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Research Question:

**CRITICALLY ANALYSE THE MEASURES PUT IN PLACE IN
MALAYSIA TO HELP BUSINESSES DURING COVID
PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY OF PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOLS**

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Due Date: May 2021
Word Count: -

**Dissertation submitted as part of the requirements for the award
BA (Hons) Business Management
2021**

Covid Pandemic:**Declaration**

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BA.

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This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged in the Reference Section.

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Abstract:

What, why, how. Main findings,

Table of contents:

Declaration	
Aknowledgements	
Abstract	
List of figures	
List of tables	
Abbreviations	

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	I
1.1 Introduction :	I
1.2 Background rationale :	II
1.3 Aims and objectives :	IV
1.3.1 Aim: :	IV
1.3.2 Objectives: :	IV
1.4 Research structure :	V
1.5 Conclusion :	V

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.0 Literature Review	
2.1 Introduction	
2:2 Government regulation	
2:3 Corporate Social Responsibility	
2.3.1 CSR theories	
2.3.2. Triple bottom line	
2.3.3. Stakeholder theory	
2:4. Changes to Educational Business Models	
2.5 Employee Ethics - Employee code of conduct	
2.6 Conclusion	

List of Figures:

-

List of Tables:**Abbreviations:**

- SME's - Small and medium-sized enterprises
- CMCO Conditional Movement Control Order
- DOS Department of Statistics
- FMM Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers
- FMT Free Malaysia Today
- GDP Gross domestic product
- MCO Movement Control Order
- MDEC Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation
- MEF Malaysian Employers Federation
- MITI Ministry of International Trade and Industry
- MOHR Ministry of Human Resources
- CSR - Corporate social responsibility
- MRC Migrant Worker Resource Centre
- MTUC Malaysian Trades Union Congress
- Malaysian qualification agency (mqa)

Chapter 1 - Introduction:

1:1

The purpose of this body of work is to examine in detail the impact that the Covid 19 Pandemic has caused to International schools within the South East Asian country of Malaysia. Evaluating the effects the virus has caused to the schools business models, progress and profits, with particular reference to the effectiveness of the methods put in place.

This chapter aims to provide a background and a rationale for the study. The chapter will explain the aim and objectives of this research, along with its description, structure and points backed by previous research.

1.1 Background

Malaysia is a diverse and multicultural country filled with many opportunities for business due to its thriving tourist economy and magnitude of attractions, such as the famous twin towers and idealistic holiday locations. *'Architectural Tourism: Building for Urban Travel Destinations.'* This study seeks to analyse how private International schools in Malaysia have been impacted by the effects of the 2020-2021 Pandemic. The effects will be examined and explained within this body of work, the study will evaluate the actions taken by different international schools in adapting their business models to suit this new environment. As well as ...

Previous research shows

For example; 'Lisa Eadicicco an official Business Insider reporter,' wrote an article detailing

Eadicicco (2019) argued, found, stated what

Chapter 2:

Literature review

2:0

The purpose of this chapter within the dissertation is to review the available literature concerning the impact of Covid 19 on International Schools within Malaysia. It may seem that a paucity of information would be recorded on this topic due to the fact that it is an ongoing crisis, however due to the vast amount of technology available to us in this century and the speed in which it can be made accessible, there is in fact an abundance of relevant supporting primary and secondary research that has been found on the topic area. Although, there is very little data on what the most effective forms of Covid 19 protections that International schools should be required to implement, that best suits their business models, and has the least impact on profits; which is what this piece of work aims to cover.

The literature review will produce the first research objective of the dissertation.

‘CRITICALLY ANALYSE THE MEASURES PUT IN PLACE IN MALAYSIA TO HELP BUSINESSES DURING COVID PANDEMIC’

The premise of this dissertation is to conduct an extant literature review examining the changes to private International schools business models when adapting to the new Covid 19 Pandemic restrictions.

To meet the objectives of this dissertation this chapter will make use of academic journals, government publications, relevant textbooks, relevant websites, professional bodies of research, books and newspaper articles.

Literature within this chapter will also be used to enable and assist the researcher in the design of primary research and methodology for collecting data within chapter three.

The literature review below consists of sources found on Google Scholar and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David’s (UWTSD) online library. These sources include academic journals and prior primary research in the topic area.

2.1

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review will be to identify the effects that Covid 19 has had on private international schools within Malaysia, by examining the adjustments of the schools business models in adaptation to schooling during a Pandemic. With close reference to the schools rationales, self regulation and professional codes of ethics when implementing new covid based protections and rulings.

This literature review will detail different International schools business strategies in coping with the Covid 19 Pandemic, as well as gauging a scope of the scale that this

Pandemic has changed the way International schools deliver their content. In order to develop on existing knowledge, we first need to identify the current knowledge on the topic and evaluate it to find any gaps in the current handling of the situation. Lastly, the literature review seeks to evaluate the limitations of current research and identify any gaps within the literature, in order to add to the body of knowledge on the subject.

2.2 Government Regulation

The purpose of regulation is for governments to enforce rules and to manage the behaviour of businesses in the domestic market. ([L'etang, 1992](#)). The Covid 19 Pandemic has posed significant challenges to all primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors across the world. The Covid outbreak that started in Dec 2019 in Wuhan China '[Business insider](#) - *The coronavirus probably started spreading in Wuhan far earlier than Chinese authorities reported,*' has impacted businesses of all sizes and industries worldwide, of which the education sector is not exempt.

In Jan 2020 the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) declared the Covid 19 outbreak as a global pandemic. '*World Health Organisation - WHO Director-General's at the media briefing on COVID-19 stated: "In the past two weeks, the number of cases of COVID-19 outside China has increased 13-fold, and the number of affected countries has tripled."*' The virus was gaining traction rapidly, making Governments and businesses around the world take action to slow the spread of the contagion in order to protect people and the health services. ([Official Portal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia](#))

The virus was confirmed to have reached Malaysia at the end of January 2020 when it was detected on travellers coming from China and arriving in the state of Johor via Singapore. '*COVID-19 Pandemic in Malaysia - From [Wikipedia](#), the free encyclopedia.*' With rising concerns over public health and fear of overbearing the health system, the Malaysian Government took action by initiating a 'Movement Control Order' for the whole of Malaysia in March 2020. '[GOV.UK](#) Foreign travel advice Malaysia.'

The movement control order ([MCO](#)) is a cordon sanitaire implemented as a preventive measure by the Malaysia Government with the aims of attempting to restrict travel and therefore control the spreading of the virus. A cordon sanitaire is usually set around either an epidemic or outbreak of infectious disease, along the border of two nations. Once this has been established, people from the affected area are no longer allowed legally to leave or enter the said zone. '*The free [encyclopedia](#).*' However it is important to note that the nature of this government regulation is one of imperative regulation opposed to the usual soft regulation. Imperative regulation refers to; laws, formal or informal rules, acts, policies, concepts and strategies that can impact the behaviour of businesses. (*Crane & Matten, 2016 [Corporations and Citizenship: Business, Responsibility and Society](#)*) This means businesses in the domestic market are required to comply or face legal punishment. This is unusual as governments do not usually interfere with private business activities. However, when a large event such as a Pandemic takes place globally, the response has to be more

severe. ([WHO](#)) This leaves schools in a challenging position as they attempt to educate their pupils to a high standard with less time and in a more challenging environment that is not ideal for learning. ([Prime Minister's Office of Malaysia Official Website](#))

The Malaysia government called this action the MCO and felt that it was an appropriate response to the rising domestic cases and increasing pressure on the Malaysian health care system. Throughout Malaysian International schools have had to alter their campuses and teaching methods to suit these new regulations. ([Department of Foreign Affairs](#))

Despite the occurrence of the Pandemic, students still need to be educated to the expected level or above in order to be able to have the right qualification and compete fairly when they leave education and go into work. (*Psychological Impact of COVID-19 and Lockdown among [University Students in Malaysia](#): Implications and Policy Recommendations*) Despite the Malaysian Government having relaxed restrictions by 4th May 2020, this did not apply for the educational sector, as schools can act as a hub for contagion of the virus. ([Research Gate](#)) In response to this and the expectation for schools to move to online learning, the Malaysian Ministry of Education has introduced initiatives to assist schools in the transition from face to face to online teaching under the ([Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025](#)), which we will discuss further in section 2.4.

Most government linked organisations in Malaysia were set up with the aim of providing education to low income families. ([GOV.MY](#)) UniKL is an example of this, it is an educational institution established in Malaysia to introduce chances for students from rural areas to pursue higher education. (*[Understanding Education Difficulty During COVID-19 Lockdown: Reports on Malaysian University Students' Experience](#)*.) The Malaysian government is aware that these new restrictions are damaging the health of education in their nation and have thus set out some initiative to ease the completion of this year for certain schools and subjects. (*Malaysian qualification agency* ([MQA](#)) For example; case studies were introduced to replace face-to-face field practice that would no longer be possible due to the MCO. ([Gov.MY - Getting Formal Education](#)) Students are required to be in weekly contact with their lectures / teachers to ensure they are still engaging with the online work that should be frequently set. (*[Students during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia](#)*) However while some educators and students now show a high enthusiasm for online learning tools, there are concerns over how it affects the quality of learning. (*[MQA - Malaysian qualification agency](#)*) Face to face teaching is much more informative and beneficial to the student, meaning students who are at home are less likely to work hard and engage with material, resulting in a likelihood to fall short of their expected grades if this trend continues. (*[Burgess & Sievertsen](#)*) Government regulation is making educational institutions jobs increasingly harder, however with a global Pandemic afoot, schools will simply have to adapt and overcome these challenges to

continue to provide high quality education to their students. ([Secondary Private Schools MY](#))

2.3 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility has a copious amount of definitions, however one of the first was in (1950) by [Bowen](#) who recognised CSR as lines of philanthropic actions, which abide by the values of society. CSR is a widely taught concept now, however during the 50s and 60s philanthropy or 'community service' / 'employee welfare' were the terms used to categorise CSR activities. *Bowen (1953)* claimed that as businesses grow and 'go global,' so does their use and impact on the planet's resources (*Blindheim and Langhelle, 2010*). In essence, CSR is a form of self-regulation, by businesses, to evaluate their contribution to their stakeholders. The three main concepts of corporate social responsibility are; environmental, social and economic (*Elkington, 2004; Holmes & Watts, 2000*).

CSR is not officially legislated, however it is seen as demonstrating to your stakeholders that your business / International School takes an interest in wider social issues, rather than being solely focused on profit maximisation. ([Research Gate Filho et al. 2010](#)). CSR promotes sustainability through the development of society's environmental and cultural resources for the benefit of future generations.

The advantage of having solid corporate social responsibilities is that it develops strong brand images for institutions such as International schools. ([Research gate Building A Corporate Socially Responsible Brand: An Investigation Of Issue Complexity January 2005 Authors: Michael Polonsky - Deakin University](#)) During the adaptation of this business like approach, International Schools (across the world as well as in Malaysia,) have realized the opportunity to create a true competitive advantage through the formation of a positive social reputation using CSR. (*Smith 2007, Porter and Kramer 2006*). [AIMS](#) is a: 'non-profit membership organisation, dedicated to the advancement of international education in Malaysia, via the provision of services to its member schools.' Being a part of AIMS in South East Asia is an example of the benefits your institution can receive from being a part of the community and establishing good corporate social responsibility. AIMS opens a channel of communication for 'discussing and/or presenting matters to the Ministry of Education and/or State Education Offices.' The importance of corporate image, corporate identity and corporate reputation is that it adds value to your school by making it publicly recognised as a more conscious body of an organisation, opposed to those who do not use CSR to their advantage. ([e-COVID19](#))

In response to this competitive corporate environment, many International schools in Malaysia have had to adopt a more business like approach in order to compete. ([Harvard Business Review - Strategies That Fit Emerging Markets](#))

As it is not possible to stop globalisation, International education institutions will need to ensure their CSR policies are competitive by making them more adapted to new economic realities ([Research gate](#) - Weymans 2010).

2.3

CSR Theories;

2.3.1.

Legitimacy theory:

Legitimacy theory analyses a businesses values against the expectations of society. [Suchman](#) (1995, p. 574) considers that "*Legitimacy theory is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions*". International schools objectives will have to be in line with and suit what the external stakeholders; such as parents, teachers and students, consider to be applicable and appropriate for the school to aim to achieve. ([Business Insider](#)) Legitimacy theory is achieved when a business's values correspond with the social system of norms, values and beliefs set by their stake and shareholders. ([Bhattacharyya](#) 2016)

2.3.2:

Triple Bottom Line

When discussing Corporate Social Responsibility, the triple bottom line is a key related topic for businesses to review. [John Elkington](#) (1994) created this term as a way to help share the CSR agenda. Elkington noticed that the triple bottom line helped encourage businesses to think beyond narrow measures of performance and profit. In Elkington's book; '[Sustainabilities Accountant](#)' he states that there are three key pillars to enable a business to be sustainable; social, environmental and economic. Each of these three areas help to give a more balanced approach to measuring performance over time. ([Tutor2u](#)) Sometimes these terms are also referred to as; people, planet and profit. (Elkington 1994 + '[Three pillars of sustainability: in search of conceptual origins](#)

[Ben Purvis](#)) International schools will see great benefits from being conscious of and using these concepts, as they are institutions that are expected to be acutely community focused and furthermore, it will also boost public persona if the school is not interitely profit orientated as it demonstrates an interconnection between business and society.

2.3.3

Stakeholder Theory

A large area in Corporate Social Responsibility is Freeman and Friedman's Stakeholder theory. Stakeholder theory is a capitalistic view that highlights the interconnections between business and all those that have a stake in the organisation, such as employees, investors and local communities. [Freeman 2013](#) states that a company's stakeholders are "those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist." Freemans view is that the corporate environment is an ecosystem of related groups, of which each stakeholder must be considered

and satisfied in order to uphold the company's brand image and keep the business healthy and successful in the long term.

This view is opposed by economist [Milton Friedman](#) who theorised that the only stakeholders a company should care about are its shareholders and creating profit maximisation. This is now known as the shareholder model of business.

([Shareholders and Social Responsibility](#) - Brian P. Schaefer - *Journal of Business Ethics*.) Friedman makes a clear distinction between government and business, suggesting that society is the government's responsibility and businesses should not play any political roles.

2.4

Changes to Educational business models:

In response to the 2020 Covid 19 Pandemic, educational institutions have had to work with the government to adapt their methods of teaching as well as make alterations to their business models to be inline with the current global state. ([Sage Journals](#)) Examples of these changes would be; isolation measures, full time online teaching, lack of resources available, campus closure and travel restrictions.

([Rethinking Education in the New Normal Post-COVID-19 Era: A Curriculum Studies Perspective](#))

The Malaysian Ministry of Education has introduced initiatives to assist schools in the move to online teaching under the [Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025](#), University of Malaya. Within the document the Ministry of education in Malaysia states: “*disruptive technologies such as advanced robotics, the Internet of Things, and the automation of knowledge work are expected to dramatically reshape the business and social landscape from what it is today. Preparing Malaysian youth to thrive in this complex and ever-changing future will require an equally fundamental transformation of how the higher education system and higher learning institutions (HLIs) currently operate.*” With the mention of terms such as ‘The Internet of small things’ and ‘automation of knowledge,’ the ministry of education in Malaysia here is clearly stating that the best method for schools to take it to move to online education. ([Malaysia Education Blueprint](#)) The two new methods of teaching that are the most popular in the current climate are; synchronous online learning and asynchronous online learning; synchronous learning refers to when students and teachers are in the same place at the same time, examples include online in-person classes and live online meetings. Whereas asynchronous online learning is when lecturers and students interact before or after the online class through recordings or thread discussion and emails. ([The future of business education: A commentary in the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic.](#)) The use of these methods has been recommended by the [Ministry of education Malaysia](#) as the correct steps to take. The advantages of these methods is that students have the freedom to connect with their teachers from wherever they are isolating. ([Singh and Thurman, 2019](#)) However, this generates new challenges for educational institutions to face, such as whether or not their students are engaging with the set work or not. This is very difficult to measure when teachers and students are isolating from home.

The issue with online learning is that it requires students' commitment and discipline while they are at home, which is especially difficult for vulnerable students who need face to face interaction for them to strengthen their social skills and understand the set workload. ([Journal - UNESCO IESALC, 2020](#)) Educational institutions are having to adapt their models of operation to suit this new teaching environment. They will need to prep teachers to work without the advantages of the schools physical materials and facilities. ([e-Covid19 - GOV.MY](#)) As well as ensure all work is being completed to the expected standards, whilst simultaneously abiding by government guidelines. ([Education and the COVID-19 pandemic - Sir John Daniel](#)) Furthermore, arrangements for safeguarding the school, division of work between departments, preparation for return of students, updates on new learning technologies and establishing mechanisms for teachers to remain in contact collectively for mutual support will all need to be established rapidly. This poses a huge challenge for any institution, with technological changes which were intended to occur over months or years implemented in a matter of weeks / days. ([Malaysian University Undergraduates' Perceptions towards Comprehensive Online Instructions amidst COVID-19.](#))

2.5

Conclusion:

Upon review of the existing literature on this topic; including official government publications and advanced academic studies, it is evident that there is a substantial amount of research on regulation, corporate social responsibility in education, ethics and the current methods in which different international schools in Malaysia are adapting to the Pandemic.

As stated in the introduction, 2.1, the main purpose of this literature review was to;

'Review the available literature concerning the impact of Covid 19 on International Schools within Malaysia.'

This chapter has now achieved purpose one and in part objective two;

'What are the most effective forms of Covid 19 protections that private International schools in Malaysia should be required to implement that best suits their business models.'

Upon evaluation of my literature review I have found many studies that focus on how International schools in Malaysia have reacted to government regulation and off campus teaching, however there is little data on how the Pandemic has disrupted International schools business models due to the changes in how they are now required to teach and deliver their content. I would also delve deeper into how

private international schools in Malaysia make money and how this has been affected by the Covid Pandemic.

Furthermore, it was also noticed that a paucity of information was available on the measures needed to be implemented for the returning of students and teachers to campus post lockdown, as well as what this is likely to cost (monetarily and non monetarily) to these institutions.

Official publications such as; ([IPTPulang](#)), [the COVID-19 Guidelines and Advice for Malaysian International Students](#) and [Malaysian Education BluePrint Universiti Malaya](#), will create a clear idea of what forms of regulation and measures of protections International schools will need to implement to protect those returning to their sites from contagion.

The next chapter in this dissertation aims to identify the most suitable methodology that will be used to perform primary research to highlight any gaps that have been recognised in the literature review.

Written by me to be added somewhere:

Issues of CSR have always been a large part of most educational institutions missions. It is very common for International education institutions to compete amongst each other, thus many higher education institutions are now using this CSR approach as part of their competitive strategy. (*Corporate Social Responsibility in Higher Education Institutions: Istanbul Bilgi University Case*) Hence by the formation of these strategies, International education institutions in Malaysia have had to compete amongst one another to attract the most high achieving students and academic staff. (*Melewar and Akei 2005*). With 171 International schools in Malaysia, competition is fierce. (*International School database*)

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