent variable. See figure 1.

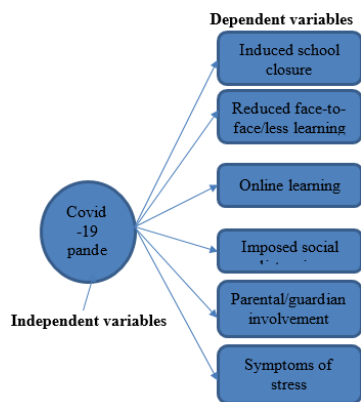


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework  
(Investigator's Drawing, 2021)

## II. METHOD

Common research designs include descriptive, exploratory, and causal. The study employed a causal research design, using a case study. To respond to some of the research objectives and questions, a mixed method approach, where both qualitative and quantitative forms are combined will be used. The investigator chose to use a hybrid or mixed method since it minimizes weaknesses then draws from strengths of a purely quantitative and qualitative methodology.

### a. Population and Sampling

Information from Hallingbury Primary School administration indicated that the school population is one thousand three hundred and twenty (1320), comprised of one thousand two hundred and eighty (1 280) enrolled pupils, and forty (40) teachers. The investigator then considered some stakeholders as parents/guardians and ministry of education officials. It was then the investigator's discretion to include at least one parent/guardian per pupil; that is one thousand two hundred and eighty parents/guardians (1 280), and two (2) ministry of education officials from the responsible district, Warren Park Mabelreign District; as key informants, to come up with realistic results.

This made the targeted population two thousand six hundred and two (2 602). Hence, the study sample is two hundred and forty six (246), using confidence level of 90%, basing on Raosoft (2010), an online sample size calculator available on <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>.

The sample was drawn using stratified sampling, purposive and snow ball sampling techniques. For instance, on purposive sampling,

respondents will be selected because they are rich in the information required. They have the necessary information needed by the investigator. The investigator decided to use stratified sampling because of heterogeneous respondents.

The investigator also chose purposive and snowball sampling to include participants who are suitable/appropriate for the study, and to be directed to other respondents with required information for the investigation. For quantitative data collection the researcher used stratified random sampling and snowball sampling. For qualitative data, purposive sampling method was used and it was a small number of people under study, and it is a case study.

### b. Data Collection Instrument

In this study, the researcher used structured and semi-structured interviews, closed and open ended questionnaires, published books, previous papers and journals to gather information/data. Quantitative and qualitative methods were both employed in the process of gathering information. The use of close ended questionnaires was done to gather quantitative data, and the use of open-ended questions was done to gather qualitative data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), was used to analyze the data collected using close ended questionnaires.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

This section aims to present and analyze the study findings. The findings are from interviews, questionnaires and documentary research. Presentations on graphs will be used, complemented by explanations based on participants' responses. Data will be analysed according to the sequence in which the questions were being asked.

### Result

#### a. Demographic Information

The purpose of the tabulated percentage below is to indicate the response rate of the administered questionnaires, conducted interviews, and the possible challenges that could have cropped up.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Respondents

Target	Number of respondents	Response Percentage
246	205	83%

The table 1 above displays the rate of response for the distributed questionnaires and conducted interviews.



b. Gender Distribution of Respondents

The investigator sought to unveil the representation of the participants by gender

Table 2 Gender Distribution

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	90	43.9	43.9	43.9
	Female	115	56.1	56.1	100.0
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	

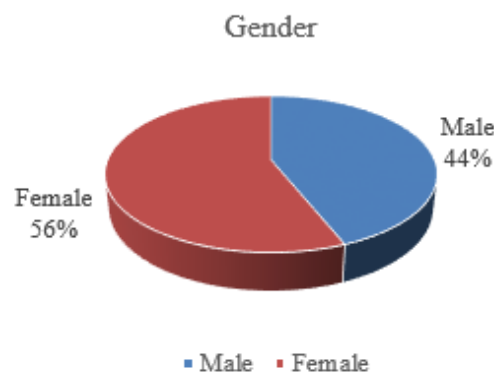


Figure 2 Gender Distribution of Participants

The above table 2 shows that gender composition of the participants comprised 56% (115) females; majority and 44% (90) males.

Hence, most of the views came from women. The results are illustrated by the pie chart below.

Gender representation on the figures above portrays that female participants were more than males. This reveals that females knowingly or not,

are much more involved in helping kids education wise than men. It may be due to cultural norms where females are normally involved in child issues overall since time immemorial, they are known to be more responsible for children. See figure 2.

c. Age Distribution of Respondents

The researcher collected information from the respondents to establish their age, starting from age 10 (Grades 5). Only structured questionnaire participants (202) had age captured.

Table 3 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10-19	89	44.06	44.06	44.06
	20-29	14	6.93	6.93	50.99



	30-39	48	23.76	23.76	74.75
	40-49	36	17.82	17.82	92.57
	50-59	11	5.45	5.45	98.02
	60-69	4	1.98	1.98	100.00
	Total	202	100.00	100.00	

The age distribution shows that the age group 10-19 had the highest (89) respondents, as this constituted all students who responded, which is 44.06% of the respondents. In this groups only 4 ages were found, 10, 11, 12 and 13. The adult

groups 20 to 69 years represented 53.94% of the respondents.

Table 4 Age Distribution of Respondents Detailed

Age		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10	14	6.9	6.9	6.9
	11	29	14.4	14.4	21.3
	12	18	8.9	8.9	30.2
	13	28	13.9	13.9	44.1
	28	8	4.0	4.0	48.0
	29	6	3.0	3.0	51.0
	30	3	1.5	1.5	52.5
	31	5	2.5	2.5	55.0
	32	6	3.0	3.0	57.9
	33	4	2.0	2.0	59.9
	34	6	3.0	3.0	62.9
	35	2	1.0	1.0	63.9
	37	5	2.5	2.5	66.3
	38	8	4.0	4.0	70.3
	39	9	4.5	4.5	74.8
	40	3	1.5	1.5	76.2
	41	4	2.0	2.0	78.2
	42	3	1.5	1.5	79.7
	43	8	4.0	4.0	83.7
	44	1	.5	.5	84.2
	45	3	1.5	1.5	85.6
	46	7	3.5	3.5	89.1
	47	7	3.5	3.5	92.6
	51	4	2.0	2.0	94.6
53	4	2.0	2.0	96.5	
55	3	1.5	1.5	98.0	
63	4	2.0	2.0	100.0	
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	

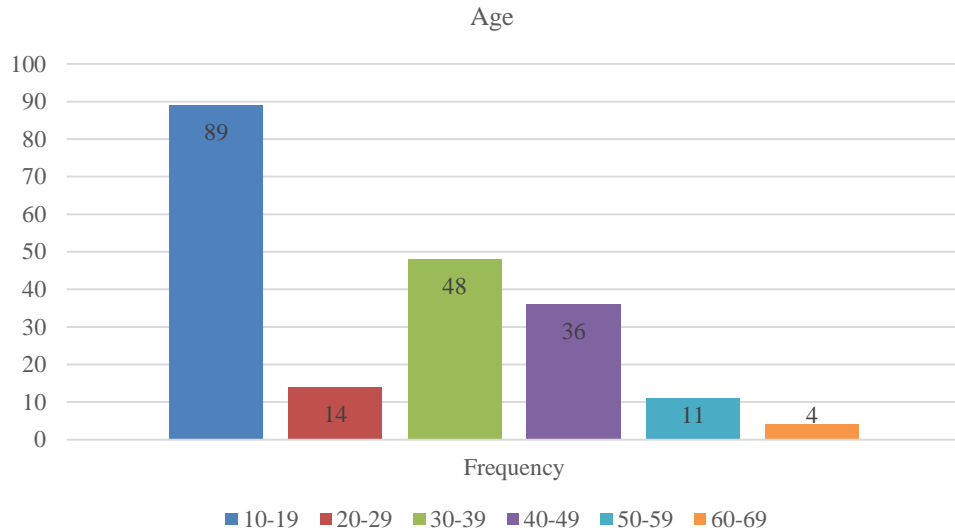


Figure 3 Age Distribution of Respondents

d. Status Level (Occupational)

There was a high response from all participants with Parents/Guardian group having the most responses of 108 (53.5%). The Teacher/Educator group had the lowest responses of

5 (2.5%) as there are also fewer compared to the total population.

Table 5 Status Level

Status Level		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pupil	89	44.1	44.1	44.1
	Teacher/Educator	5	2.5	2.5	46.5
	Parent/Guardian	108	53.5	53.5	100.0
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4 show the distribution of the occupational status of the respondents showing a higher Parent/Guardian participation.

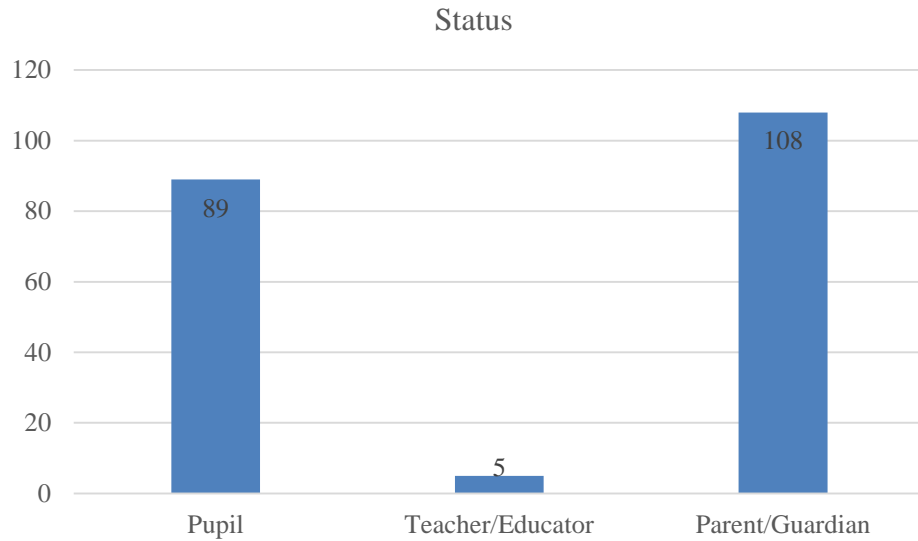


Figure 4 Status Level

e. Employment Status  
 There were high responses, 86 (42.6%), from those formally employed. The majority being parents. The none group are the school children who responded on this option. Those unemployed were 24 (11.9%) and 3 (1.5%) were informally employed.

Table 6 Employment Status

Employment Status					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Formal	86	42.6	42.6	42.6
	Informal	3	1.5	1.5	44.1
	Not Employed	24	11.9	11.9	55.9
	None	89	44.1	44.1	100.0
	Total	202	100.0	100.0	



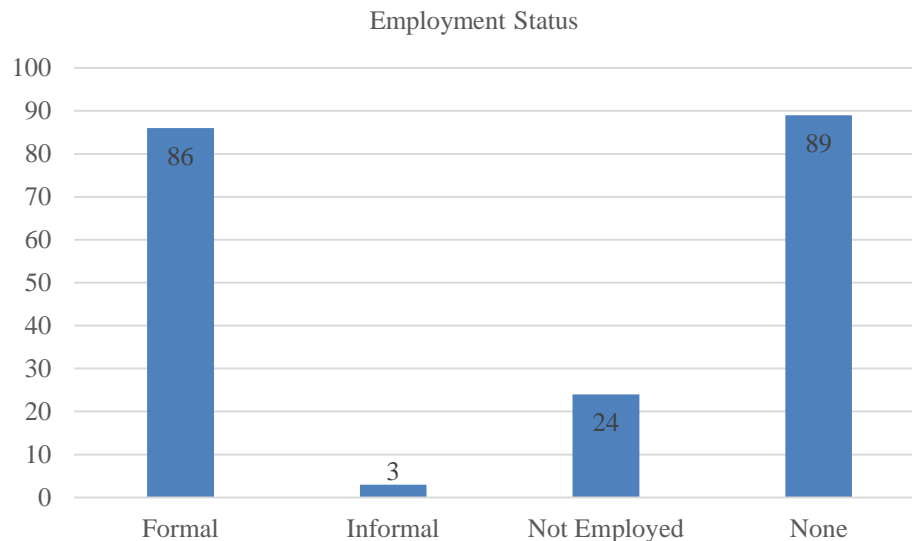


Figure 5 Employment Status

With a high number of employed parents, the study should reflect on how this group of parents cope with Covid-19 restrictions on their children.

f. To Identify Education Management Practices at Hallingbury Primary School

Unstructured questions were also sent to the participants, they came with unique of answer with general separately classes as discussed below:

Question a. How are pupils attending classes?

Question b. further asked for a comment.

Question c. How are measures to contain the spread of the pandemic being followed at the school?

Question d. What is being done if someone has tested positive for Covid-19 at the school?

Question e. What do you recommend before pupils, parents, staff and visitors enter the school premises during Covid-19 times?

Question f. How do pupils sit in class when attending physical lessons? (Sitting arrangement)

Question g. What do you do if anyone does not follow the stipulated rules to contain pandemic spread?

Question h. How do you compensate for learning time loss?

Question i. What do you think is the best way to manage education in pandemic times?

Question j. What would you like the government to do to address education management issues?

g. To Assess Whether the Management Practices are Adequate or Not

The study sought to find out if the education management was adequate or not. The results indicated that the education management during the pandemic was not adequate as they cited less learning time, longer period to grasp new concepts as a result of the two or three days learning system introduced to contain the spread of the pandemic, unequal access to internet facilities for online education as also highlighted by Di Pietro et al. (2020), low academic performance as evidenced by the grade seven pass rates for years before and during Covid-19 Pandemic. The interview with the school administration indicated that before the pandemic in the year 2019, the pass rate was 95%. During the pandemic, the rate was 93.75 in 2020, which is a decline and it was during peak, then 94.75 in 2021 when people were aware of the pandemic and getting used, though there was still a decline compared to 2019 where the pandemic had not emerged. The decline in the pass rate was because of the inadequacy of the management practices as revealed by the data gathered.





Table 7 Attitude towards Education Management Practices and Ways of Managing Education

Question	True	False	Not Sure	TOTAL
a.	183	19	0	202
b.	0	202	0	202
c.	202	0	0	202
d.	4	198	0	202
e.	50	152	0	202
f.	39	162	0	202
g.	202	0	0	202
h.	82	19	101	202
i.	202	0	0	202
j.	202	0	0	202

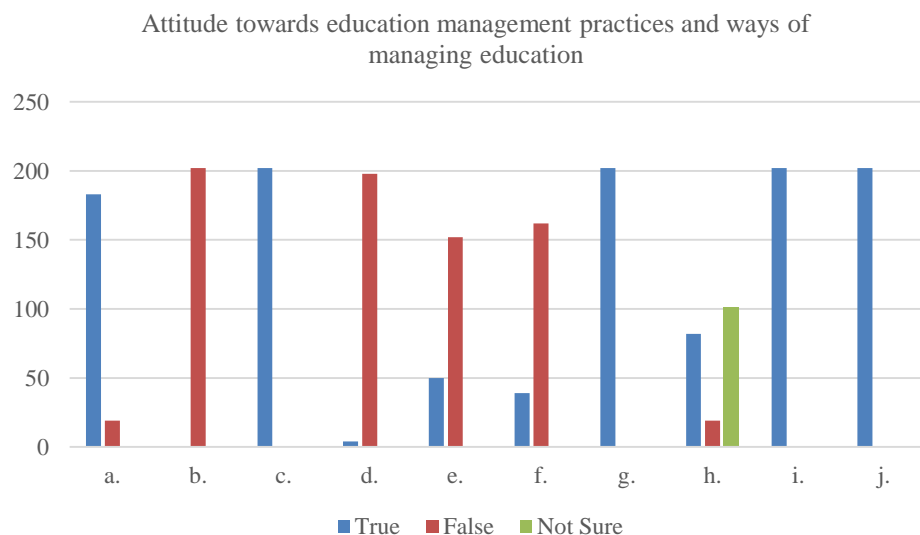


Figure 6 Attitude Towards Education Management Practices and Ways of Managing Education

On questions c) Educators should be trained on proper ways of managing education at any given time; g) Covid 19 induced school closure has no effect on education management; i) The best strategy to manage education at any given circumstance is to offer educators training, and craft policies that embrace sustainable online education for all and j) Pupils and parents/guardians should be supported and educated on unconditional education management, there was 100% assertion to the questions. Whereas question b) Education management is not a priority during pandemics has 100% disagreement.

A total of 183 (90.6%) of the respondents agree to question a) that says various forms of education help in managing education in pandemic times, with only 19 disagreeing. 198 (98%) disagree

on question d) that online learning improves performance across the globe.

Only 50 (24.8%) assert with question e) that pupils have definitely nothing to do with education management in any society, whereas 152 (75.2%) disagree. On question f) Pupils and parents/guardians have the right to disregard education in pandemic as some do not have the facilities to practice online lessons in place of



physical lessons, 163 (80.7%) disagree and 39 (19.3%) agree to this statement.

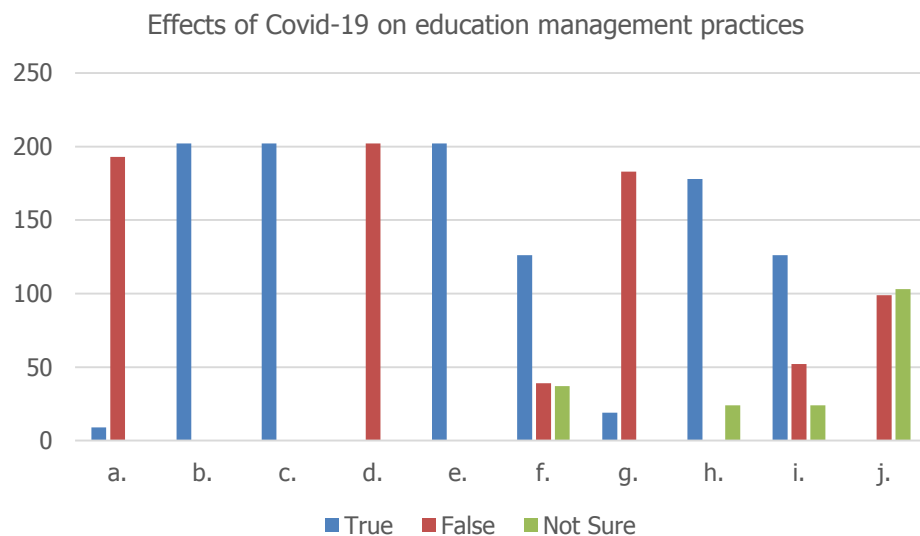
There was a 50% (101) uncertainty response on question c) which said that; Ministry of Education is reluctant on managing education during Covid-19 pandemic. 40.6% (82) agreed with the statement whilst 19 (9.4%) did not agree.

**h. Effects of Covid-19 on Education Management Practices**

The responses represented in Table 7 below on the 10 questions indicate that most respondents had similar answers, be it True, False or Not Sure. Questions b, c and e had 100% answers as True, and question d had 100% answers as False. The rest of the questions had majority choosing the same answers. Each question is analyzed below.

**Table 8 Effects of Covid-19 on Education Management Practices**

Question	True	False	Not Sure	TOTAL
a.	9	193	0	202
b.	202	0	0	202
c.	202	0	0	202
d.	0	202	0	202
e.	202	0	0	202
f.	126	39	37	202
g.	19	183	0	202
h.	178	0	24	202
i.	126	52	24	202
j.	0	99	103	202



**Figure 7 Effects of Covid on Education Management Practices**

On question a) Education can take place anywhere everywhere without affecting pupils, the majority 95.5% (193) of the respondents indicate that they don't agree with the fact that education can

take place anywhere everywhere without affecting pupils. Only 4.5% agree with this assertion. Question b) Pupils' performance or results may be affected by reduced learning time and c) Covid-19



pandemic has effects on education management practices there was 100% assertion to the questions.

Pertaining to question d) Online learning does not affect parents, educators, or anyone, there was a 100% denial that online learning does not affect parents, educators, and anyone. 100% agree on question e) Education is a driver for Sustainable Development.

The majority 62.4% (126) agree that education with time may be categorized and improved, question f. With nearly equal numbers between those disagreeing (39, 19.3%) and those not sure (37, 18.3%).

Most respondents (183, 90.6%) do not agree on question g) Is every parent/guardian or educator able to engage/assist in online learning, with 19 (9.4%) agreeing. 178 agree to questions h) that state Covid-19 pandemic has negative effects on education management practices, with none disagreeing. The rest 24 (11.9%) were not sure. On question i) Everyone is responsible for managing education in any circumstance, 126 agree, 52 disagreed and 24 were not sure.

On the last the question j) Are there facilities to check on education management practices during crisis, none agreed on the assertion, with 99 disagreeing with the statement and 103 were not sure.

- i. To find effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management at the school, as well as comparing the grade seven pass rate, years before and during the pandemic

Covid-19 pandemic caused poor academic performance, lack of assessments and grading which leads to lack of learners' motivation. Also data gathered indicated that education could not be managed well after such long days of school closure where it is very difficult to work with some children who would have changed their attitude or behaviour towards education/learning during lock down as cited in Onyema et al. (2020). Data collected from the school administration also indicated negative effects of the pandemic as the grade seven results percentage declined from 2019's 95% to 2020's 93.75%, when the pandemic was at peak. The table 9 and figure 8 below portray the pass rates.

Table 9 Grade Seven Results Pass Rates

Year	Pass rate
2019	95%
2020	93.75%
2021	94.75%

The graph below indicates a comparison of academic performance using grade seven results for

three consecutive years before and during Covid-19 pandemic.

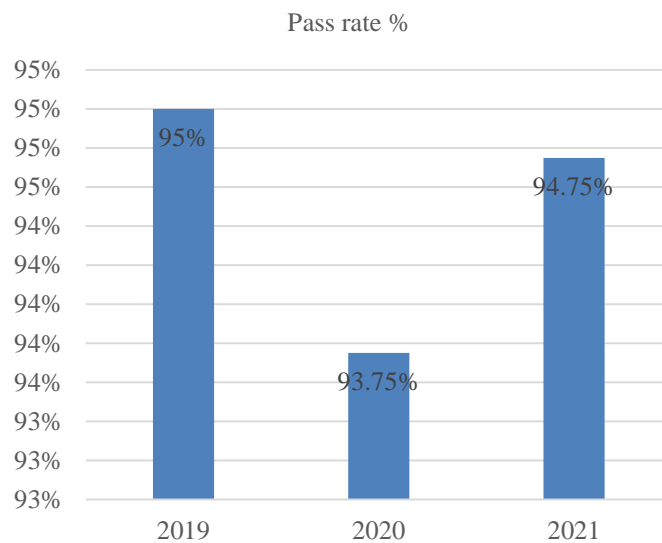


Figure 8 Grade Seven Results Pass Rate

- j. To proffer best ways of managing education during pandemic times

The study sought to investigate on effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management. It then revealed that the pandemic has negative effects on education, and responses from interviews proffered ways of managing education during pandemics. The respondents' answers revolved around, following and checking compliance of WHO guidelines that includes supply of PPEs (using the Paretian theory) as it is a global issue, and following Standard Operating Procedures from MoPSE as a way of managing education during Covid-19. Engaging in online education, blended learning, distance education, and improving infrastructure to accommodate pandemic times was considered in managing education in pandemic situations, which was also highlighted by Onyema et al. (2020). Allowing private organisations and willing parents/guardians to intervene in facilitating online education, and adjusting teachers' training syllabus to match with the global trends, availing free internet facilities to accommodate the less privileged and the rural people were also cited in responses.

Also, engaging stakeholders in education management issues through the school administration, and through school development committees, training educators right from the training institutes so that they are ready for educational practices in all seasons were considered to be ways of managing education. The

study responses also suggested on improving infrastructure and funding to adequately facilitate learning during pandemic times. Crafting policies with active participation and involvement of education stakeholders, not leaving out parents/guardians and educators for an efficient, effective, holistic and sustainable educational management system was cited in interview responses.

#### IV. DISCUSSIONS

It was revealed through study responses from interviews and questionnaires that Covid-19 pandemic has negative effects on education management at Hallingbury Primary School. Education is not being managed well during the pandemic as the practices are not adequate, (the two or three day system). Serious effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management were observed from the investigation, and also mentioned by Tadese and Muluye (2020) are that of learning disruptions due to unscheduled school closures, reduced time for face to face education, lack of financial resources to fund distance or online education, lack of adequate infrastructure, long time of grasping new concepts, poor academic performance, unequal access to online education, symptoms of stress, lack of motivation (loss of interest in learning), and loss of lives, as some teachers died of the pandemic (Onyema et al., 2020).



Therefore, plausible ways of managing education during pandemics as highlighted by the study are blended learning, considering remote/distance education, online learning through provision of free internet facilities to accommodate the less privileged, closing digital divide gap, providing for ICT infrastructure, transforming the whole educational system according to holistic and sustainable 21st century technologies. To craft strategic policies with the inclusion of all education stakeholders for successful implementation, stakeholder participation was cited as key by the respondents, as also suggested by Onyema et al, (2020).

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The investigation concludes that the Covid-19 pandemic has negative effects on education management at Hallingbury Primary School. Basing on data collected, the investigator highlighted some recommendations Researcher thinks may be applied by Hallingbury Primary School so that pandemics may not have negative effects on education management, so that goal number four of the SDGs may be realized successfully for the betterment of the nation.

The investigation unpacked that the education was managed through online education though with limited resources during induced school closure, engaging in a two or three day per week system, following WHO guidelines by practicing social distancing, masking up, temperature checks, regular hand washing and sanitizing.

The education management practices are not adequate at Hallingbury Primary School as indicated by the questionnaires, where most respondents who completed reveal that the two or three day per week system is not enough for pupils to grasp new concepts. They also cited inadequate internet facilities to facilitate continuity of education through online education during the peak of the pandemic. The other reason for inadequate education management practices is that the authorities are facing financial challenges in terms of complimenting the parent ministry supplies of PPEs, and lack of inadequate infrastructure to cater for classroom divisions meant to contain the pandemic spread.

Effects of Covid-19 pandemic on education management at the school were cited as reduced face to face learning, less learning time, induced school closure, unequal opportunities to leaning, unequal access to internet facilities and online lessons, imposed parental/guardian

involvement in online learning, symptoms of stress and poor academic achievement as shown by the grade seven results for the past three consecutive years on the graph in the succeeding paragraphs.

Most participants' answers were indicating distance education, online learning, equity and equality in resource distribution, inviting private organisations to participate in the facilitation of online learning through provision of free internet to cater for the less privileged, provide adequate infrastructure, crafting strategic 21st century holistic and sustainable policies, including stakeholders in policy making processes, Hallingbury Primary School stakeholders portrayed a high literacy level, this may be an advantage to the responsible authorities to make use of different platforms through ICTs to educate them on how to manage education during pandemics or any other matters that may disrupt education.

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