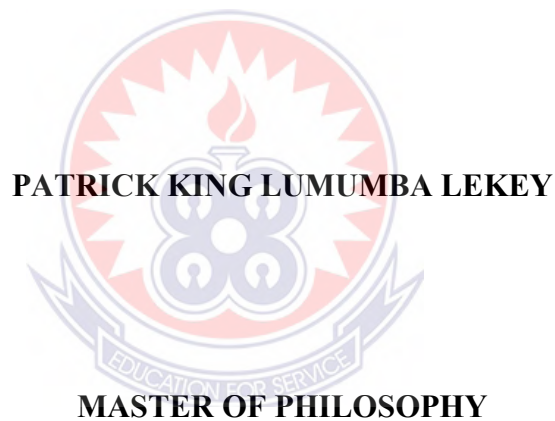


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF PRIVATE BASIC SCHOOL
HEADTEACHERS IN EDUCATIONAL EMERGENCIES IN THE ERA OF
COVID-19 IN THE GOMOA EAST DISTRICT**



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**PATRICK KING LUMUMBA LEKEY
(202122641)**



**A thesis in the Department of Educational Administration and Management,
School of Education and Life-Long Learning, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Educational Administration and Management)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

JUNE, 2024

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Patrick King Lumumba Lekey, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Prof. Hinneh Kusi (Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents who led my first steps to school. Further, I dedicate this work to my wife Mrs. Sarah Egyimah Lekey who accepted the hard work of supporting the family's responsibilities during my studies. Last but not least, to my children Dorothy Kukua Wireko, Gladys Afi Lekey, Erin Dzifa Lekey, Mercy Marigold Kafui Lekey during my absence. May God bless you all.



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Finally, I express my gratitude to all my course mates at the University of Winneba, Department of Educational Administration and Management for their support and encouragement. I acknowledge the good relationships we had on campus.

I really say thanks to all of you.

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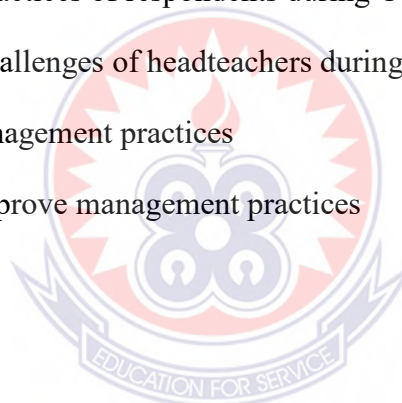
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

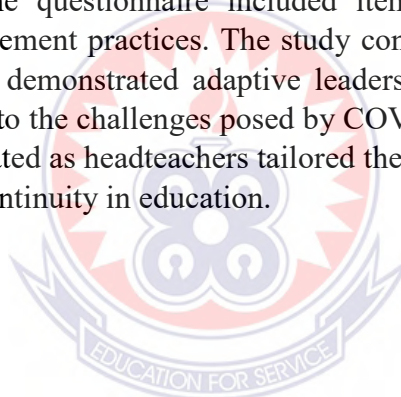
CAMFED:	Campaign for Female Education
CENDLOS:	Centre for National Distance Learning and Open Schooling
CO ₂ :	Carbon dioxide
Covid:	Corona virus
EMIS:	Education Management Information System
FCUBE:	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
GEDA:	Gomoa East District Assembly
GEDED-EMIS:	Gomoa East District Education Directorate
GES:	Ghana Education Service
GLRRP:	Ghana Learning Radio and Reading Programme
GLTV:	Ghana Learning Television
GNAPS:	Ghana National Association of Private Schools
GoG:	Government of Ghana
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
JHS:	Junior High School
KG:	Kindergarten
MDG:	Millenium Development Goal
MMD:	Metropolitan/ Municipal District
MMDEOC:	Metropolitan, Municipal, District Education Oversight Committee
MoE:	Ministry of Education
MoH:	Ministry of Health
OECD:	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
PPE:	Personal Protective Equipment

PTA:	Parent Teacher Association
SHS:	Senior High School
SHTS:	Senior High Technical School
SISO:	School Improvement Support Officer
WAEC:	West African Examination Council
WASSCE:	West African Senior Certificate Examination
WHO:	World Health Organization



ABSTRACT

This study attempted examining the management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of covid-19 in the Gomoa East district. The research focused on management practices of private basic school headteachers during, and after Covid 19, challenges and strategies adopted in improving the management practices of private basic headteachers in the Covid 19 era. The study employed the Contingency Theory of Leadership, which posits that effective leadership depends on the fit between the leader's style and the situational context. This theory is particularly relevant in the COVID-19 era, where headteachers had to adapt their management practices to navigate the disruptions caused by the pandemic. A positivist paradigm underpins this research, emphasizing objectivity and the quantification of data to derive conclusions. The research approach was quantitative, utilizing a descriptive design to systematically describe the management practices of headteachers. The population for the study was 85 headteachers from private basic schools in the Gomoa East district. A sample size of 50 headteachers was selected using simple random sampling technique to ensure representativeness. A structured questionnaire was developed and administered to the headteachers. The questionnaire included items designed to assess various dimensions of management practices. The study concludes that headteachers in the Gomoa East District demonstrated adaptive leadership and effective management practices in response to the challenges posed by COVID-19. The contingency theory of leadership is validated as headteachers tailored their strategies to fit the situational demands, ensuring continuity in education.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Educational emergencies, as described by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), are periods when crises such as pandemics, conflicts, and disasters disrupt the right to safe, relevant, and continuous learning. According to INEE (2015), such emergencies encompass not only continuity of instruction but also psychosocial support, protection, and recovery measures that position education as both life-sustaining and life-saving.

These disruptions often lead to suspended schooling, limited access to learning environments, and weakened capacity to sustain normal educational routines. Increasingly, global educational stakeholders recognize that such emergencies not only deepen existing inequalities but also threaten long-term developmental progress.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been identified by UNESCO and the World Bank, UNESCO, and UNICEF (2021) as the most far-reaching educational emergency in modern history, affecting over 1.6 billion learners globally. UNESCO (2023) further stresses that this disruption was uneven, disproportionately affecting vulnerable learners and amplifying pre-existing inequalities due to unequal access to technology and household support systems.

In Ghana, the Ghana Education Service (GES, 2020) documented how schools were closed nationwide on 16 March 2020, prompting the Ministry of Education and its partners to develop a coordinated response plan that included remote learning, health protocols, and catch-up programmes. Global Partnership for Education (2020)

confirmed that these interventions were supported by international stakeholders to sustain education.

Later, Ghana Education Service and Ghana Health Service (2021) issued guidelines for safe reopening, reinforcing the EiE framework's emphasis on preparedness and recovery.

Private basic schools, however, faced distinct challenges. As highlighted by Ehwi (2021) & Okyere, Osei-Kyei, & Asuming (2024), private schools, which depend heavily on school fees, were disproportionately affected by prolonged closures, leading to financial strain and limited capacity to adopt remote learning. Mills (2023) adds that reopening was equally challenging, with headteachers navigating health risks, staff management, and resource shortages. Similarly, Addai, Asante, & Antwi (2025) argue that private schools were fiscally exposed, making the role of headteachers critical in sustaining both learning and financial viability.

Brion (2024) emphasizes that headteachers' leadership during the crisis was contingent and adaptive, requiring quick decision-making, staff motivation, and community engagement under conditions of uncertainty. In a related study, Poole et al. (2022) found that crisis leadership across Africa and Latin America was characterized by distributed leadership, relational trust, and creative use of both high- and low-tech solutions. These findings suggest that Ghanaian headteachers' ability to interpret national policies and mobilize resources was central to sustaining education in private basic schools.

From the perspective of INEE (2010/2015) and Sphere/INEE (2017), effective management in educational emergencies requires context analysis, community participation, and coordinated delivery of services.

In Ghana, this translated into headteachers ensuring safe school operations, remedial teaching, and family engagement strategies. Yet, as UNESCO and the World Bank et al. (2021) warn, significant learning losses and widened inequalities remain, making the management practices of headteachers critical in the recovery phase.

Therefore, this study investigates the management practices of private basic school headteachers in the Gomaa East District during the COVID-19 educational emergency. By drawing on the works of Ehwi (2021), Brion (2024), Mills (2023), Okyere et al. (2024), and Addai et al. (2025), the study foregrounds how headteachers adapted to crises by balancing health protocols, financial sustainability, and learning continuity. It situates their practices within the broader EiE framework and crisis-leadership literature to generate lessons for preparedness and resilience in future emergencies.

Basic schools play a pivotal role in laying academic foundations, and being especially sensitive to interruptions, such emergencies can drastically impede students' progress. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted this vulnerability starkly: schools, students, and educators had to pivot quickly to remote learning—a shift that laid bare digital inequalities and stark structural disparities (UNICEF, 2024; World Bank, 2022).

Emerging research underscores these impacts. In Ghana, Ansah & Tetteh (2025) report that headteachers in public basic schools adopted adaptive management

tactics ranging from reliance on visual teaching tools to enforcing COVID-19 health protocols and orchestrating collaborative provisions of PPE—to preserve educational delivery during the crisis. Similarly, Juvenile & Ehwi (2021) explore how private basic schools in Ghana confronted multiple challenges, including instructional disruption, fee recovery difficulties, staff salary issues, idle assets, and storage costs revealing the precarious situation of low-fee private institutions operating on slim margins.

The pandemic also severely eroded learning attainment. One study found that during a three-month school closure, foundational numeracy achievements dropped by approximately 66% of prior learning gains among Ghanaian students transitioning through Complementary Basic Education programmes. These setbacks disproportionately impacted vulnerable groups, notably rural and low-socioeconomic-status children, highlighting uneven access to support and resources.

In Ghana's broader systemic response, initiatives like the Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (GALOP), supported by the World Bank and other partners, promoted remote learning through TV, radio, online platforms, and printed materials. GALOP also assisted with safe school reopening, teacher training, and accelerated learning efforts to mitigate learning deficits (World Bank, 2020).

Against this backdrop, it is essential to understand how headteachers in private basic schools in the Gomoa East district managed educational emergencies during COVID-19. Their decisions, leadership strategies, and adaptive practices are central to safeguarding continuity and equity for foundational learners. This research illuminates those responses and highlights lessons for future emergency preparedness.

Emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic cast a long shadow on the emotional and mental wellbeing of both students and teachers. Uncertainty and disruption breed anxiety, and for young learners in basic schools, this turmoil can obstruct essential stages of emotional and social development. Teachers and headteachers, too, faced their own mental health challenges, as the rapid shift to remote learning, concerns over safety, and the unknown consequences of the crisis disrupted their sense of purpose and emotional resilience (Quansah et al., 2022).

Research in Ghana shows that teachers often felt unsafe teaching during the pandemic and suffered anxiety ranging from mild to extreme as they adapted to new teaching formats with limited support (Quansah et al., 2022) . Additional evidence from the Quality Preschool for Ghana project highlights how teachers in difficult environments without social support or facing household food insecurity reported increasing symptoms of anxiety and depression over the school year (Fentor et al., 2020).

Headteachers of private basic schools found themselves at the helm of unprecedented challenges: coordinating remote learning with limited internet access, safeguarding school assets, and keeping communication channels open with parents, students, and staff, all while navigating emotional stress and uncertainty.

The researcher conducting this study on private basic schools in the Gomoa East district of Ghana makes sense for several reasons because schools lay the academic and social groundwork for children and any disruption at this level risks long-term setbacks in learning and development. Again basic schools in the Gomoa East district are often under resourced and lack the infrastructure for emergencies and also some of the headteachers have limited or no formal training in crisis

management. Their ability to handle emergencies often depends on improvisation rather than structured preparation, which places students and school operations at risk.

This underscores why it's vital to study how headteachers in private basic schools responded to educational emergencies: their choices and leadership strategies offer critical insights into building resilient, equitable school systems capable of withstanding future crises and protecting the learners at the foundation of education.

A report by the Ghana Education Service (GES, 2021) underscored the profound effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, especially at the basic school level. According to the report, while some urban schools were able to transition to forms of online or blended learning, rural schools encountered significant barriers due to limited access to digital devices, weak internet connectivity, and inadequate teacher preparation for remote delivery. Consequently, students in rural and under-resourced communities suffered greater learning losses than their urban counterparts. The GES further highlighted the critical role of headteachers in mitigating these challenges. Those who proactively mobilized community resources, collaborated with local authorities, and maintained active communication with parents were better positioned to minimize disruptions and sustain learning continuity. This observation echoes more recent studies which emphasize school leaders' capacity to adapt and innovate under crisis conditions (Amponsah & Essuman, 2023; UNESCO, 2022).

The impact of educational emergencies can also be better understood through theoretical frameworks. Resilience Theory (Masten, 2014) argues that individuals and systems possess the capacity to adapt and even thrive amidst adversity. Applied

to schools, this perspective suggests that headteachers can foster resilience by cultivating adaptive management strategies such as flexible learning models and psychosocial support that ensure continuity of education despite disruptions.

Similarly, the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Theory (Wisner et al., 2012) stresses preparedness, prevention, and mitigation as essential components of emergency response. For headteachers in basic schools, DRR translates into policies and practices that reduce vulnerability, such as establishing access to alternative learning platforms, stockpiling essential resources, and building partnerships with community actors to cushion the impact of crises.

Finally, Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978) highlights the importance of visionary leadership during periods of uncertainty. Headteachers who demonstrate transformational qualities by inspiring teachers, motivating students, and articulating a clear vision for continuity are more likely to sustain morale and commitment within their schools. Recent scholarship supports this claim, showing that transformational leadership enhances teachers' professional resilience and students' engagement during the pandemic (Quansah et al., 2022; Day et al., 2021).

Taken together, these perspectives highlight that the ability of basic school headteachers to navigate educational emergencies depends not only on available resources but also on their capacity to apply adaptive strategies, foster resilience, and inspire confidence within their school communities.

Educational emergencies manifest in diverse forms. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes can devastate school infrastructure, displace learners and teachers, and interrupt academic activities. In such situations,

temporary learning spaces often tents or makeshift classrooms are used until schools are rebuilt (UNESCO, 2022).

Similarly, armed conflicts have profound consequences for education. In conflict-affected regions, schools may become unsafe due to militarization or violence, forcing prolonged closures and displacement of children and educators (Save the Children, 2021). Health crises also disrupt educational continuity. The Ebola epidemic, recurring influenza outbreaks, and more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic, are stark reminders of how public health emergencies can compel governments to close schools to curb the spread of disease (World Bank, 2022).

The outbreak of COVID-19 in late 2019 caused unparalleled disruption across global sectors, with education among the hardest hit. Basic schools, in particular, faced unprecedented challenges as they struggled to balance instructional continuity with the safety of students and staff. In Ghana, after the first cases were reported, the Government of Ghana (GoG) introduced a partial lockdown and directed the closure of all schools basic, secondary and tertiary effective March 16, 2020. This policy decision affected nearly 9.2 million learners from kindergarten to senior high school, 0.5 million tertiary students, and about 450,000 teachers across public and private institutions (Daily Graphic, June 2020).

To address the crisis, the government rolled out strategic interventions designed to:

1. Sustain learning during the closure period
2. Prepare the education system for safe reopening; and
3. Build resilience against future disruptions.

These measures acknowledged that prolonged school closures pose severe risks, including deepened learning losses and increased dropout rates. Evidence suggests

that vulnerable learners particularly girls were exposed to heightened risks of teenage pregnancy, early marriage, sexual exploitation, and abuse. Learners with disabilities and those from rural or low-income households were disproportionately affected due to limited access to remote learning opportunities (UNICEF, 2021).

In January 2021, the GoG launched the Back to School Campaign, an initiative to guide school reopening and recovery. Its priorities included engaging local communities in reopening plans, allocating resources to underserved areas, ensuring children's safe return to school, creating healthier school environments, and tackling learning loss through accelerated and remedial programs. These objectives were aligned with global frameworks on "building back better" in education after crises (Babalola & Ayeni, 2020).

Earlier, in April 2020, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) had unveiled the COVID-19 Coordinated Education Response Plan. This framework sought to mitigate both immediate and longer-term effects of the pandemic. The initial phase focused on distance learning initiatives, psychosocial support, prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), improved communication, and coordinated action among stakeholders. The subsequent recovery phase emphasized back-to-school campaigns, fumigation of schools, enhanced hygiene and safety protocols, catch-up programs, and efforts to strengthen systemic resilience against future emergencies. Together, these measures demonstrated Ghana's attempt not only to cushion the immediate shock of the pandemic but also to build a more robust and adaptive education system.

In response to the pandemic, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) to mitigate learning loss, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) quickly rolled out mechanisms for distance learning and provided ongoing professional support to teachers. In preparation for the safe reopening of schools, the MoE and GES collaborated with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ghana Health Service (GHS) to develop communication strategies and operational plans focused on hygiene, sanitation, and safety protocols. Following a series of risk assessments, the Government of Ghana announced the resumption of in-person teaching and learning on January 18, 2021, under strict adherence to health guidelines (Agyemang, 2021; UNICEF, 2021).

To guide this reopening, the government introduced protocols that regional and district directors of education, together with headteachers, were mandated to implement. These included the “Sick Stay Home” policy, where students, teachers, and staff exhibiting symptoms were required to remain at home. Schools were also instructed to promote enhanced hygiene practices such as frequent handwashing with soap, the use of alcohol-based sanitizers, and the regular disinfection of high-contact surfaces. The wearing of face masks was made compulsory for all, while social distancing measures were enforced during assemblies, worship sessions, and dining activities. Although these measures were framed at the national level, their practical execution depended largely on school headteachers and their management teams, reflecting the centrality of leadership in navigating education through the pandemic.

Education remains one of the most significant pillars of socio-economic and political development, serving as the foundation of human resource development. Recognizing this, Ghana has aligned with international frameworks such as the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4, which emphasizes quality education for all. This commitment has led to the expansion of basic schools across the country, many of which are overseen by teachers serving as headteachers. The concept of headship and leadership has received considerable scholarly attention in recent decades, particularly as globalization and technological advancements have added layers of complexity to leadership roles. School heads are widely acknowledged as key drivers of school effectiveness, performing multiple roles simultaneously to uphold educational quality and standards (Bush, 2011).

Management, in its broadest sense, involves decision-making about institutional goals and strategies for achieving them. While managerial approaches may differ across organizations, fundamental functions such as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, motivating, communicating, and controlling are common across all institutions (Koontz & Weihrich, 2015). Within Ghana's educational system, the MoE assumes responsibility for policy formulation and financial control, while the GES implements pre-tertiary policies through regional, municipal, and district directorates. Schools, both public and private, are thus expected to operate effectively under this framework.

Efforts to define the headteacher's role in Ghana date back to the mid-1990s when the MoE and GES introduced a handbook designed to guide and support school heads (Oduro et al., 2003). Despite this initiative, the handbook failed to adequately equip headteachers with the leadership and managerial skills needed for their positions.

The Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) Act of 1992 further emphasized efficiency in school management, yet leadership preparation for

headteachers remained minimal. Typically, teachers attain the rank of Principal Superintendent before appointment as headteachers, a promotion largely based on years of teaching experience rather than specialized training in leadership (Oduro, 2020). This practice reflects the long-standing assumption that classroom experience alone sufficiently prepares one for effective school leadership (Amuzu-Kpeglo, 1990).

Globally, literature has consistently highlighted the central role of school leadership. The U.S. Senate Committee Report on Equal Educational Opportunity (1973) identified the principal as the most influential person within a school. Research since then has reinforced this, emphasizing how leadership shapes school climate—a factor defined by Green (2010) as the atmosphere and ethos of the school, and by Fullan (2002) as the lived experiences of norms, values, relationships, and organizational structures within the school environment.

The scope of school leadership responsibilities has expanded considerably in the 21st century, encompassing curriculum oversight, teacher supervision, evaluation, stakeholder engagement, discipline management, and long-term planning for resources (Clifford et al., 2012; Green, 2010). Increasingly, school leaders are held accountable under conditions of financial constraints, rising expectations, and external pressures, making their role both demanding and pivotal.

Within this context, this study examines the management practices of private basic school headteachers in Gomoa East District during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gomoa East, a district in Ghana's Central Region, is home to numerous private schools that cater to both rural and urban populations. Like elsewhere, the pandemic disrupted teaching and learning, forcing headteachers to adopt new management

practices to cope with financial uncertainties, health protocols, and remote learning challenges.

The research therefore seeks to:

1. Assess the management practices adopted by private basic school headteachers in Gomoe East during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Explore the challenges these headteachers faced in sustaining operations.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies in maintaining learning continuity and ensuring the safety of staff and students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Ghana, many private basic school headteachers face management challenges due to limited administrative and leadership training (GES, 2020). The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic magnified these challenges, exposing gaps in preparedness, institutional support, and crisis-specific leadership skills. UNESCO (2020) observed that school leaders in low-resource environments often struggled with crisis decision-making, further undermining their capacity to maintain effective operations.

While effective school management is vital for educational quality, headteachers are burdened with competing responsibilities such as instructional leadership, staff supervision, and financial management, often under conditions of scarce resources (Bush, 2011). Similar challenges have been documented in countries like Kenya, South Africa, and India, where school leaders contend with limited funding, weak professional development structures, and inadequate infrastructure (Oduro & MacBeath, 2017).

For private schools in particular, financial instability is a pressing concern, as they rely heavily on tuition fees. The pandemic severely disrupted fee collection, threatening the sustainability of many schools (Boateng, 2022). Moreover, headteachers in these institutions face additional challenges such as high teacher turnover and limited government support, as public institutions often receive priority in resource allocation (Brion, 2020; Abeka, 2022).

In Gomoa East, headteachers of private basic schools encountered unprecedented difficulties during COVID-19. Prolonged closures forced schools to adopt remote learning strategies with limited technological resources, while reduced enrolment and unpaid fees exacerbated financial strains. The absence of tailored government support left headteachers with difficult decisions regarding staffing, resource allocation, and safety management.

Despite their pivotal role in ensuring educational continuity during crises, little scholarly attention has been given to private basic schools, particularly in districts like Gomoa East. Existing studies (e.g., Elizabeth, 2020; Tawiah, 2012) have focused on administrative challenges or quality management in private schools but have not explored leadership during emergencies. As a result, practical strategies employed by headteachers during COVID-19 remain undocumented, leaving a critical gap in literature.

This study addresses that gap by examining how private basic school headteachers in Gomoa East navigated the COVID-19 crisis. It sheds light on the management strategies they adopted, the challenges they faced, and the effectiveness of their approaches in safeguarding education and wellbeing during unprecedented times. Findings from this study will provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators,

and stakeholders, enabling the development of targeted support mechanisms to strengthen the resilience of schools in future emergencies.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of Covid-19 in the Gomoe East district. The study also seeks to identify the challenges encountered, assessing the support systems available and evaluating the strategies implemented to mitigate the impact of Covid-19.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was directed by these objectives;

1. To investigate the management practices of private basic school headteachers during educational emergencies.
2. To identify the management challenges of private basic school headteachers during educational emergencies.
3. To examine the support provided to the headteachers to manage their school during educational emergencies.
4. To explore the strategies that can be adopted to improve the management practices of private basic school headteachers after educational emergencies.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study;

1. What are the management challenges of private basic school headteachers during educational emergencies?
2. What are the management challenges of private basic school headteachers during educational emergencies?

3. What are the supports provided to the headteachers to manage their school during educational emergencies?
4. What are the strategies that can be adopted to improve the management practices of private basic school headteachers after educational emergencies?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Understanding the management practices of private basic school headteachers during the Covid-19 era holds significant implications for educational policy development and implementation.

By identifying the challenges faced by headteachers and the strategies employed to mitigate them, policymakers can tailor policies and guidelines to better support schools in similar contexts during future crises and the study being the first to be conducted in the study area and for the subject matter would help the Gomoe East district during their orientation of newly appointed headteachers.

This research can inform the development of proactive measures to enhance the resilience of educational institutions and ensure the continuity of learning for all students, especially those in underserved communities.

The findings of this study can shed light on the differential impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on private basic schools in the Gomoe East District by examining the management practices of headteachers, particularly in relation to resource allocation and support for vulnerable students.

This study can inform efforts to promote educational equity. Understanding how headteachers navigate challenges such as digital divide, access to remote learning

tools, and socio-economic disparities can contribute to the development of targeted interventions aimed at reducing educational inequalities.

This study can also inform professional development initiatives for school administrators, including training programmes and capacity-building workshops.

By documenting effective management strategies and highlighting areas for improvement, this study can provide valuable insights for the professional growth of headteachers in the Gomoa East district and beyond by equipping headteachers with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate crises effectively.

This study can enhance the overall quality of school leadership and management.

Finally, the findings of this study would likewise pave way for other interested educational researchers to replicate the problems on the ground in other academic institutions in the country.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted in the Gomoa East District Education, Potosin of Ghana Education Service.

The study would focus on the management practices of headteachers during the Covid-19 period on Teachers and Students. Headteachers in this study refer to individuals who have assumed a managerial position in the private schools in the Ghana Education Service.

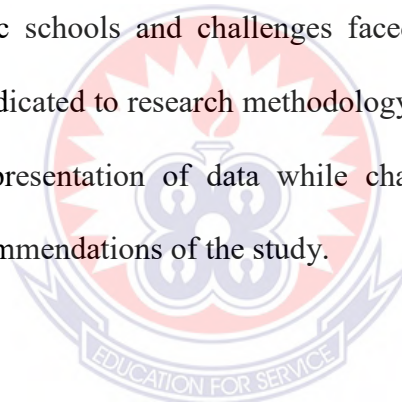
The lower primary pupils are excluded from this study since they were not supplied with Government Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). However, the Upper primary and Junior High Students who were supplied with the PPEs as a means so

they will follow the protocols strictly are included. Due to managerial and accessibility issues the researcher focused on headteachers.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study was organized under five (5) chapters. The first chapter (one) deals with the background to the study by focusing on issues related to the study. This chapter discussed the statement of the problem, objectives of the study as well as the research questions for the study. The chapter also looked at the significance of the study. The second chapter (two) reviewed literature for the study.

Leadership theories were reviewed in chapter two as well as roles of the headteachers of basic schools and challenges faced by leaders of these schools. Chapter three was dedicated to research methodology adopted for the study. Chapter four discussed the presentation of data while chapter five presented summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter has identified and reviewed themes of relevance to the study with reference to existing literature related to them.

This literature review aims to explore the management practices adopted by headteachers in private basic schools during the Covid-19 pandemic, the challenges they faced, the support they received, and the strategies for improving school management in the post-pandemic era.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to the global education system, disrupting traditional learning environments and forcing schools to rapidly adapt to new modalities of teaching and management. Basic school headteachers, as frontline managers, have played a crucial role in managing these changes.

The outline of the literature review would be as follows:

- i. Basic schools in Ghana
- ii. Private schools in Ghana
- iii. Covid-19
- iv. Theoretical underpinning
- v. Management practices in schools
- vi. Management challenges of schools during the Covid-19
- vii. Support for schools during Covid-19
- viii. Strategies for improving schools after the Covid-19
- ix. Summary of the literature review

2.1 Basic Education in Ghana

Basic education in Ghana operates under a 11 year schooling comprising two years of kindergarten, six years of primary, and three years of Junior High School (JHS) culminating in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) administered by WAEC. This structure emerged from the educational reforms of 2007, championed by the Ghana Education Service (GES).

The Ministry of Education (MoE) emphasizes that the core mission of basic education is to equip learners with foundational literacy and numeracy particularly in English and Mathematics paving the way for future educational and vocational development.

Ghana faces chronic shortages of school placements, especially in rapidly expanding urban areas, driving parents toward private basic schools. Though comprehensive impact studies remain limited, evidence suggests that parents often choose private schools for their perceived advantages: smaller class sizes, better student performance, and improved teacher attendance and accountability. Findings from the 2013 National Education Assessment reveal that in both Grades 3 and 6, more than 80% of private school students achieved minimum competency in Mathematics, while nearly half of public school learners failed to do so.

Private school enrollment has surged in recent years. By 2014, nearly a quarter (23%) of primary-level students and 16% of secondary-level students attended private institutions. Enrollment at the primary level rose from 7% in 2011 to 18% in 2018; similarly, secondary-level private enrollment climbed from 7% to 15%. In specific locales like the Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions, private schools

accounted for about 30% and 27% of primary student enrollment, respectively, whereas in the Northern Region, uptake was below 7%.

In-school staffing also differs markedly between sectors. In 2011, only 11% of private primary school teachers were formally trained compared with 63% in the public sector. Pupil-teacher ratios further reflect these disparities: 34:1 in public primaries versus 26:1 in private schools; and at the JHS level, 78% of public school teachers were trained, compared with just over 20% in private schools with pupil-teacher ratios of 17:1 public and 13:1 private.

Leadership, especially the role of headteachers play is crucial for enhancing school effectiveness. Across Ghana, research reveals that headteachers adopt diverse leadership styles: transformational, ethical, instructional, democratic, and even certain authoritative tendencies, emerging from the bureaucratic governance structures of GES, which funnel policy decisions centrally and cascade them downward through regional and district offices.

Transformational leadership in particular has been documented in several studies (Adarkwah & Zeyuan, 2020; Adu, 2016; Asare, 2017; Malakolunthu et al., 2014). These found that headteachers who provided inspirational motivation, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence fostered stronger teacher development, deeper community involvement, and higher student outcomes. Nonetheless, Adarkwah & Zeyuan (2020) discovered a negative association between transformational leadership and teacher motivation in some contexts suggesting that effectiveness of such leadership may be highly contextual.

Headteachers are also tasked with comprehensive school management, encompassing planning, resource allocation, organizing extra-curricular and curricular activities, budgeting, directing staff, and fostering partnerships with communities and parents. Effective planning serves as a blueprint for all functions, leading to a better learning outcomes, resource efficiency, and sustained school culture (Marzano, 2010; Ojo & Olaniyan, 2008; Mankoe, 2007). Strong school–community links, further, enrich educational delivery through resource support, diversified programmes, and locally rooted initiatives.

2.2 Private School in Ghana

Private schools in Ghana whether for profit or non-profit are established and managed by individuals, charitable organizations, or religious groups, and are funded through tuition fees, endowments, or grants. They are recognized as educational institutions existing independently of direct government operation, a definition formally articulated by the 2015 Report of the President’s Committee on Education Reforms. The legal foundation for establishing such institutions dates back to the Education Act of 1961, which remains central to the regulation of pre-tertiary private education in Ghana.

Ghana’s constitution further strengthens this foundation. Article 25(2) ensures that –every person shall have the right, at his expense, to establish and maintain a private school or schools at all levels,” provided they meet conditions stipulated by law. Modern regulation under the Pre-Tertiary Education Act, 2020, builds upon these constitutional rights mandating that private basic schools be duly incorporated, governed by structured boards, staffed by licensed professionals, and approved by the National Schools Inspectorate Authority and District Education Directorates.

Establishment protocols require clear demonstration of need and capacity, including suitable infrastructure, governance structures, and resource provision. A private school must operate under the supervision of Ghana Education Service bodies, submit annual reports, and remain open to inspections. Initial operations typically begin with provisional approval granted for up to one year after which full accreditation may follow upon meeting regulatory standards.

Over the decades, private schools have continued to fill gaps the government struggles to manage on its own. A 2007 estimate revealed that out of more than 42,000 educational institutions in Ghana, roughly 15,900 were privately owned including primary, Junior Secondary, and Senior Secondary schools. Although the 1992 constitution and subsequent Education Act of 2008 reaffirmed and expanded the operational scope of private schools, the state provides no direct financial support and they are instead subject to the same curriculum, calendar, and compliance standards expected of public schools.

The growth of private education has not been uniform. Urban areas, particularly cities and regional capitals, host the majority of private schools, while rural regions lag significantly behind. For example, in urban settings, private institutions account for approximately 20% of basic education enrolments, in contrast to only about 4% in rural areas. This imbalance is largely due to population density, higher income levels, and parental education in urban areas, which foster greater demand for private schooling.

Recent reports indicate that private basic school enrollment has surged dramatically by over 40% in the past decade making up roughly one-quarter of all basic school enrolments nationally. This proliferation is driven by perceptions of higher quality,

smaller class sizes, more consistent teacher supervision, and stronger parental engagement and this is in contrast to ongoing resource challenges in public schools.

Research continues to examine the source of performance gaps between private and public schools. A study using household-level data found that private school students outperform their public school counterparts in numeracy and literacy, with over 60% of the performance gap tied to observable factors like years of schooling, access to extra classes, religious affiliation, and urban residence. The residual gap is attributed to the inherent “private school effect”.

However, private schools are not without challenges. In Kumasi, private schools significantly outnumber public counterparts and enroll more pupils, yet grapple with underfunding, insufficient infrastructure, and dependence on untrained teachers. This study recommended allowing private schools to access government resources like GETFund and strengthening their supervision to uplift educational quality. Other research in senior high school contexts echoes similar concerns: declining enrolments, difficulty in attracting qualified teachers, and revenue shortfall compel private school managers to adopt contingency strategies.

Despite these challenges, private schools remain indispensable in the Ghanaian educational landscape, offering essential alternatives, especially in less privileged communities. Their presence has increased access and diversity within basic education, positioning them as partners albeit independently funded ones in the broader goal of educational equity and quality.

In a report on basic Statistics and Planning Parameters for Basic Education in 2010/2011 by Education Management Information System, the following are the number of private basic schools in Central Region:

Table 2.1: Number of Public and Private Basic Schools in Central Region – 2023/2024

Type of School	KG	Primary	Junior High
Public	1,495	1,518	1,432
Private	1,366	1,371	1,010

Source: GES C/R 2023

According to Tooley, & Dixon, 2005 private schools provided the mechanism for social mobility. Personnel could be trained for varied sectors for societal development. More so, Public servants could be re-trained for new offices and professional advancement.

A consistent rise in private school enrollment can be observed in number of schools as shown in Table 5 below. Remarkable has been the increase in KG enrollment from 19.5% in 2009 to a high of 27.2% in 2015. This implies more than one in every five pupils enrolled can be found in private school at the KG level.

Table 2.2: Percentage enrolment in private education between 2011 -2021

% enrolment in Private education	2011/2 012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	Deprived districts 2018/19	Deprived districts 2019/20	Deprived districts 2020/21
KG	19.5	20.8	22.2	23.6	24.6	27.2	30.2	9.7	10.9	16.5
Primary	18.6	19.3	22.1	23.1	23.2	25.3	27.5	7.8	8.9	12.6
JHS	17.4	17.6	19.0	20.3	20.1	22.0	21.5	6.7	6.8	9.9

Source: MoE 2022

For the primary level, the proportion is marginally lower with 25.3% of pupils enrolled in private school whereas that for JHS hovers around 22.0%. Overall however, coverage of private schools is relatively lower in deprived districts rising from 8.9% in 2020 to 12.6% in 2021. From the foregoing discussion, it is safer to argue that institutional stabilization in respect of active private participation in education is taking place in Ghana. In respect of teacher supply in basic schools in Ghana, public schools are rated better in terms of staffing by trained teachers compared to their private counterparts.

The table below presents the trained teacher situation in both public and private schools between 2017 and 2021. Private schools are mostly staffed by untrained teachers' at all three levels of the basic education system. The situation is more acute at the KG level where, as recent as 2021, 94.93% of private school teachers were recorded as untrained.

Table 2.3: Trained and untrained teacher distribution in public and private schools in Ghana

Category		2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
		Total	% trained	Total	% trained	Total	% trained	Total	% trained
Public	KG	29,411	31.3	31,595	38.8	33,108	51.5	37,147	61.7
	Primary	88,994	58.4	94,927	62.8	94,905	69.4	96,715	75.01
	JHS	59,214	76.7	65,186	78.4	72,777	83.6	77,239	87.8
Private	KG	8,302	6.8	9,889	6.6	12,115	5.2	14,860	5.07
	Primary	25,427	11.6	29,432	11.2	34,964	9.1	42,213	8.1
	JHS	16,195	21.9	18,153	20.2	21,020	17.5	26,119	16.4

Source: MoE 2016

The role of private participation in compulsory education in Ghana and the world over cannot be overemphasized. By providing quality education to large segments of the population, private schools have contributed significantly and helped Ghana meet the MDG of universal primary education. The evidence that private schools consistently outperform their public counterparts in national assessment tests is a good challenge for heightened competition.

Addae-Mensah, Ivan, Djangmah & Agbenyega (1973) asserted that the greatest patronage of private schooling comes from the elite. The elite parents set high academic standards for their children at an early age. More so, they take great pains to draw their children's attention to what socio-economic success is and the means to that end. So it repeats itself generation upon generation in the social set up. Woodhead et. al (2013) agreed to this reality as he made mention that private schooling is perceived as a mechanism for perpetuating the stratification system, in

that it provides excellent instruction guaranteeing high levels of academic performance.

Private schools in Ghana faced unique challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic. Unlike public schools, which received more direct support from the government, private schools often struggled with financial sustainability and resource limitations. Many private schools had to adopt innovative management practices to survive, such as tuition fee adjustments and enhanced digital learning platforms (Akyeampong, 2021). The comparison with public schools highlights disparities in resource allocation and crisis preparedness. Upon the achievement of the private schools over the years, they have had some management practices during the Covid 19 era.

2.3 Covid-19

The recently emerged novel coronavirus, ~~severe~~ acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2)", caused a highly contagious disease called coronavirus disease 2019, (UNICEF 2020). The virus was first reported from Wuhan city in China in December, 2019, which in less than three months spread throughout the globe and was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11th of March, 2020.

So far, the ongoing pandemic severely damaged the world's most developed countries and is becoming a major threat for low- and middle-income countries. The poorest continent, Africa with the most vulnerable populations to infectious diseases, is predicted to be significantly affected by the ongoing Covid-19 outbreak, (UNESCO, 2020).

The word “Pandemic” originates from the Greek *pan* meaning “all” and *demos* “the people”, and The word is commonly taken to refer to a widespread epidemic of contagious disease throughout the whole of a country or one or more continents at the same time (Honigsbaum, 2009). Pandemics are for the most part disease outbreaks that become widespread as a result of the spread of human to-human infection. There have been many significant disease outbreaks and pandemics recorded in history, including Spanish Flu, Hong Kong Flu, SARS, H7N9, Ebola, Zika (WHO, 2011b).

The term “pandemic” has not been defined by many medical texts, but there are some key features of a pandemic, including wide geographic extension, disease movement, novelty, severity, high attack rates and explosiveness, minimal population immunity, infectiousness and contagiousness, which help us to understand the concept better, if we examine similarities and differences among them. The pandemic related crises have been associated with enormous negative impacts on health, economy, society and security of national and global communities. As well, they have caused significant political and social disruption. Nevertheless, in over the past 2 decades, the term has not been able to be defined by many modern medical texts. Even authoritative texts concerning pandemics in their indexes, including resources as comprehensive histories of medicine, classic epidemiology textbooks, the Institute of Medicine’s influential 1992 report on emerging infections (Morens, Folkers, & Fauci, 2009).

According to WHO (2020), the first pneumonia case was discovered on December 8, 2019 in a wet market in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province of China.

Afterwards, several clusters of patients with such pneumonia were reported throughout late December 2019.

The World has been gripped by a pandemic over the first half of 2020. It was identified as a new coronavirus (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, or SARS-CoV-2), and later named as Coronavirus Disease-19 or Covid-19 (Schleicher, (2020). While Covid-19 originated in the city of Wuhan in the Hubei province of China, it has spread rapidly across the world, resulting in a human tragedy and tremendous economic damage. By mid-June, there had been over 8 million cases of Covid-19 globally, with over 436,000 deaths.

By that time, many had died in China, Italy, Spain, United States of America and parts of Middle East and Asia, and these countries had taken containment measures such as social distancing, sanitization protocols and quarantine (WHO, 2020).

The first coronavirus infection case in Kenya was reported on 12th March 2020, from a Kenyan who travelled from the United States through the United Kingdom. Based on the several reports, the Kenya's government quickly announced similar containment measures and by 13th March 2020, the president ordered schools to close down, followed by colleges and universities a few days later (WHO, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has placed a heavy toll on the human and economic development of many countries around the world. The President also instructed employers to allow staff to work from home. The Covid-19 pandemic has elevated curiosity among many to understand how the world has handled pandemics in the past. There is numerous information about how pandemics such as influenza, Ebola

and others were managed and even specifically the impact and management of education.

As of 31st December 2020, Ghana had the second-highest number of coronavirus cases in the region of West and Central Africa with 54,771 persons having tested positive, (GHS, & GoG (2020). Acknowledging the multiple efforts made by the Government of Ghana, the paper calls for further investment and actions to address the adverse effects of the pandemic, especially on children (MoE, 2020).

Given the rapid spread of Covid-19, countries across the World have adopted several public health measures intended to prevent its spread, including social distancing (Karalis, 2020). As part of social distancing, businesses, schools, community centres, and non-governmental organization (NGOs) have been required to close down, mass gatherings have been prohibited, and lockdown measures have been imposed in many countries, allowing travel only for essential needs. The goal is that through social distancing, countries will be able to “flatten the curve”, i.e., reduce the number of new cases related to COVID-19 from one day to the next in order to halt exponential growth and hence reduce pressure on medical services (Owusu-Fordjour et. al, (2020).

Thousands of people had already died from this infection while millions were still facing the illness and several industries had either collapsed, closed down or reduce drastically their work force. In spite of the negative aspects of coronavirus on the globe, the coronavirus crises brought a positive impact on the natural environment (WHO 2020).

- i. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that the outdoor air pollution kills 7 million people each year worldwide and more than 80%

urban population is exposed to unhealthy air (WHO 2020). Since people stayed home, these last few months have paved significant improvement in air quality.

- ii. The carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission is responsible for the climate change. The transportation sector, industries and electricity have a huge contribution in carbon dioxide emission. Due to coronavirus lockdown the emission of CO₂ has decreased worldwide
- iii. Reports are indicating that during Covid-19-induced lockdown not only the air quality but water quality in rivers and water bodies are also improving. The stoppage of discharging industrial effluents and other wastes into water led to an apparent positive effect on water quality. Clean rivers and other water bodies have a significant positive effect on the aquatic life.

The positive part of the Covid-19 as enumerated in the country include; That some schools have integrated effectively technologies into education system and this has improved quality of education and teaching delivery. The Covid 19 has also improved school health education programme. Students always keep their school environment clean and tidy from dirt. Some schools now have continuous water running in their various schools. This has also improved personal hygiene among students. Students periodically wash their hands and use the hand sanitizers and paper tissues after visiting the urinal or the toilet. Again students wash their hands when they are engaged in any activities.

The following findings on the effects of school closures on children's educational outcomes due to Covid-19 as conducted by UNICEF 2021 in collaboration with the Government of Ghana) is below:

1. The pandemic's impacts on children's access and quality of education are most severely felt through the tracking closure of schools without adequate alternative education services accessible by all children, nation-wide.
2. The pandemic has also affected the gross and net enrolment ration of pupils. Already prior to the pandemic, 16.9% of children aged 5-11 years, 50.9% of children aged 12-14 years, and 83.3% of children aged 15-17 years were either not attending school, two or more years behind in school, or have not achieved the correct level of schooling for their grade.
3. The pandemic has also affected the attendance of students or pupils to school. Nationwide school closures began on March 16, affecting approximately 9,253,063 learners between pre-primary and secondary education levels. School closure was partially lifted in the second half of June – through a phased approach and while maintaining social distancing regulations – for final year senior high school and junior high school students with a focus on exam preparation and completion. Second year junior high school and senior high school students returned to school in August to complete the remainder of the 2019-2020 curriculum with the understanding that, as exam students in the 2021 school year, they need to have covered all curriculum content missed during school closure. For other students, closure of schools is still in force and distance learning programmes are continuing to be rolled out by the Ministry of Education.
4. Although distance learning programmes such as the radio learning/reading, and other virtual classes have been implemented nationwide, these services were not equitably accessed. Most of the children were without access to

radio, televisions, mobile devices, and internet so they never benefited from the virtual lesson conducted and therefore they lost contact hours.

5. Also for those students who were even able to access distance and online learning programmes, the quality of learning was highly impacted as a result of numerous factors, including learning difficulties at home and this is likely to have negative long-term impacts on learning outcomes.
6. Again children learning from home may also face inadequate conditions for effective learning, such as living in overcrowded households, living in households without electricity or proper lighting, or not having an appropriate space for learning or support from parents and teachers and this is especially relevant for children living in rural and remote areas.
7. The pandemic also disrupted learning, schooling and exam schedules and also forced authorities to change the academic year.
8. Also Boys and girls may be vulnerable to gendered traditional roles in the household (e.g. increased involvement in child labour for boys, and childcare and early marriage for girls), which may occur more frequently in economically vulnerable households.
9. Children may not return to regular education in favour of alternative (economic) activities pursued during the period schools were closed.

While the primary impact of the pandemic in Ghana is concentrated on human health and public health systems, the secondary effects of the virus and its consequences have affected every facet of the human life and evidence from other crises suggests that poorer families may not be able to cope as well as higher income families in keeping their children in school.

A significant number of headteachers identified, from the beginning of the school academic year, the management of the anxiety and fear in relation to coronavirus as a major difficulty. A headteacher of a school characteristically made the following comment: “there were teachers who were afraid to come in contact with colleagues but also with students and were thinking about how to get to the classroom and it was normal because almost everyone had a problem related to COVID-19 such as: belonging to vulnerable groups themselves or someone of their own, they had elderly parents, a child with a problem etc.”

Moreover, another headteacher of a school reported serious concern and difficulties regarding the management of sick students. A significant barrier for some headteacher in managing the school amidst the pandemic was the large number of students per class, in conjunction with the lack of appropriate premises.

According to the analysis, school leaders as a whole accepted the responsibility to implement the sanitary protocols, and took it very seriously, advocating for the protection of the physical health and safety of the entire school community. Organizing the school unit according to the protocol was a particularly painful process, not only because the daily routine of school had to be changed, but mainly because they had to care about the adaptation of both teachers and students to these measures, but also for their proper observance. Students used of facemasks and the social distancing of two meters, especially during breaks, were reported as significant difficulties by the headteacher, especially in relation to younger pupils, which was in agreement with previous research (Di Pietro et al. 2020; Educational Institute of Scotland 2020).

This fact, combined with the large number of children per class, made it, in some cases, impossible for the protocols to be applied exactly. It should be noted that, the maximum number of students per class amounts to 25, with a minimum of 15. Moreover, majority of the headteacher pointed out that social distancing and the use of a mask in school greatly disturbed the educational process and the pedagogical work in general. They referred to difficulties in communication with students, in delivering lessons, and in carrying out the curriculum, with frontal teaching as the only possible practice. It turned out that the measures had a serious impact on the pedagogical practices of kindergarten, while limiting the ability of kindergarten teachers to provide emotional support to the children.

Having to manage school in this crisis context, the majority of the headteachers relied largely on their own forces and strengths, recruiting their personal and social skills, as well as their experience and knowledge in school management.

As the evolution of the Covid-19 pandemic is still unpredictable, and the conditions so far require the educational process to alternate between virtual and school classrooms, these obstacles seem quite difficult to overcome; this is unless headteachers, teaching staff and students receive appropriate support to maintain resilient and meet their extremely important social role, which is to prepare children emotionally (Kearney, 2008).

The first coronavirus infection case in Ghana was reported on 12th March 2020. By that time, many had died in China, Italy, Spain, United States of America and parts of Middle East and Asia, and these countries had taken containment measures such as social distancing, sanitization protocols and quarantine (WHO, 2020).

Having learnt from them, Ghana's government quickly announced similar containment measures and by 13th March, the President ordered schools to close. Basic schools, followed by Colleges and Universities a few days later. The President also instructed employers to allow staff to work from home. The Covid-19 pandemic has elevated curiosity among many to understand how the world has handled pandemics in the past. There is numerous information about how pandemics such as influenza, Ebola and others were managed and even specifically the impact and management of education.

The global impact of Covid-19 on education has been profound, leading to widespread school closures and disruptions in learning. In Ghana, the pandemic exacerbated existing educational inequalities, with rural and underserved areas being particularly hard hit. The pandemic posed specific challenges such as limited access to technology for remote learning, health risks for students and staff, and the need for new health and safety protocols in schools (World Bank, 2020).

Headteachers, particularly in private basic schools, faced several challenges in ensuring educational continuity, student engagement, and staff welfare. The Gomoe East district, like many regions, experienced these disruptions, prompting an investigation into how headteachers managed these challenges. Headteachers in private basic schools in the Gomoe East district had to adapt their management practices to navigate the crisis effectively. The next session reviews the theoretical framework provided by contingency theory and examines empirical studies relevant to the management practices of headteachers during the pandemic.

2.4 Theoretical Underpinning

2.4.1 Contingency theory

The management practices of school headteachers during educational emergencies can be analyzed through various theoretical lenses, which posit that effective leadership depends on aligning styles and decisions with the specific context. As Fiedler (1967, 2010) emphasized, there is no universal leadership formula as what works in one situation may falter in another. Headteachers in the Gomoa East district demonstrated the practical value of this insight by tailoring their approach to unprecedented, rapidly evolving challenges.

Rooted in organizational studies, Contingency Theory challenges classical, one-size-fits-all management paradigms by underscoring responsiveness to internal dynamics and external pressures. This framework helps explain how private school leaders adapted the abrupt shifts in schooling such as implementing online learning, managing health protocols, and navigating resource constraints. Donaldson (2001) emphasized this view by asserting that environmental uncertainties demand corresponding flexibility in organizational structure and process, a concept that reflected in the strategies adopted by headteachers during the pandemic.

This need for agility intertwines compellingly with Adaptive Leadership, as articulated by Heifetz and colleagues (Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz, 1994), which views leadership as a process of mobilizing communities to tackle difficult problems that demand learning, experimentation, and collaborative problem-solving. Headteachers in the district embraced adaptive leadership when they quickly pivoted to mixed delivery models, sourcing printed materials for learners with limited internet, leveraging local radio for continuity, and offering emotional support to staff

and students. These actions exemplify context-sensitive, resourceful leadership, reinforcing earlier findings that effective management depends on aligning practices with situational variables (Woodward, 1965).

Recent research further substantiates both Contingency and Adaptive Leadership in educational crises. For instance, a systematic review highlights crisis management approaches and emergent leadership traits during COVID-19 (Khawaja & Karimi, 2025). Educational leaders' resilience and crisis responsiveness have also been explored in mixed-method research (Hill-Berry, 2025), while secondary principals' adaptive responses are documented in global case studies (Alene, 2025). Moreover, Ghana research sheds light on headteachers navigating rural challenges during the pandemic, reinforcing district's experience (Brion, 2024).

Importantly, effective leadership during emergencies also depends on relational trust that is an essential foundation for stakeholder cooperation and resilience (Robinson, 2011). Transparent, empathetic communication strengthened trust between educators, parents, and students, and proved vital in sustaining the learning process amid uncertainty.

Furthermore, Resilience Theory (Masten, 2014) complements these ideas by focusing on how systems withstand shocks and emerge stronger. During COVID-19, technologies became crucial in bolstering resilience an acceleration of digital integration in leadership and learning, as noted by Fullan (2002). To equip future educational leaders, embedding resilience, adaptability, stakeholder engagement, and well-being into leadership development is essential and not just for crisis contexts, but for ongoing institutional robustness.

Together, these theoretical lenses; Contingency Theory, Adaptive Leadership, Resilience Theory, and relational trust create a comprehensive framework for explaining how headteachers in Gomoa East adapted effectively during COVID-19. By matching leadership style to situational demands and enhancing resilience, they sustained educational continuity in the most challenging of times.

The Covid-19 pandemic presented challenges to educational management, requiring headteachers to adapt swiftly to ensure continuity of education. In this context, contingency theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how headteachers can effectively manage these challenges. Educational institutions, particularly during educational emergencies like the Covid-19 pandemic, require adaptable leadership that can respond to rapidly changing circumstances. Research indicates that headteachers who adopt a flexible leadership style, capable of adjusting to the specific needs of their school community, are more successful in managing crises. Adaptive leadership is a core tenet of contingency theory, proved essential for headteachers during the pandemic.

Contingency theory also emphasizes the need for flexible decision-making processes. As observed; organizations that align their internal processes with the demands of their external environment are more likely to succeed (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967).

In response to the pandemic, headteachers in private basic schools had to make quick, informed decisions about safety protocols, curriculum adjustments, and resource allocation. This flexibility is crucial in maintaining educational standards while safeguarding the health of students and staff.

By emphasizing adaptive leadership, flexible decision-making, and effective communication, contingency theory provides a pathway for educational leaders to navigate complex and rapidly changing environments. The experiences of headteachers in the Gomoa East district underscore the practical applicability of this theory, demonstrating that tailored management practices can significantly enhance organizational resilience and effectiveness in the face of unprecedented challenges. By applying contingency theory, headteachers can enhance their responsiveness and effectiveness, ensuring the continuity and quality of education even in the most challenging times.

Robinson, (2011) emphasize the role of trust in effective school leadership, stating, relational trust between educators, students, and parents are fundamental to achieving educational success. During the pandemic, transparent communication with stakeholders was critical for maintaining trust and ensuring cooperation.

The resilience displayed by headteachers in managing the pandemic underscores the importance of resilience in educational leadership. According to Masten (2014), resilience in leadership involves the capacity to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity. The pandemic has reshaped educational leadership. The pandemic accelerated the integration of technology in education.

As stated by Fullan (2002), “The role of technology in transforming learning environments is undeniable, and its effective integration is key to modern educational leadership”. Headteachers had to leverage digital tools to facilitate remote learning and maintain educational standards. Future leaders must be prepared to handle crises with agility and innovation. This includes embracing technology, fostering collaborative environments, and prioritizing mental health.

The experiences of headteachers in the Gomoa East district demonstrate the importance of these practices in maintaining educational continuity and addressing the well-being of students and staff. These findings underscore the relevance of contingency theory in understanding and improving school management in times of crisis. By aligning management strategies with the specific challenges and resources of their schools, headteachers can enhance their responsiveness and effectiveness, ensuring that their schools are better equipped to handle future crises.

The experiences of headteachers in the Gomoa East district demonstrate the importance of these practices in maintaining educational continuity and addressing the well-being of students and staff. These findings underscore the relevance of contingency theory in understanding and improving school management in times of crisis. By aligning management strategies with the specific challenges and resources of their schools, headteachers can enhance their responsiveness and effectiveness, ensuring that their schools are better equipped to handle future crises.

2.5 Management Practices in Schools

Management practices in schools remain a central concern in the discourse on educational effectiveness, particularly in the context of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Best management practices, while not defined in a single way, are often associated with approaches, strategies, and leadership styles that contribute to efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation within organizations (Bendixsen & De Guchteneire, 2003).

In the school context, these practices are crucial because they influence not only institutional operations but also the quality of teaching and learning, teacher morale, and student outcomes. This review examines management practices in schools, with

particular attention to the role of basic school headteachers in Ghana during the COVID-19 pandemic. It considers both the traditional functions of management and the evolving demands of educational leadership in times of uncertainty.

The concept of best management practices is well established in organizational studies. Bush (2007) defines best practices as “successful initiatives or model projects that make an outstanding, sustainable, and innovative contribution to the issue at hand.” Within schools, best practices often include curriculum planning, supervision of teachers, monitoring student performance, and creating enabling teaching and learning environments (Kerzner, 2010).

Importantly, these practices are contextual. What works in one institution or cultural setting may not be directly transferable to another (Hall & Jennings, 2008). For schools in Ghana, contextual factors such as limited resources, large class sizes, and socio-economic disparities must be considered when defining or adapting best practices.

According to Oduro & MacBeath (2003), management practices serve three key objectives: achieving organizational goals at minimal cost, safeguarding the welfare of staff, and protecting institutional resources.

These objectives align with the functions of management outlined by Fayol (1949) and later by Koontz and O'Donnell (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2004), which include planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. In education, such practices translate into developing instructional plans, allocating human and material resources, supervising teaching, and ensuring accountability.

Teachers in the 21st century are increasingly expected to play diverse leadership roles beyond classroom instruction. Harrison and Killion (2007) highlight roles such as instructional specialists, mentors, curriculum developers, and team leaders. In basic schools, the headteacher embodies the role of the teacher leader, responsible for guiding both teachers and learners while ensuring the smooth running of the school (Mankoe, 2007).

Headteachers are, therefore, central to the implementation of best management practices. They serve as administrators, motivators, and strategic planners. Atta et al. (2000) assert that the aims and aspirations of a school can only be achieved when there is an effective and efficient leader. Similarly, Bass and Riggio (2006) emphasize the transformational role of school leaders, who must inspire staff to give their best while promoting collective goals. In Ghana, where basic education serves as the foundation for the nation's educational system, the role of headteachers is particularly critical in shaping the future of learners and contributing to national development.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, management practices in schools were largely routine. Headteachers focused on curriculum delivery, student assessment, teacher supervision, and administrative reporting (Bush, 2011). While challenges existed, they were relatively predictable and could be managed using established procedures.

The outbreak of COVID-19, however, disrupted these routines significantly. Schools were closed for extended periods, forcing headteachers to adapt quickly to new modalities of teaching and learning. Remote learning, previously uncommon in many basic schools in Ghana, became a necessity. Headteachers had to facilitate the

adoption of online platforms, support teachers in using digital tools, and maintain communication with parents and students (Harris & Jones, 2020).

In addition to instructional challenges, health and safety concerns emerged as central management issues. Schools had to implement hygiene protocols, enforce social distancing, and provide psychosocial support to learners and staff. These new demands required flexibility and adaptability in leadership. Azorín (2020) underscores that decision-making flexibility enables school leaders to respond effectively to emerging challenges, an attribute that proved indispensable during the pandemic.

The literature identifies core management functions that remain relevant across contexts. Fayol's (1949) framework planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling continue to influence contemporary management theory. In education, Koontz and O'Donnell's (1968) emphasis on staffing and directing is particularly relevant, as schools rely heavily on human capital.

Effective managers must possess technical, human, and conceptual skills (Babayemi, 2006). Technical skills enable leaders to understand and use resources effectively, human skills facilitate interpersonal relations, and conceptual skills support strategic thinking (Darvas & Balwanz, 2014).

Importantly, these skills are not innate; they are developed through training and experience (Amadi, 2008). Carpenter (2020) reinforces this point, noting that the principles of management planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—equip leaders to navigate challenges successfully.

Crisis situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, demand more than routine management skills. They require adaptive leadership, which involves flexibility, resilience, and responsiveness. Certo & Certo (2009) argue that adaptive leaders are better equipped to shift strategies, mobilize resources, and address uncertainty. In schools, adaptive leadership was reflected in headteachers' ability to transition to remote learning, modify curricula, and maintain staff motivation.

Emotional intelligence also emerged as a critical leadership quality during the pandemic. Kouzes & Posner (2007) contend that leaders who can regulate their emotions are better positioned to support their organizations through crises. For headteachers, this meant providing emotional support to teachers overwhelmed by new teaching methods and to students struggling with isolation. Harris et al. (2020) further emphasize that emotional intelligence enhances leaders' capacity to build trust, foster collaboration, and sustain morale in challenging times.

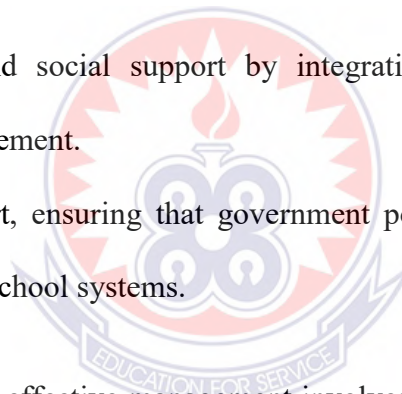
Despite their efforts, headteachers faced numerous challenges during the pandemic. Limited access to technology, inadequate training in digital tools, and socio-economic inequalities among learners hampered the effectiveness of remote learning (UNESCO, 2021). Moreover, financial constraints limited schools' ability to provide personal protective equipment and other safety resources. These challenges highlight the need for ongoing investment in school infrastructure and professional development for headteachers.

At the same time, the pandemic revealed the resilience and creativity of school leaders. Many headteachers leveraged community resources, fostered collaboration among teachers, and developed innovative approaches to keep learners engaged.

These experiences underscore the importance of building capacity for adaptive leadership in education systems.

Looking forward, it is clear that school management practices must evolve to meet both routine and crisis needs. This requires a stronger emphasis on:

1. Digital competence by ensuring headteachers and teachers are proficient in using technology for instruction and administration.
2. Professional development by providing continuous training in leadership, management, and crisis response.
3. Collaborative leadership by promoting teamwork and shared responsibility among staff.
4. Emotional and social support by integrating psychosocial services into school management.
5. Policy support, ensuring that government policies prioritize resilience and flexibility in school systems.



As Bush (2011) said, effective management involves balancing the use of resources with the achievement of school goals. In the post-pandemic era, this balance must incorporate both traditional practices and new competencies gained from crisis experiences.

Management practices in schools are dynamic and context-dependent. While best practices provide valuable guidance, they must be adapted to local conditions and evolving challenges. In Ghana, basic school headteachers have demonstrated resilience and adaptability in navigating the disruptions of COVID-19. Their experiences highlight the importance of flexible decision-making, adaptive leadership, and emotional intelligence. Moving forward, strengthening management

practices in schools requires investment in training, technology, and supportive policies to ensure that schools are better prepared for future challenges.

2.6 Management Challenges of Schools during Educational Emergencies

Building on Marzano's (2003) insight that no management education programme is perfect and that quality is an ongoing journey rather than a fixed destination. This study underscores the continuous process of refining management practices. Marzano emphasizes that effective leadership grows through sustained iteration and learning.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, private basic schools across Ghana, especially in the Gomoa East District, confronted a myriad of challenges. These included managing the abrupt school closures, facilitating remote learning, and safeguarding the health and emotional well-being of the school community. Headteachers reported heightened stress, exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, scarce resources like protective equipment and classroom furniture, and insufficiently trained staff—factors that severely impeded effective educational management.

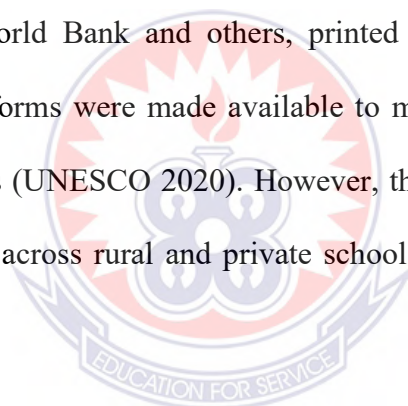
In public basic schools such as those in the Akuapem-North Municipality, headteachers demonstrated adaptability by using visual teaching aids, strictly enforcing health protocols, and partnering to supply PPE an efforts that kept learning alive amid immense disruption (Okyere Amponsah, et al. 2024)..

Similarly, headteachers in Accra Metropolitan primary and junior high schools described occupational stress intensified by enforcing safety measures such as mask-wearing and distancing which proved difficult in crowded settings (Ansah, & Tetteh, 2025).

Private schools faced challenges of a different nature. Many lacked government support and were financially strained by halted tuition. This compromised their capacity to offer digital learning, pay teachers, and retain students.

Moreover, teachers themselves encountered psychological challenges and demotivation. While intrinsic drive and dedication sustained many, the lack of teaching support and increased stress threatened both teaching quality and retention.

In Ghana, the Ministry of Education and partners responded with a range of support measures. The Ghana Learning TV and Radio programmes delivered curriculum-based lessons to students lacking internet access. Through the GALOP project, supported by the World Bank and others, printed materials, sanitation kits, and remote learning platforms were made available to millions of students and tens of thousands of teachers (UNESCO 2020). However, the unequal distribution of these resources, especially across rural and private schools, highlighted pervasive equity gaps.



2.7 Support for Basic Schools during Educational Emergencies

Educational emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, present unique challenges for schools and school leaders. They disrupt teaching and learning, strain resources, and expose inequalities in access to quality education. For basic schools in Ghana, particularly private schools in districts such as Gomoe East, the pandemic magnified these difficulties.

Headteachers, as frontline managers, were tasked with not only sustaining learning but also ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of learners and teachers. In doing so, they relied heavily on external support from international organizations, the

government, NGOs, and local community actors. This section reviews the nature and effectiveness of these support mechanisms, emphasizing their relevance for headteachers managing private basic schools during educational emergencies.

Globally, international organizations played a pivotal role in mitigating the educational impacts of COVID-19. UNICEF (2020) reported that emergency interventions included the distribution of learning materials, the establishment of online and radio-based educational programs, and the provision of teacher training on digital pedagogy.

UNESCO's Global Education Coalition also facilitated partnerships to ensure continuity of learning, particularly for marginalized learners in sub-Saharan Africa. These agencies emphasized the principle of "learning continuity," recognizing that prolonged school closures could lead to learning loss and increased dropout rates (UNESCO, 2020).

In Ghana, these international interventions were adapted to local conditions. UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education (MoE) in rolling out radio and television broadcasts, designed for students who lacked reliable internet connectivity. According to World Bank (2022), approximately 4.45 million students benefitted from Ghana's Learning TV and Radio programmes, while additional printed and digital resources were distributed nationwide under the Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project (GALOP). These resources were instrumental in reaching learners in remote and underserved communities.

However, while these international supports were essential, they were not evenly distributed. Rural schools, especially private basic schools with limited ties to

government support structures, often struggled to access the full range of interventions. This suggests that international aid, though valuable, must be better targeted to address disparities at the local level (OECD, 2021).

At the national level, the Ghanaian government responded swiftly by introducing a range of interventions aimed at sustaining education during the pandemic. The Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service (GES) developed a comprehensive response strategy anchored in three pillars: (1) continuity of learning, (2) safe reopening of schools, and (3) teacher professional support (MoE, 2021).

The Ghana Learning TV (GLTV) and Ghana Learning Radio programmes represented the flagship initiatives. These platforms broadcast lessons aligned with the national curriculum, enabling learners to continue their studies from home. Additionally, the government distributed printed learning packs to children in under-resourced households. For teachers, the government organized virtual training workshops on blended learning and provided guidelines for safe school reopening. Financial assistance and teaching resources were also allocated to support schools in enforcing hygiene and safety protocols.

For private basic schools, however, government support was inconsistent. Many private schools, particularly those in rural areas such as Gomoa East, reported limited access to resources. Unlike public schools, which were prioritized in the distribution of learning packs, private schools often had to rely on their own ingenuity and external partnerships to survive. This gap highlights the need for policies that include private schools in national education resilience planning, given their significant contribution to Ghana's education system.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) complemented international and government efforts by addressing specific gaps. For instance, CAMFED (Campaign for Female Education) focused on preventing girls from dropping out during the pandemic. Their interventions included providing sanitary supplies, facilitating community-based study groups, and supporting vulnerable families with food and financial assistance (CAMFED, 2021). These initiatives were particularly critical because, during emergencies, girls are disproportionately at risk of exclusion from education due to household responsibilities, early marriage, or poverty.

Local NGOs and faith-based organizations also played significant roles. The OECD (2021), highlights that NGOs contributed not only materially but also by promoting equity and inclusion in educational responses.

For headteachers in Gomaa East, these partnerships were vital. Local NGOs worked closely with school leaders to provide training on remote learning tools, distribute personal protective equipment (PPE), and support community sensitization on COVID-19 safety. Such collaborations demonstrate the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach in responding to educational emergencies.

At the district level, private basic schools in Gomaa East faced unique constraints. Many lacked the infrastructure and resources to transition to remote learning smoothly.

Despite the multiple layers of support, significant inequities persisted. Rural schools, particularly private ones, often received less support than urban public schools. Learners without radios, televisions, or internet access were excluded from national learning programmes, creating gaps in continuity of learning (World Bank, 2022).

Moreover, the reliance on parents to facilitate remote learning disproportionately disadvantaged households where parents were illiterate, overworked, or economically vulnerable.

These disparities highlight the importance of equity-sensitive approaches to educational emergencies. As Akyeampong et al. (2021) argue, resilience in education requires not only resource provision but also deliberate strategies to include marginalized learners and institutions. For headteachers in Gomoa East, the lack of consistent and equitable support placed additional pressure on their managerial capacity. They had to innovate and improvise with limited resources while ensuring that learning did not completely stall.

The review of supports provided during the pandemic underscores the pivotal role of headteachers as managers and leaders. External support could only be effective when headteachers were able to mobilize, adapt, and integrate these resources into their school operations. Adaptive leadership (Certo & Certo, 2009) was evident in the ways headteachers negotiated partnerships, repurposed community spaces for learning, and motivated teachers under challenging circumstances.

Moreover, the pandemic emphasized the need for emotional intelligence in school leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2007) argue that emotionally intelligent leaders are better positioned to guide their institutions through crises. Headteachers had to provide emotional reassurance to anxious teachers, engage parents constructively, and support students struggling with the psychological effects of isolation. Without such adaptive and emotionally intelligent leadership, external support would have been less impactful.

The COVID-19 experience demonstrates that support for headteachers during educational emergencies must be comprehensive, equitable, and sustainable. Future strategies should prioritize:

1. Inclusive policies that explicitly integrate private schools into national education emergency response frameworks.
2. Digital infrastructure development to ensure equitable access to online and blended learning opportunities.
3. Capacity building for headteachers in crisis management, digital pedagogy, and resource mobilization.
4. Strengthened community partnerships to leverage local resources and foster resilience.
5. Monitoring and evaluation systems to track the effectiveness and equity of support mechanisms.

By institutionalizing these strategies, Ghana's education system will be better prepared for future emergencies. For private basic school headteachers in Gomoe East, such measures would reduce reliance on ad hoc improvisation and ensure more predictable and equitable support.

Support for basic school headteachers during educational emergencies is multidimensional, involving international agencies, national governments, NGOs, and local communities.

In Ghana, interventions such as the Ghana Learning TV and Radio programmes, the GALOP project, and NGO initiatives like CAMFED provided critical lifelines during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, disparities in access persisted, particularly for private schools in rural districts such as Gomoe East. Headteachers

were therefore compelled to innovate, demonstrating adaptive leadership and resilience in the face of resource constraints. Moving forward, a more inclusive, equity-sensitive, and sustainable approach to educational emergency support is essential for safeguarding the continuity of learning and strengthening school leadership capacity.

2.8 Strategies for Improving Schools after Educational Emergencies

Moving forward, several strategies have been proposed to improve basic schools in the post educational emergencies. Looking ahead, enhancing digital infrastructure remains paramount. Public-private collaborations and targeted investments are needed to ensure equitable access to devices, connectivity, and electricity for all students especially in rural zones. According to the World Bank (2021), investing in ICT infrastructure and ensuring all students have access to devices and the internet is essential. They recommend public-private partnerships to achieve this goal.

Professional development must be scaled up so teachers gain digital pedagogy skills, enabling them to deliver blended or remote instruction effectively. Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of ongoing professional development programs to equip teachers with the necessary skills to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices.

Mental health support systems should be entrenched in school programmes to address students' and teachers' socio-emotional recovery. Research indicates psychological well-being as essential to academic success and educator retention. Adarkwah (2021) suggests that schools should incorporate mental health support into their programs. He notes, "The psychological well-being of students is crucial for their academic success and overall development" (Adarkwah, 2021).

Research also emphasizes the value of community partnerships. Encouraging parent and local group engagement strengthens learning continuity and offers vital emotional and logistical support. Community involvement is also vital. Engaging parents and local communities in the educational process can help bridge gaps and provide additional support to students. As Oduro (2020) points out, strengthening community-school partnerships, can enhance the learning environment and provide a support system for students.

Institutionalizing adaptive leadership characterized by flexible decision-making and rapid response is critical to building resilience in educational systems against future disruptions. Schools that embraced such leadership better navigated health guidelines and instructional shifts.

The literature on the management of basic schools during educational emergencies highlights significant challenges, including the abrupt shift to online learning, the digital divide, and exacerbated inequalities. Support initiatives, both globally and locally in Ghana, have been instrumental in mitigating these challenges, with various stakeholders contributing to educational continuity. Moving forward, strategies to improve basic schools focus on enhancing digital infrastructure, providing teacher training, addressing mental health needs, and fostering community involvement. These measures aim to create a more resilient and inclusive education system capable of withstanding future disruptions.

In conclusion, the literature reviewed established the general structure and role of basic schools in Ghana, with a particular focus on private basic schools. It highlighted the unique characteristics, contributions, and challenges of private institutions in the broader educational landscape. The COVID-19 pandemic as a

global emergency was reviewed. This emergency disrupted education systems, exposing both strengths and weaknesses in school management.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological approach adopted to investigate the management practices of private basic school headteachers during the COVID-19 era in the Gomoa East District. The methodology outlines the research paradigm, research approach, research design, target population, sampling techniques, instruments, validity and reliability procedures, methods of data collection, pre-testing, and data analysis techniques. The study also provides a profile of the research area to situate the investigation in context.

This study was guided by the positivist paradigm, which is grounded in the assumption that reality is objective, observable, and measurable through empirical evidence. Positivism emphasizes the use of quantifiable data to examine phenomena and make generalizations across contexts (Neuman, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the present study, the positivist paradigm facilitated an assessment of the management practices of headteachers during the COVID-19 crisis using measurable indicators such as policy implementation, staff management, and instructional supervision.

Research methodology, according to Gelo et al. (2008), refers to the philosophical and logical principles that underlie the selection and application of research methods. It is the framework that ensures that the research process is systematic, rigorous, and capable of generating valid knowledge. More recently, Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019) emphasize that methodology provides a roadmap linking research philosophy, design, and strategy to the research objectives, ensuring

coherence between research questions and the methods adopted. Thus, the methodology serves as the backbone of the study, guiding the generation of credible findings that contribute to the body of knowledge on school leadership in times of crisis.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm reflects the worldview that shapes a researcher's choices regarding ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (how knowledge is acquired), and methodology (the processes of inquiry) (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Alase, 2017).

Positivism is characterized by the belief in a single, tangible reality that can be discovered through systematic observation and analysis. Ontologically, positivists assume that reality exists independently of human perception. Epistemologically, they argue that knowledge should be acquired through objective, value-free methods. Methodologically, positivism favors structured, quantitative approaches that yield replicable findings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

By contrast, interpretivism contends that reality is socially constructed and best understood through qualitative inquiry that explores meanings and experiences (Bryman, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2020). Pragmatism, on the other hand, adopts a flexible stance, advocating for the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods depending on the research objectives (Morgan, 2014; Maarouf, 2019). Although interpretivism and pragmatism have their merits, the present study adopted the positivist paradigm due to its alignment with the research objectives, which required the collection of quantifiable data from headteachers to identify patterns and relationships in their management practices.

3.3 Research Approach

The research adopted a quantitative approach. This approach enabled the researcher to collect data numerically through structured questionnaires and to analyze the results statistically. Quantitative research is particularly suitable for studies that seek to establish trends, patterns, and relationships between variables, as it allows for the objective testing of hypotheses and enhances the generalizability of findings (Muijs, 2010; Klenke, 2016).

According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), a research approach represents the plan or procedure that links philosophical assumptions to data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Quantitative approaches are preferred when the research problem requires the measurement of variables and the application of statistical analysis (Queirós, Faria, & Almeida, 2017). This study sought to determine the extent to which private basic school headteachers applied effective management practices during COVID-19, and the quantitative approach provided the rigor needed to evaluate these practices across multiple schools.

While qualitative approaches provide deep insights into participants' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2013), and mixed-method approaches integrate both textual and numerical data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), the quantitative approach was considered most suitable for this study. Its strength lies in its ability to generate statistical evidence that supports generalizations and policy recommendations. However, it is acknowledged that one limitation of the quantitative approach is its inability to capture the nuanced, subjective experiences of participants. Despite this, the focus of the research on measurable practices and outcomes justified the choice of a quantitative methodology.

3.4 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was employed for the study. This design is appropriate for systematically describing existing conditions, practices, or phenomena without manipulating variables (Creswell, 2013; Saunders et al., 2019). It allowed the researcher to capture a comprehensive picture of the management practices of headteachers during the COVID-19 crisis across different private schools in the Gomoa East District.

Descriptive surveys are widely used in social science research to obtain factual information about the present status of a phenomenon (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015). They are particularly useful in educational research because they provide reliable first-hand information from participants and allow researchers to generalize findings to a broader population (Cohen et al., 2018). The design was therefore well-suited to the objectives of this study, which sought to explore and describe the leadership and management practices implemented by headteachers during the pandemic.

3.5 Population

The population for this study comprised all 85 private basic school headteachers in the Gomoa East District (GEDED, 2022). These individuals were responsible for overseeing school operations, implementing COVID-19 safety protocols, ensuring continuity of learning, and managing financial and human resource challenges during the pandemic.

Fraenkel et al. (2015) define a population as the entire group of individuals to which the researcher wishes to generalize findings. Similarly, Saunders et al. (2019) describe it as the complete set of cases from which a sample can be drawn. The

selection of headteachers as the study population is justified because they occupy key leadership roles and were directly responsible for the management of schools during the pandemic. Their perspectives and practices are therefore central to understanding the challenges and responses in educational emergencies.

The population was diverse in terms of school size, resource availability, and professional experience. Some headteachers managed small rural schools with fewer than 50 pupils, while others led larger urban institutions with more than 300 learners. Their years of leadership experience ranged from newly appointed heads to veteran administrators with over two decades in the profession. This diversity enriched the study, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of school leadership during COVID-19.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A total of 50 headteachers were selected as the sample for the study. This represents approximately 59% of the total population, which is considered adequate for descriptive research. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), sampling more than 30% of the population is generally sufficient to ensure representativeness and reduce sampling error, particularly when the population is relatively small.

The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) simplified formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample size, N is the population (85), and e is the margin of error. Based on this formula, a sample size of 50 yields an acceptable margin of error of 9–10%, which is suitable for small population studies (Israel, 2019).

The simple random sampling technique was employed to select participants. This method ensured that every headteacher had an equal chance of being included in the study, thereby minimizing selection bias and enhancing the generalizability of the findings (Bryman, 2016; Patton, 2015). The process involved assigning numbers to all 85 headteachers and randomly selecting 50 from the list. Simple random sampling was considered appropriate because the population was relatively homogenous in terms of the core characteristics of interest leadership roles and responsibilities during COVID-19 era.

3.7 Site and Subject Characteristics

The choice of the Gomoa East District as the context for this study is justified on several grounds. The district has a significant number of private basic schools, which play a crucial role in providing access to education along the public institutions. According to the Gomoa East District Education Directorate (2022), private basic schools constitute a larger proportion of the total number of basic schools in the district, serving a diverse range of learners. This makes the district a strategic and representative site for understanding how private schools headteachers respond to educational emergencies.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed notable variations in the management practices of school headteachers, particularly in private institutions where resources, policy directives, and external support often differ from those available to public schools. The Gomoa East District presents a unique case in that many private basic schools operate with limited government assistance, compelling headteachers to independently devise strategies for continuity of teaching and learning, health safety, and stakeholder engagement during emergencies. Studying this context provides an

opportunity to explore leadership and management practices in a setting where adaptability and resourcefulness are paramount.

The Gomoe East district was affected by the pandemic's disruptions, including prolonged school closures, loss of instructional time, financial strain on school operations, and psychosocial challenges for staff and learners. This made it a fertile ground for applying the positivist paradigm which emphasizes objective measurement and empirical observation to assess the extent, patterns, and effectiveness of management practices.

The Gomoe East district is one of the twenty-two (22) districts in the Central Region of Ghana. The district was carved out as a separate district from the then Gomoe East district, Afransi in 2008 by the Legislative Instrument (LI) 1883 and became operational in 16th June, 2008. By LI (2340), 2017, the new Gomoe East district became operational on 15th March, 2018 with the new capital at Gomoe Potsin, separating it from the erstwhile Gomoe East with LI 1883 which had Gomoe Afransi as its Capital. It occupies an area of about 260.69 square kilometers. (GEDA 2020). The population of Gomoe East District, according to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, is three hundred and eight thousand six hundred and nine-seven (308, 697) representing three point four percent (3.4%) of the Region's total population. Males constitute forty-nine percent (49%) of the total percentage with a figure of One Hundred and Fifty-Two Thousand Two Hundred and Thirty-Eight (152,238) and females represent fifty-one percent (51%) with a figure of One Hundred and Fifty-Six Thousand Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine (156,459). The urban population is eighty-seven percent (87%) with a total urban household population of two hundred sixty seven thousand four hundred and twenty-one (276,

421). However, the rural household population stands at forty-one thousand two hundred and seventy-six representing thirteen percent (13%). The populous language spoken by the inhabitants is mostly Fante (Gomoa).

Agriculture is the key economic activity in the district. It employs over sixty percent (60%) of the total labour force in the district. The Agricultural sector constitutes the major economic activity of the people in the district. Total agricultural land is estimated at 169.25 square meters. The ecology of the district encourages the cultivation of crops such as cassava, maize, sugar cane, pineapple, rice, pawpaw, vegetable, citrus, yam and plantain. There are however, very few small scale aqua-cultures in areas around Okyereko and Adzintem.

The educational facilities in the district are neither evenly nor equitably distributed across the entire district. The southern area (Nyanyano and Ojobi / Akotsi area councils) has the highest level of Educational facilities as compare to the northern areas (Dominase, Area council).

There are eighty-five (85) private basic schools in the district and about eighty percent (80%) of these schools are mostly located in the Nyanyano and Buduburam circuit whiles the remaining 20% located in the Potsin, Ojobi and Buduatta circuits. There are six (6) Senior High Schools in the district. This figure comprises 3 public and 3 private SHS (GEDED EMIS 2022).

3.8 Research Instrument

The primary data collection instrument for this study was a questionnaire. Questionnaires are effective tools for collecting data from a large number of respondents within a short period (Fowler, 2013). Bryman (2014) is also of the view

that, the questionnaire is one of the most widely used instruments for collecting data in survey research. According to him, the appeal of the questionnaire partly stems from its cheapness and quickness in terms of administration, the absence of the interviewer effect and its convenience for correspondence.

Questionnaires are commonly used in quantitative research because they allow for the collection of standardized information from a large sample, making comparisons across respondents possible (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). They allow for the standardized collection of data, making it easier to compare responses and analyze results quantitatively. Apart from these advantages, the survey questionnaire also enables one to collect standardized information in respect of the same variables for everyone in the sample selected. The questionnaire was developed after a careful review of relevant literature on school leadership during crises to cover all aspects of the research objectives on the management practices of headteachers in educational emergencies during Covid-19 era in Gomoa East district and this ensured that the questions were aligned with both the study objectives and established measures of effective school management practices. The questionnaire was structured to contain closed-ended questions to make choices from alternative responses.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring validity and reliability is critical in educational research to guarantee that the instrument measures what it intends to measure and produces consistent results.

Validity refers to the accuracy of the instrument in capturing the intended constructs (Creswell, 2014). To ensure content validity, the draft questionnaire was reviewed by experts in educational management and research methodology, including two university lecturers and one official from the District Education Directorate. Their

feedback helped refine ambiguous items, improve wording, and ensure coverage of all relevant dimensions of management practices. Construct validity was enhanced by basing the items on theoretical frameworks of leadership and management in education (Bush, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020).

Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the consistency and stability of the instrument across time and respondents (Fraenkel et al., 2015). To establish reliability, a pilot test was conducted with 10 headteachers from neighboring districts (Agona West Municipal Education) who were not part of the study sample. Data from the pilot were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which is widely recognized as a measure of internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained, which exceeds the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instrument was reliable for the main study.

3.10 Pre-Test

Fogelman & Comber (2007) suggest that undertaking a pre-test study before the main study is sensible for the sake of the clarity and validity of the instrument to be used. McMillan & Schumacher (2006) recommend that it is best to locate a sample of subjects with characteristics similar to those that will be used in the study and the administration of the pre-test study instruments should be the same as that to be used in the study. Turner (2010) adds that a pre-test tests the research instruments on a small number of persons with similar characteristics to the research population.

Prior to the start of the data collection, the researcher conducted a pre-test study of the questionnaire on 10 private basic schools headteachers in the Agona West Municipal. The distribution of Covid-19 PPEs was a national exercise and all

schools in the country benefitted including both Public and Private schools. The rationale was to assess the appropriateness of the instrument and also to find out from respondents how long it took them to complete the questionnaires; whether the instructions and items were clearly understood (Creswell, (2014). These respondents were issued with copies of the questionnaires to discuss and critique the content of the instrument. Opie (2004) argues that the piloting phase has a great importance since it helps to avoid vague questions that may appear in the instruments. Further, pre-testing influences the relevance of the instruments and its ease of understanding by the respondents. Pre-testing, or pilot testing, involves administering the questionnaire to a small group of respondents to identify any issues with the instrument (Creswell, 2014). A pilot test was conducted with 10 headteachers from Agona West Municipal. Feedback from the pilot test was used to refine the questionnaire, ensuring clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the questions.

3.11 Data Collection Procedures

After securing an introductory letter from the Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Administration and Management, University of Education Winneba necessary approvals from the Gomoa East district education directorate, the required number of copies of both the introductory letter and the questionnaires were made and with the consent from the participating headteachers, data collection was carried out over a month period. The researcher with the support of the SISOs administered the questionnaires to ensure a high response rate and to clarify any uncertainties regarding the items.

The researcher at one of the private basic school meetings with the District Director, took the opportunity to explain to the sampled headteachers about the purpose of this exercise and also to seek their consent

Given the contagious nature of COVID-19, precautionary measures such as the wearing of face masks, hand sanitizing, and physical distancing were observed during the administration process. Where face-to-face interactions were not feasible, the researcher arranged for questionnaires to be distributed and collected through electronic platforms such as email and WhatsApp, which had been increasingly used in education during the pandemic (Zhang, Wang, & Ho, 2021).

Follow-ups were made through phone calls to ensure that respondents returned the completed questionnaires within the stipulated time. This approach resulted in a 100% retrieval rate, as all 50 distributed questionnaires were successfully collected and used for the analysis.

3.12 Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected were subjected to quantitative analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were used to summarize the data and present an overall picture of the headteachers' management practices. Descriptive statistics are particularly useful in survey research because they provide a clear summary of respondents' views and allow for easy comparison across variables (Saunders et al., 2019).

In addition, inferential statistics such as chi-square tests and correlation analysis were applied to examine relationships between variables such as years of experience, school size, and management practices. This enhanced the ability of the

study to make generalizations about the population of private school headteachers in the district.

The choice of these methods is consistent with Creswell & Creswell (2018) assert that quantitative analysis provides objectivity and rigor in testing relationships among variables. Moreover, the use of SPSS ensured that the data were analyzed systematically, reducing the risk of human error and increasing the credibility of the findings.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

According to Klenke, (2016) ethical considerations form a significant element in research. They emphasized that the researcher needs to adhere to these ethics in order to promote the aims of the research, discover authentic knowledge and truth and prevent of errors. The researcher informed respondents that, participation in this study is voluntary and respondent can withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. The researcher implemented measures to protect the confidentiality of participants by coding data and store data securely. The researcher made sure no one accessed the data except the researcher and also ensured data was used solely for the study's purposes it was designed for. To maintain objectivity by avoiding any bias in data collection, analysis, and reporting, the researcher used standardized procedures for administering questionnaires and analyzing data. The researcher was committed to protecting the privacy and anonymity of every information provided by all participants. This was done by numerically coding each returned questionnaire and keeping the responses confidential. There was no trace of identifying the participants' schools. The recorded data was coded, transcribed and stored in the researcher's computer for research use only. It was kept confidential

and access required a password. The raw material was destroyed after the researcher completed his work.

3.14 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter outlined the systematic approach adopted to investigate the management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of COVID-19. By employing a quantitative approach, a descriptive survey design, and robust sampling and data collection methods, this study aimed to provide reliable and valid findings that contributed to the understanding of how headteachers managed schools during educational emergencies. The next chapter is chapter four and it presented the research result from the data gathered.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected from headteachers on management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of Covid-19 in the Gomoe East District. It addressed the research questions posed in Chapter One. The analysis were based on the following objectives;

- i. investigating the management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of Covid-19 in the Gomoe East District,
- ii. identifying the management challenges of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies during the Covid 19 era,
- iii. examine the supports provided to the headteachers to manage their school during Covid-19 era and
- iv. explore the strategies that can be adopted to improve the management practices of private basic headteachers in the Covid 19 era.

This section is sub-divided into questionnaire return rate, Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher gave out 50 questionnaires and all of them were properly filled and returned. Hence, the study recorded a 100 percent response rate.

4.3 Background Information

The study focused on gender, respondent position, academic qualifications and years of service as headteacher. These were used because they had a potential of affecting the nature of responses given.

4.3.1 Gender

The researcher deemed it important for the respondents to indicate their gender. The results are displayed in table 4.2.1 below.

Table 4.1: Gender Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents	Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Headteachers	Male	28	56
	Female	22	44
Total		50	100

Source: Field work, August, 2023

From Table 1, the respondents were well represented. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents were males while the female respondents were 22 constituting 44%. Thus, there was fairness in the selection of the respondents and also this could be that the male population in the study area exceeds that of the female population.

4.3.2 Academic Qualification

The education level of headteachers were analyzed and categorized as shown in the table 2 below.

Table 4.2: Academic Qualification

Respondents	Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Headteachers	Master's Degree	1	2
	Bachelor's Degree	35	70
	Diploma Certificate	14	28
Total		50	100

Source: Field work, August, 2020

The respondents indicated their educational qualifications. From table 2 (2%) had attained Master's Degree, while 35 (70%) had attained a Bachelor's Degree and 14 (28%) had attained Diploma Certificate. These were indications that in terms of training and qualification, the headteachers were well qualified to head or handle the various private basic schools.

4.3.3 Duration of Service in Current Position

The respondents were also asked to specify their duration of service in their current position as headteachers. The results indicated in table 3 below.

Table 4.3: Duration of Service in Current Position

Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5	5	10
6 -10	15	30
11-15	25	50
16- 20	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Field work, August, 2023

As displayed in table 4.3, respondents who had worked in their current position as headteachers for 1-5 years made up of 5 (10%) while 15 (30%) had served for 6-10 years. For respondents who had worked for the period from 11—15 years constitute 25 (50%) and for those who had served for 16-20 years made up of 5 (10%). Per the results, no respondent had served for more than 21 years as a headteacher. The inference drawn from the results was that about more than half the total number of respondents in the private basic schools in the district had been in school administration for more than 5 years and they are maybe well experienced in school administration. This experience can afford the headteachers to manage and undertake decisions that would help improve the status of the school during pandemics.

4.4 Location of School

The respondents were asked to indicate the location of their respective schools and their responses are as indicated in figure table five below.

Table 4.4: Location of school

Location	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Urban	30	60
Rural	20	40
Total	50	100

Source: Field work, August, 2023

From table 4.3, 30 (60%) schools are located in the urban centres whereas 20 (40%) schools are located in the rural centres.

4.5 Key to Interpreting Results

The management practices of private basic school headteachers play a critical role in enhancing the quality of education and to gather evidence for the studies, the headteachers were made to rate their responses to the statements using the Likert scale; strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree or strongly agree. The mean ranges for the statements were scored as strongly disagree=1, disagree= 2, not sure= 3, agree= 4 and strongly agree= 5. A criterion value of 3.00 was established for the scale. To obtain the criterion value (CV=3.00), the scores were added together and divided by the number in the scale that is $(1+2+3+4+5=15/5=3)$.

This means individual statements that were scored more than 3 were regarded as agreement to that statement. Attitude determined is based on the argument that a mean score of 3 in Likert scale represents neutral attitude, mean score of less than 3 represents negative attitude and greater than 3 represents a positive attitude. The

range of interpreting the Likert scale means score was given as follows: 1.0-2.4 (Negative attitude), 2.5-3.4 (Neutral attitude), and 3.5-5.0 (Positive attitude).

To assess these practices, various aspects were measured and analyzed using mean values and standard deviations. This discussion delved into these findings with reference to relevant literature, providing insights into their implications for educational management. The mean represents the average value of a data set, providing a central point around which data points are distributed. The standard deviation measures the amount of variation or dispersion from the mean, indicating how spread out the values in a dataset are.

4.6 Presentation of Main Results

This section discussed the main results of the research questions that were posed to guide the study. Data on the research questions sections B, C, D, E, and F were collected on a five point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree and strongly agree). The score of the Likert scale was given as: strongly disagree=1, disagree= 2, not sure= 3, agree= 4 and strongly agree= 5.

Research Question One: What are the Management practices of private basic school headteachers during the Covid 19 pandemics?

The essence of this research question was to investigate the management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of Covid-19 in the Gomoa East District. This was to help find out how different the respondents managed their schools during the Covid and what had changed after the easing of the Covid restriction within their work environments. The respondents were required to rate their various management roles.

Table 6 respondents' responses on management practices of private basic school during the Covid 19 pandemic are tabulated below.

Table 4.5: Management practices of respondents during Covid 19

Management Practices.... The Head	SD	D	NS	A	SA	M	SD
Provided supplementary regular classroom instructions.	1	1	0	28	20	4.3	0.76
Provided a counselling session to students.	0	0	0	30	20	4.4	0.49
Distributed resources to teachers to promote teaching and learning.	0	0	2	12	36	4.5	0.57
Conducted regular classroom monitoring and supervision of lessons.	0	0	0	12	38	4.8	0.43
Spent money to manage the school and its activities.	0	0	0	14	36	4.7	0.45
Vetted and marked teachers' lesson notes and scheme of work.	0	0	0	0	50	5.0	0.00
Organized SBI -service training for teachers on good practices.	0	0	0	16	34	4.7	0.45
Inspected students' exercise books to ensure adequate class exercise	0	0	0	18	32	4.6	0.48
Ensured punctuality of students to school	0	0	0	32	18	4.4	0.48
Ensured punctuality of teachers to school.	0	0	0	25	25	4.5	0.50
Ensured regularity of attendance of students to school.	0	0	0	28	22	4.4	0.25
Ensured regularity of attendance of teachers to school.	0	0	0	28	22	4.4	0.25
Ensured clean environment to promote safe schools.	0	0	0	14	36	4.7	0.45

Source: Field work, August, 2023

The calculated limits 4.21-5.00 was interpreted as a very high rating; 3.5-4.2 indicates high rating; 2.5-3.4 means moderate; 1.81-2.5 is interpreted as low rating whilst 1.00-1.80 shows a case of very low rating, (Ampofo, (2015). Since all the means were more than 3.5 for all the statements on the management practices we conclude that the headteachers had high positive perception towards them. This implies that if all these aspect of management practices were well applied and implemented then they could lead to high and improved performance.

Provision supplementary regular classroom instruction

The results showed that headteachers provided supplementary regular classroom instruction as a management practice, 28 agreed to the response while 20 strongly agreed to the response out of total respondents. The mean score of 4.3 for the statement of provision of supplementary regular classroom instructions is a positive perception towards the statement. This indicated that headteachers were aware of the responsibilities and practices and this had an effect on school management as Oldroyd & Hall (1990) suggest, understanding what a manager does is a necessary prerequisite to doing it effectively; they added that in essence, managers lead, manage and administrate. During the pandemic, supplementary classroom instructions were essential to adapt to remote and hybrid learning environments. According to UNESCO (2020), providing additional instructional support helped mitigate learning losses and maintain educational standards. The high perception score of mean score 4.3 with a standard deviation of 0.76 indicates that supplementary instructions effectively supported students in coping with the disruptions caused by the pandemic. This indicates a high level of provision of supplementary classroom instructions with moderate consistency. According to Leithwood & Jantzi (2004), effective instructional leadership, which includes

supplementary instructions, significantly improves student outcomes. The moderate standard deviation suggests variability in how consistently this practice is applied, possibly reflecting differing school policies or teacher capabilities.

Provision of counselling session to students

With regards to the provision of counselling session to students during the Covid era, 30 of the headteachers agreed while 20 strongly agreed. This implied that majority of the headteachers agreed that the provision of counselling session to students during the Covid era was necessary with a mean score of 4.4 and it is a high positive perception. The Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted mental health of students and effective counseling sessions were crucial for supporting both students and teachers. The World Health Organization (2020) emphasized the importance of mental health services in educational settings. The positive feedback underscores the role of counseling in promoting a conducive learning environment and addressing the emotional needs of the school community. With a mean of 4.4, the provision of counseling sessions is highly rated and consistent. Studies by Carey (2009), show that counseling supports students' academic and emotional well-being, contributing to overall school success. The low standard deviation of 0.49 suggests that this practice is uniformly adopted across the schools surveyed.

Distribution of resources to teachers to promote teaching and learning

About the distribution of resources to teachers to promote teaching and learning during the Covid-19 era, 2 were not sure, 12 and 36 agreed and strongly agreed respectively to the statement. A total of 48 implies that majority of the respondents agreed that distribution of resources to teachers promoted teaching and learning in the school during the Covid 19 era. Providing necessary resources was critical for

teachers to deliver effective remote instruction. The OECD (2020) highlighted that resource allocation was a key factor in the success of remote learning initiatives. The high perception score reflects the importance of equipping teachers with the tools they needed to maintain teaching quality during the pandemic. This indicated a strong commitment to resource distribution, crucial for teaching efficacy as highlighted by Fullan (2007). The moderate standard deviation of 0.57 suggests some variability, potentially due to differences in school funding or administrative efficiency.

Regular classroom monitoring and supervision of lesson

The findings showed that majority 38 of the respondents responded that they strongly agree to conducting regular classroom monitoring and supervision of lesson while 12 agreed with a means score of 4.8 toward positive perception. Regular monitoring and supervision ensured that teaching standards were maintained. Research by Kraft & Papay (2014) found that consistent feedback and oversight significantly enhanced teaching effectiveness. The positive perception indicates that regular supervision was effective in ensuring educational standards and supporting teachers in adapting to new instructional methods. A mean of 4.8 signifies very high engagement in monitoring and supervision. Effective monitoring is linked to improved teaching practices and student performance (Robinson 2011). The low standard deviation of 0.48 indicates this practice is consistently executed.

Spending money to manage the school and its activities

With regards to spending money to manage the school and its activities, 14 and 36 headteachers responded agreed and strongly agreed respectively with a mean score of 4.7. Financial investment in technology, health measures, and training was

indispensable. The Education Endowment Foundation (2020) noted that schools which invested in these areas were better prepared for pandemic-related disruptions. The positive feedback highlights the necessity of financial commitment to sustain school operations and support educational continuity. The high mean of 4.7 and low standard deviation of 0.45 indicates robust and consistent financial management practices across the schools.

Vetting and marking of teacher's lesson notes and scheme of work

With a mean score of 5.0 all respondents 50 unanimously agreed strongly to the statement of vetting and marking of teacher's lesson notes and scheme of work as a management practice during the Covid-19. Ensuring that lesson plans and teaching materials were current and effective was vital. According to Marzano (2003), such practices ensure consistency and quality in instruction. The positive perception reflects the effectiveness of vetting and marking in maintaining instructional quality and alignment with educational goals. The perfect mean and zero standard deviation suggest universal and rigorous vetting of lesson notes, reflecting a standardized practice essential for maintaining teaching quality and curriculum alignment (Marzano, 2003).

Organized school based in-service training for teachers

With a mean score of 4.7, 16 and 34 headteachers responded agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they organized school based in-service training for teachers on good practices during on the Covid-19 era. Professional development was crucial as teachers adapted to new teaching methods and technologies.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) highlighted that targeted professional development enhances teachers' skills and effectiveness. The high perception score indicates that

in-service training was essential in equipping teachers with the necessary skills to handle the challenges of the Covid-era. In-service training is vital for professional development. The high mean of 4.7 and low standard deviation of 0.45 indicates that such training is highly valued and consistently provided.

Inspected students' exercise books to ensure teachers set adequate class exercises

With a mean score of 4.6 of positive perception, 18 and 32 headteachers responded agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they inspected students' exercise books to ensure teachers set adequate class exercises. Regular inspection of students' work ensured accountability and maintained educational standards. Black & Wiliam (1998) emphasize the importance of formative assessment in promoting student learning and engagement. The positive feedback suggests that regular inspections were effective in ensuring that students received adequate and meaningful class exercises. While the mean is high, the very high standard deviation 0.48 suggests significant variability in this practice. This could be due to differing inspection frequencies or criteria across schools.

Punctuality of students and teachers

The findings showed that majority of headteachers responded to ensuring that measures were put in place to check punctuality of students and teachers to school with a man score of 4.4 and 4.5 respectively. Punctuality is linked to better academic performance and discipline. Research by Gottfried (2014) shows that attendance and punctuality significantly impact student achievement.

The high perception score indicates that measures to ensure student punctuality were effective in promoting discipline and academic success. Again teacher punctuality is

essential for setting a professional standard and ensuring full instructional time. The positive perception suggests strong leadership in maintaining professional standards despite disruptions. The high feedback reflects the effectiveness of measures to ensure teacher punctuality, which contributed to a stable and professional learning environment.

Check regularity of students and teachers

The findings showed that, all respondents responded to ensuring that measures were put in place to check regularity of students and teachers to school. Regular attendance is critical for learning continuity. Kearney (2008) stresses the importance of attendance for academic success. The positive perception indicates that strategies to engage students and ensure regular attendance were successful, which is vital for consistent learning. Teacher attendance was vital for maintaining educational delivery. Ingersoll (2001) highlights the impact of regular teacher attendance on educational stability.

The high perception score suggests effective strategies were in place to ensure teacher attendance, supporting consistent and stable instruction. High mean value of 4.4 with low standard deviation of 0.25 indicate that punctuality and attendance are consistently enforced, reflecting the importance of discipline and regularity in school performance.

Clean environment to promote a safe school

With regards to ensuring a clean environment to promote a safe school 14 and 36 agreed and strongly agreed respectively responded that measures were put in place to keep the school clean and safe with a mean score of 4.7. Hygiene and cleanliness were paramount during the pandemic to prevent virus spread. The CDC (2020)

recommended rigorous cleaning protocols in schools. The positive feedback reflects the effectiveness of maintaining a clean environment, which was essential for the safe operation of schools during the pandemic.

A clean environment is critical for health and learning. The high mean value of 4.7 and low standard deviation of 0.45 suggests strong and consistent practices in maintaining school cleanliness.

The high perception scores of mean values for these management practices indicated that private basic school headteachers implemented effective strategies to navigate the educational challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Their proactive and comprehensive approach ensured educational continuity, maintained high standards, and supported the well-being of both students and staff. The findings again indicate that private school headteachers generally excel in various management practices, with most showing high mean values and low standard deviations, signifying consistent and effective application.

These practices align well with the literature on effective school management, highlighting the critical role of leadership in educational success. The variability in some areas suggests opportunities for standardization and improvement to ensure uniformly high standards across all schools.

Research Question Two: What are the management challenges of private basic schools headteachers during Covid-19?

The researcher intended to get responses on the management challenges of headteachers in practicing their managerial role in the private basic schools during

Covid-19 era. The responses were classified and categorised. The respondents were required to rate the various management roles they played.

Table 4.6: Management challenges of headteachers during Covid 19

The Head had a challenge with	SD	D	NS	A	SA	M	SD
Limited infrastructural challenges during the Covid 19 era.	3	4	9	12	22	3.9	1.23
Managing both students and teachers during the Covid period.	1	5	7	13	24	4.0	1.12
Managing the change in learning process of students.	6	2	7	18	17	3.8	1.29
Monitoring and supervising teachers who did online teaching.	5	7	12	17	9	3.4	1.21
Managing the cost associated with the Covid 19 management.	5	3	0	20	22	4.0	1.26
Increased in the responsibilities and workload during the era.	4	7	14	1	24	3.9	1.41
Managing the stress and fear of COVID-19 infection.	6	5	0	14	25	3.9	1.98
Making provision for different breaks in teaching hours.	6	9	7	9	19	3.5	1.45
Managing school hours to ensure that protocols are followed.	8	2	0	16	24	3.9	1.42

Source: Field work, August, 2023

Limited infrastructural challenges

It was the target of the study to ascertain whether the respondents faced any form of managerial challenges in managing the private basic schools in the midst of the Covid restrictions.

From the findings, it showed that 22 respondents strongly agreed they had limited infrastructural challenges during the Covid 19 whereas 12 respondents agreed. Nine (9) respondents were not sure of the effect of any infrastructural challenges. Four (4) disagreed and 3 strongly disagreed to the statement of limited infrastructural challenges. The mean score of 3.9 suggested that majority of the headteachers agreed to the statement.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light significant infrastructure challenges in educational institutions. The headteacher's experience, reflected by a mean score of 3.9, indicates a substantial difficulty in this area, with a standard deviation of 1.23. According to Azorín (2020), the sudden shift to remote learning exposed the inadequacies in technological infrastructure in many schools, especially those in under-resourced areas. Literature from Dorn et al. (2020) supports this, highlighting that schools with pre-existing infrastructure issues faced more pronounced challenges in transitioning to online education. There were infrastructural challenges due to the physical distance observed by the school.

Managing of both students and teachers

From the responses on managing of both students and teachers during the Covid 19 era, it showed that 24 respondents strongly agreed, 13 agreed, 7 were not sure, 5 disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed that managing both students and teachers during the Covid-19 era was a challenge. Managing both teachers and students was

particularly challenging due to the abrupt shift to remote learning and the need to address varied needs. UNESCO (2020) noted that maintaining engagement and motivation among students and staff was a significant difficulty during the pandemic. The high mean score of 4.0 highlights this as a good perception and most challenging aspect for headteachers, indicating a need for better support systems and strategies to manage dual responsibilities effectively.

The pandemic required headteachers to balance the needs and expectations of both students and teachers, a significant challenge indicated by a mean of 4.0. The standard deviation of 1.12 suggests this was a consistently difficult task. According to Schleicher (2020), managing remote learning logistics and ensuring engagement and well-being were primary concerns for educational leaders during the pandemic. The headteacher faced considerable challenges in managing both students and teachers, a difficulty shared widely across educational institutions as reflected by the literature. The consistency in the challenge is underscored by the relatively low standard deviation.

Managing the change in learning process of students

The findings of the study revealed diverse responses regarding how headteachers managed the shift in the learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic. Six respondents strongly disagreed and two disagreed that the change was effectively managed, while seven were undecided. However, 18 and 17 respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively, suggesting that most headteachers recognized that the traditional face-to-face teaching and learning practices were heavily disrupted. This shows that the transition required a significant re-adjustment to teaching and learning practices, which did not come without challenges.

Bennett and Lancaster (1986) argue that change within organizations is not simply the introduction of new policies or compliance with external directives, but rather involves individuals developing personal strategies to adapt and influence structural and cultural transformations.

In the case of schools, this meant that teachers, learners, and administrators needed to adapt personally as much as organizationally. Without strong commitment and trust among staff, innovations risked being introduced in ways that encouraged dysfunctional behaviours. This was reflected in the responses, where some teachers and leaders struggled with the new learning methods.

The study produced a mean score of 3.8 with a standard deviation of 1.29, which indicates moderate variability in the way respondents experienced the transition. According to Hodges et al. (2020), the sudden shift to online learning created major challenges for both educators and learners, particularly because many had limited time to develop the competencies required for virtual teaching. For headteachers in private basic schools, this was an even greater challenge because they were tasked with leading the transition without adequate preparation or resources. The findings confirm that the shift in the learning process was not uniform, and while some schools adapted better, others encountered serious difficulties.

Monitoring and supervision of teachers who did online teaching

Another significant issue raised in the study was the monitoring and supervision of teachers who taught online during the COVID-19 period. The responses showed that five participants strongly disagreed and seven disagreed that supervision was a major challenge. On the other hand, 12 respondents were uncertain whether online teaching even occurred in their schools, suggesting gaps in reporting and

communication. However, a majority of 17 respondents agreeing and nine strongly agreeing indicated that monitoring and supervising online teaching posed real challenges to headteachers.

Ho, Chee, & Ho (2020) emphasized that the sudden transition to online learning was especially difficult for schools in developing contexts due to poor infrastructure, inadequate planning, and limited access to technological resources. In many cases, both teachers and students lacked familiarity with digital learning tools, and this lack of technical competence limited the ability of headteachers to monitor effectively. The mean score of 3.4 and a standard deviation of 1.21 further reflected that while the challenges were widespread, their intensity varied across schools.

Karalis (2020) also pointed out that online learning represents a unique methodology that requires new forms of acceptance, adaptation, and training. Teachers and students were not fully prepared for such a drastic shift, and as a result, many learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, relied on television, radio, or self-study methods to keep up. In this context, headteachers struggled to design supervisory mechanisms that could ensure accountability and instructional quality.

Harris and Jones (2020) further argued that remote supervision requires innovative strategies such as digital feedback systems, which many schools in low-resource contexts could not adopt. These findings highlight that while headteachers attempted to supervise teachers in online spaces, their efforts were often constrained by limited familiarity with digital applications and the absence of proper monitoring structures.

Managing the cost associated with Covid 19 management

The study also explored how headteachers managed school hours to ensure adherence to COVID-19 protocols. The responses showed that eight strongly disagreed and two disagreed, while 16 agreed and 24 strongly agreed that managing school hours to enforce protocols was a challenge. This reveals that a majority of respondents recognized that restructuring school schedules was necessary to comply with safety measures.

Van Lancker and Parolin (2020) noted that the pandemic significantly disrupted school operations and family routines globally. In Ghana, many headteachers had to adjust school hours, implement shifts, and reorganize timetables to maintain physical distancing.

Parents were also hesitant to send their children to school, further complicating school management. For headteachers, ensuring that students complied with safety protocols such as wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and observing physical distancing required close monitoring and continuous adjustment of school routines.

Handling increased responsibilities and workload

The responses on handling increased responsibilities and workload during the Covid 19 era showed that 4 strongly disagreed, 7 disagreed 14 respondents were not sure. However, one response agreed and 24 strongly agreed that there was an increased in the responsibilities and workload of headteachers during the era.

The increased workload and responsibilities during the pandemic were substantial, as indicated by a mean of 3.9. The standard deviation of 1.41 suggests a high degree of variability in how headteachers experienced these challenges. Kim & Asbury

(2020) discuss the unprecedented demands placed on school leaders to manage new operational protocols and support both staff and students.

The headteacher faced significant increases in workload and responsibilities, consistent with the experiences documented in the literature. The variability suggests that the impact of these challenges differed widely.

On managing the stress and the fear of Covid 19 infection

From the responses on managing the stress and the fear of Covid 19 infection during the Covid 19 era showed that 6 respondents strongly disagreed, 5 disagreed. However, 14 agreed and 25 strongly agreed. The high standard deviation (1.98) alongside a mean of 3.9 highlights significant variability in managing stress and fear of infection.

According to Greenberg et al. (2020), the psychological impact of the pandemic on school leaders was profound, with varying degrees of stress depending on individual and contextual factors. The challenge of managing stress and fear of infection was notable but varied widely. The literature corroborates the existence of these challenges, emphasizing the diverse impacts on school leaders.

Making provision for different breaks in teaching hours

From table 9, making provision for different breaks in teaching hours during the Covid 19 era in private basic schools in the Gomaa East district were responded as follows. 6 strongly disagreed, 9 disagreed, 7 were not sure, 9 agreed while 19 strongly agreed. The mean score of 3.5 indicates moderate challenges in adjusting teaching hours, with a standard deviation of 1.45 showing some variability.

According to Dhawan (2020), reconfiguring school schedules to accommodate online learning and ensure adherence to health protocols was complex and required significant adjustments. The headteacher faced moderate challenges in this area, with the literature supporting the need for flexible scheduling during the pandemic. The variability in experiences is reflected in the standard deviation.

Managing school hours to ensure that the protocols were followed

Responses on managing school hours to ensure that the protocols were followed during the Covid-19 era showed that, 8 strongly disagreed, 2 disagreed, 16 agreed while 24 strongly agreed. The corona virus attack had a significant impact on the education system and structure as lack of operational activities, and closure of educational institutions has affected the progress.

As per the views of Van Lancker & Parolin, (2020), the parents and national governments are keen to protect the people and working on the plan to manage the operations and to this, many parents will avoid sending their children abroad for higher education due to the high risk of virus attack in the coming years.

Research Question Three: What are the supports that were provided to the headteachers to manage their school during Covid-19 era?

The objective of this question was to identify the various supports headteachers received to manage their schools during Covid-19 era in the Gomoa East district education. The respondents rated the various support received in the management of their schools in the era of Covid 19. These are included in table 5 below;

Table 4.7: Supports to management practices

SUPPORT	SD	D	NS	A	SA	M	SD
Parents provided enough PPEs to their wards during the period.	15	6	0	15	14	3.14	1.65
GES officers monitored the observation of Covid-19 restrictions.	1	23	6	10	10	3.10	1.24
Parent Association provided facilities and other support.	1	32	0	17	0	2.66	0.97
GES officers provided enough PPEs to students to fight Covid-19.	1	3	0	40	6	3.94	0.73
GES officers provided teaching support to schools.	0	22	0	17	11	3.34	1.24
GES provided information on the management of the Covid 19 to the school.	6	0	0	29	15	3.94	1.04

Source: Field work, August, 2023

Finally, the study investigated whether private basic schools received any form of support during the pandemic. After the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, schools were confronted with unprecedented disruptions to their normal operations (Bailey & Breslin, 2021). Respondents indicated that while some forms of resource support were provided, many schools had to manage with minimal external assistance.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020) defines resource allocation as the process of budgeting, acquiring, and utilizing financial, physical, and personnel resources. In the case of private schools, financial resources became critical for procuring sanitizers, masks, and digital devices. Dollinger (2006) argues that financial resources shape the extent to which organizations can acquire

necessary tools, equipment, and training for staff. Similarly, physical resources such as classrooms and equipment had to be reconfigured, while personnel resources, including teachers and co-curricular leaders, required retraining to adapt to new management practices.

Overall, the findings suggest that although schools attempted to manage with the resources available, the pandemic underscored the vulnerability of private schools in times of crisis. The lack of strong systemic support from government and external agencies meant that headteachers bore much of the responsibility for innovating and adapting to the new educational realities.

Parents' provision of Personal Protective Equipment

The responses on parents' provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to their wards during the Covid 19 era in private basic schools in the district were recorded as follows. The responses showed that 15 strongly disagreed, 6 disagreed, and 15 agreed while 14 strongly agreed.

Dampson et, at. (2020) said the more involved parents are with their children's schooling, the greater it seems are the chances of their children doing well. They added that even though the ways in which parental involvement help children's attainment are not well-understood, research has shown their positive effect on pupil motivation.

Brighouse & Tomlinson (1991) said that research shows that schools in which pupils do well are all characterized by good home-school relations. Parents do seem influential particularly in the private sector. This was the assertion of Fox 1985, that Parents who choose to educate their children privately, at high cost, not only have a

greater degree of influence over the content and organization of the education that their children receive, but in making this choice they must also possess a view of the nature of the world into which their sons are poised to enter. Parents relate to the school as private persons attempting to rescue the best for their own children in a value system and that of the school.

There is no education system exists in a vacuum, and that of school environments help define school purpose and meaning, as well as define school functions and limitations. Each person in the school brings values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours from outside the schools that affect the internal workings of schools. This was in response to the parents' involvement and the parent-school relationships in the schools of study.

The mean value of 3.14 and standard deviation of 1.65 suggests that responses were slightly above neutral but varied significantly. This implies a moderate level of agreement among respondents regarding the provision of PPEs by parents.

According to Van Lancker and Parolin (2020), the provision of PPEs and other safety measures by parents can be influenced by socioeconomic status. Families with higher incomes are more likely to afford sufficient PPEs for their children. The moderate mean value combined with a high standard deviation reflects diverse experiences and possibly socioeconomic disparities in the provision of PPEs by parents. This aligned with existing literature highlighting inequalities in resource availability among different demographic groups.

GES officers monitored the observation of the Covid-19 restrictions

The responses whether GES officers monitored the observation of the Covid-19 restrictions in private basic schools were recorded as follows. The responses showed that 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 23 disagreed, 6 were not sure and 10 each agreed and strongly agreed that GES officers monitored the observation of the Covid protocols in schools. The mean value of 3.10 with a standard deviation of 1.24 indicates a slight tendency towards agreement that GES officers effectively monitored Covid-19 restrictions, though responses varied. Effective monitoring of health protocols in schools is crucial. Studies like those by Viner et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of adherence to health guidelines to prevent outbreaks in educational settings. However, the variation in responses might reflect inconsistencies in monitoring practices. The slightly positive mean value suggested that while there was some recognition of monitoring efforts by GES officers, the significant variation indicates that these efforts may not have been uniformly perceived or implemented across different schools.

Parent Association provided facilities and other support

The responses whether PA provided facilities and other support during Covid-19 were recorded as follows; the responses showed that, 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 32 disagreed, 17 agreed that PA provided facilities and other support to the schools during the pandemic.

The mean value of 2.66 and a standard deviation of 0.97 suggest a below-neutral response, indicating that respondents generally disagreed with the statement, with relatively less variation compared to other items. Epstein (2018) highlights the vital role of parent associations in supporting schools, especially during crises. However,

the lower mean score could suggest limited engagement or capability of parent associations in providing support during the pandemic.

The generally negative perception of the support provided by parent associations might indicate challenges in mobilizing resources or effectively supporting schools during the pandemic, consistent with literature on varying levels of parental involvement and support in educational contexts.

GES Officials provided PPEs to students in fighting Covid-19

The responses on GES Officials provided PPEs to students in fighting Covid-19 in private basic schools were recorded as follows; the responses showed that 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 3 disagreed, 17, 40 agreed and 6 strongly agreed. With a mean value of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.73, indicate strong agreement that GES officers provided sufficient PPEs to students, with relatively low variability. Adequate provision of PPEs to schools is critical and according to a study by Akyeampong, (2021), governmental and institutional support in providing PPEs is essential for effective disease management in schools. This finding aligns well with positive assessments of institutional support in other contexts.

The high mean and low standard deviation suggested a consistent and positive perception of the adequacy of PPE provision by GES officers, reflecting effective institutional support in managing the pandemic.

GES Officials provided teaching support to schools

The responses on GES Officials provided teaching support to schools during the Covid 19 pandemic were recorded as follows, 22 respondents disagreed, 17 respondents agreed, while 11 strongly agreed to GES Officials providing teaching support during the pandemic. The mean value of 3.34 with a standard deviation of

1.24 suggested a moderately positive response regarding the teaching support provided by GES officers, with notable variation in responses.

Teaching support during the pandemic has been critical in ensuring educational continuity. Studies by Reimers & Schleicher (2020) emphasize the importance of such support for maintaining educational standards during disruptions.

The variation in responses could reflect differences in the effectiveness or extent of support provided. The moderately positive mean value indicates a general approval of the teaching support provided by GES officers, although the variation suggests that the quality or quantity of support may have differed across schools.

GES provided enough information on the management of the Covid-19

The responses on GES provided enough information on the management of the Covid 19 to schools during the pandemic showed that 6 respondents strongly disagreed 29 respondents agreed while 15 respondents strongly agreed. The mean value of 3.94 and standard deviation of 1.04 shows strong agreement that GES provided adequate information on managing Covid-19, though with some variability in responses. Effective communication of health guidelines and management strategies is essential during a pandemic.

Research by Punch, (2013) underscores the importance of timely and clear communication from authorities to schools. The high mean value indicates a positive perception of GES's efforts in this regard. The strong agreement on the adequacy of information provided by GES, combined with some variability, suggests overall satisfaction with the communication efforts but highlights the need for consistent and clear dissemination of information across all schools.

Research Question Four: What are the strategies that can be adopted to improve the Management Practices of Private Basic Headteachers in the Covid-19 era?

The objective of this question was to identify ways and strategies respondents can use to improve management practices of respondents in the era of Covid-19. The respondents rated the various ways of improving schools' management practices of headteachers in the era of Covid-19. These were included in the table below;

Table 4.8: Strategies to improve management practices

STRATEGIES	SD	D	NS	A	SA	M	SD
Improve upon their managerial skills on pandemic management.	0	0	2	29	19	4	0.65
Periodic workshop to improve the capacity of Heads and staff.	0	0	0	16	34	5	0.57
Improve planning and management efficiency in delivery of teaching and learning.	0	0	0	31	19	4	0.62
Attain professional knowledge in educational administration or leadership skills.	0	0	2	31	17	4	0.59
Create an environment of orderliness, mutual respect, and success.	0	0	5	19	26	4	0.79
District Assembly offices should collaborate with schools to provide resources to manage the occurrence of pandemics.	0	0	0	12	38	5	0.49
District Assembly offices need to allow private basic schools flexibility and independence in making decisions about instruction and other educational practices.	0	0	0	22	28	5	0.66
Private school owners should appoint active and innovative heads who can make changes in school administration.	0	0	2	26	22	4	0.69
Heads are to maintain and sustain good interpersonal relationships and orderly teaching and learning environment.	0	0	3	23	24	4	0.74

Source: Field work, August, 2023

From Table 9, it was evident that; just a handful of respondents were not sure as to whether the strategies suggested when implemented would bring a change in management practices. Most of the respondents agreed to the strategies that when implemented there would be massive improvement in management practices. The detail analysis of the individual items responded to by the respondents are found below.

Improve upon their managerial skills on pandemic management

The responses to improve upon headteachers' managerial skills on pandemic management during the pandemic showed that two (2) respondents were not sure, 29 agreed while 19 strongly agreed. The mean score for improving managerial skills on pandemic management is 4, with a standard deviation of 0.65. This finding highlights the need for enhanced managerial skills specifically tailored to pandemic situations.

According to Kouzes & Posner (2007), effective leadership during crises requires adaptability and decisiveness. The moderate mean suggests a recognized importance but indicates variability in current proficiency levels among managers. Improving managerial skills is crucial for effective pandemic management.

According to John Kotter in "Leading Change" (1996), strong leadership and effective management are vital in times of crisis. Kotter emphasizes the need for clear communication, strategic planning, and adaptability.

Additionally, Michael Fullan in "Leading in a Culture of Change" (2001) argues that leaders must foster a collaborative culture to navigate through unprecedented challenges successfully. There is a significant need for school heads to improve their

managerial skills to better handle pandemic situations. Effective management and leadership practices are crucial during crises.

The importance of managerial skills during pandemics cannot be overstated. Leaders who can effectively manage crises can ensure the safety and continuity of educational processes. Kotter's (1990) principles of leading change highlight the need for clear vision and strategic planning, which are crucial during pandemics. Fullan (2001) also emphasizes the role of collaborative culture in managing crises effectively. School leaders should engage in continuous professional development to improve their crisis management capabilities.

Periodic workshop to improve the capacity of headteachers and staff

The response on periodic workshop to improve the capacity of headteachers and staff showed that 16 agreed and 34 strongly agreed that there should be periodic workshop to improve the capacity of heads and staff in the management of pandemic. The mean score of 5, with a standard deviation of 0.57 a perfect mean score reflects a unanimous agreement on the effectiveness and necessity of periodic workshops. The low standard deviation indicates a strong consensus.

Drucker (2008) emphasizes continuous learning and development as crucial for organizational success. Periodic workshops can significantly enhance the skills and capacities of heads and staff. Peter Senge in "The Fifth Discipline" (1990) highlights the importance of continuous learning and professional development. Senge's work suggests that workshops can foster a culture of learning and adaptation, which is essential for dealing with crises like pandemics. Regular workshops are essential for enhancing the capabilities of school heads and staff. Workshops provide a platform

for continuous learning and professional development, which are crucial for adapting to new challenges.

Senge's (2006) concept of a learning organization underscores the need for regular training to enhance the skills and capacities of school heads and staff. Continuous professional development helps in adapting to new challenges and improving overall performance. Regular training sessions should be organized to build the capacity of school heads and staff (Addo, 2023).

The importance of professional development in the education sector is widely recognized as a critical factor for improving teaching quality and educational outcomes.

Headteachers and staff in private basic schools play crucial roles in school administration, curriculum implementation, and overall school management, necessitating ongoing professional growth.

Historically, educational workshops in Ghana have been sporadic and often limited by resources and accessibility. Early efforts focused on basic training, with recent initiatives aiming for more comprehensive professional development. Theoretical foundations for continuous professional development highlight its impact on enhancing educators' knowledge, skills, and attitudes, ultimately leading to better student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017).

The Ghana National Association of Private Schools (GNAPS) organizes annual training workshops aimed at improving the administrative and pedagogical skills of headteachers and staff. These workshops cover a range of topics from leadership skills to modern teaching methodologies. A recent workshop in Accra focused on

integrating technology in teaching, which resulted in improved digital literacy among participants (GNAPS Annual Report, 2023). Participants reported enhanced confidence in using digital tools and a more collaborative approach to school management.

In India, the National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA) conducts regular capacity-building workshops for private school leaders. NISA's training programmes include sessions on innovative teaching practices and school leadership. Schools that participated in these programs have reported significant improvements in student performance and teacher satisfaction (NISA Annual Report, 2023).

However, limited funding and resources often hinder the ability to conduct frequent and high-quality workshops. The quality of workshops can vary significantly, leading to inconsistent professional development outcomes. Resistance to change among headteachers, especially those accustomed to traditional methods, can be a barrier to implementing new practices learned in workshops.

It was recommended that GNAPS encourage collaboration between government bodies and the private sector to secure funding for professional development workshops and also to develop standardized training modules that ensure a consistent quality of professional development across all workshops and incentivize participation in workshops by offering certifications and opportunities for career advancement, making it more attractive for headteachers and staff in private basic schools to engage in ongoing professional development.

Improve planning and management efficiency in delivery of teaching and learning

Responses to improve upon their planning and management efficiency in the delivery of teaching and learning in private basic schools in the district showed that, 31 agreed while 19 strongly agreed. This finding underscores the need for better planning and management to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Mintzberg (1994) suggests that strategic planning in education should be flexible and dynamic to address changing needs. The mean score is 4, with a standard deviation of 0.62. Effective planning and management are key to the delivery of quality teaching and learning. Henry Mintzberg in “The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning” (1994) underscores the importance of strategic thinking and flexibility in educational management.

Mintzberg argues that efficient planning processes can lead to improved educational outcomes. Efficient planning and management can significantly improve the delivery of teaching and learning. Mintzberg's (1994) insights into strategic planning highlight the need for flexibility and strategic thinking, which are essential for educational management. Schools should adopt strategic planning methods to enhance the efficiency of teaching and learning processes.

Effective planning and management are fundamental to the successful delivery of teaching and learning in schools. Private basic schools face unique challenges that require efficient management practices to ensure quality education. Management practices in Ghanaian education have evolved from traditional, centralized approaches to more decentralized and participatory models.

Theoretical approaches to educational management emphasize strategic planning, resource allocation and stakeholder engagement as key components of effective school management (Bush & Bell, 2002). The School Performance Improvement Programme (SPIP) which is practiced in the public basic schools aims to enhance planning and management practices in schools through strategic planning initiatives and training for school leaders. SPIP workshops on financial management and strategic planning have helped schools to optimize their resources and improve operational efficiency.

The Progressive Principals Network (PPN) in South Africa provides tools and training for strategic planning and management to school leaders. PPN's comprehensive training programs include modules on curriculum management, financial planning, and stakeholder engagement. Schools under PPN's guidance have seen increased student engagement and better curriculum delivery (PPN Strategic Planning Guide, 2022).

In the midst of that, there are inconsistent applications of management practices across different schools and this can lead to disparities in educational quality. Resource constraints, such as limited funding and inadequate infrastructure, pose significant challenges to effective management. Many school leaders lack training in modern management techniques, which can hinder their ability to implement efficient planning and management practices.

There is the concern to adopt technology, such as management information systems, to streamline planning and administrative tasks, conducting regular training programmes for school leaders to equip them with modern management skills and techniques. Government through the assembly should support in terms of funding

and resources to ensure schools have the necessary tools to implement effective management practices. Efficient planning and management are crucial for the successful delivery of teaching and learning in private basic schools.

Attain professional knowledge in educational administration

The responses on the need to attain professional knowledge in educational administration or leadership skills in the Gomoa East district showed that, 31, agreed while 19 strongly agreed that heads need to attain professional knowledge in educational administration or leadership skills in private basic schools. The idea about the need to consider administration as a formal profession is crucial.

The contention is that if any person placed in charge of an organization would do a perfect job such a person would first need to study the technique of administration as profession which may be likened to any other study of medicine, law or architectural.

According to Mulford, (2003), the aim of studying administration was to rescue executive methods from the confusion and costliness of empirical study and set them upon foundations laid deep in stable principles. Attaining professional knowledge in educational administration is crucial for effective school leadership.

Leithwood et al. (2004) highlight the impact of leadership on student outcomes and the importance of professional development for leaders. The mean score is 4, with a standard deviation of 0.59. Attaining professional knowledge in educational administration or leadership is crucial. In “Educational Leadership: Context, Strategy and Collaboration” (2007), Bush highlights that effective educational leaders must be well-versed in administrative strategies and leadership skills. Bush

advocates for continuous professional development to enhance leadership capabilities.

Acquiring professional knowledge in educational administration and leadership is necessary for school heads to effectively manage their institutions. Professional knowledge in educational administration is critical for effective school management.

Bush (2011) emphasis on continuous professional development underscores the need for school leaders to stay updated with the latest administrative strategies and leadership skills. School leaders should pursue further education in educational administration and leadership.

The role of headteachers in school administration is critical for the overall success and effectiveness of educational institutions. Therefore attaining professional knowledge in educational administration equips headteachers with the skills needed to manage schools efficiently and promote student achievement.

Educational administration training in Ghana has historically been limited, with recent efforts focusing on providing more comprehensive training programmes. Theories in educational leadership and administration emphasize the importance of continuous professional development and practical experience in administrative roles (Fullan, 2007).

The University of Education, Winneba offers an Educational Leadership Certification Programme designed to provide headteachers with professional knowledge and skills in school administration. The programme includes courses on educational policy, financial management, and leadership strategies. Graduates of the programme have reported improved administrative capabilities and more

effective school management (University of Education, Winneba Annual Report, 2023).

The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) in the UK provides comprehensive training for aspiring headteachers. The NPQH programme includes practical leadership training, mentorship, and coursework on school management. Participants in the NPQH programme have demonstrated improved school leadership and higher student achievement (Department for Education, UK, 2023). However, accessibility of professional development programmes can be limited, especially for headteachers in rural or under-resourced areas. Also funding for training programs is often inadequate, limiting the number of headteachers who can benefit from these opportunities again balancing administrative duties with continuous learning can be challenging for headteachers, especially in smaller schools where resources are already stretched. This is giving rise to increasing the accessibility of professional development programmes through online courses and satellite training centers.

Also there should be collaboration between assembly and private sector partnerships to fund training programs for private basic headteachers in the rural areas to help incorporating practical administrative experiences in training programs to ensure headteachers can apply their knowledge effectively. The professional knowledge in educational administration is very important for headteachers to manage schools effectively and promote student achievement.

Create an environment of orderliness, mutual respect

Responses on, to create an environment of orderliness, mutual respect, and success in private basic schools showed that, 5 were not sure, 19 agreed whiles 26 strongly

agreed. An environment of orderliness and mutual respect is fundamental for educational success. The mean score of 4, with a standard deviation of 0.79 reflects the importance of a positive school environment. However, the relatively higher standard deviation suggests varied experiences or perceptions among respondents.

Kounin (1970) emphasizes that classroom management is critical for a conducive learning environment. Establishing an environment of orderliness and mutual respect is fundamental for the success of educational institutions. Leaders must focus on building positive relationships within the school community. Creating an environment of orderliness and mutual respect is fundamental for educational success. Efforts should be made to establish an environment of orderliness and mutual respect within schools.

Creating an environment of orderliness and mutual respect is fundamental to the effective functioning of any educational institution. Headteachers play a critical role in fostering such an environment, which is conducive for learning and good student outcomes. Discipline and respect have been central to the functioning of schools in Ghana, with traditional approaches focusing on strict discipline.

Theoretical underpinnings of school climate and culture highlight the importance of a positive and respectful environment for student learning and well-being (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). The Positive Discipline Initiative in private schools promotes non-punitive discipline strategies to create a more respectful school environment.

Training programmes for headteachers on positive discipline tool kits techniques must be adopted. This will reduce indiscipline and improve positive school climate (Positive Discipline Initiative Report, 2023).

Finland is renowned for its inclusive and respectful school environments, achieved through comprehensive teacher training and student engagement programmes. The Finnish schools emphasize student participation in decision-making and fostering mutual respect and this will improve high student well-being and academic performance (OECD, 2023).

As headteachers implement these positive tool kits, there will be some form of resistance to the new discipline methods from teachers as accustomed to traditional punitive approaches and cultural norms and societal expectations can affect the implementation of modern discipline practices.

District Assembly offices need to allow private basic schools flexibility and independence

On District Assembly offices need to allow private basic schools flexibility and independence in making decisions about instruction and other educational practices, the responses showed that 12, agreed while 38 strongly agreed. Allowing private schools flexibility and independence in decision-making can lead to better educational practices.

Handy & Aitken in “The Age of Unreason” (1990), advocates for autonomy and flexibility in organizational management. Handy's work implies that private schools can innovate and adapt more quickly when given independence. The mean score of 5, with a standard deviation of 0.66 indicate the need for flexibility and independence for private schools.

Autonomy in decision-making is crucial for innovation and responsiveness, as highlighted by Caldwell (1997). Granting private schools the flexibility and

independence to make decisions about instruction and educational practices can lead to more effective and innovative approaches. Allowing private schools flexibility and independence can lead to better educational practices.

Handy's (1990) advocacy for autonomy and flexibility in management suggests that private schools can innovate and adapt more quickly when given independence. Private schools should be given the flexibility to make decisions about educational practices.

Collaborate with District Assembly offices and private schools

Response that, there should be collaborate with district assembly offices and private basic schools showed 12 were not sure, 38 agreed while 5 strongly agreed. Collaboration between district assembly offices and schools is critical for resource provision during pandemics. With a mean value of 5 and standard deviation of 0.49 is an indication of a strong agreement on the need for district assembly's collaboration.

This aligns with Fullan (2007) who advocates for systemic support in educational reforms. Collaboration between district assembly offices and schools is vital for providing the necessary resources to manage pandemics. Such partnerships can enhance the support system for schools. Collaboration between district assembly offices and schools is crucial for managing resources during pandemics.

The work on collaborative leadership suggests that such partnerships can enhance support and resource management during crises. District assembly offices and schools should collaborate closely to manage resources effectively during pandemics

Appoint active and innovative heads

Private school should appoint active and innovative heads who can make changes in school administration. The responses showed that, 2 were not really sure, 26 agreed, while 22 strongly agreed. Appointing innovative heads can drive significant changes in school administration.

Yukl (2010) discusses how innovative leadership is crucial for adapting to changing educational demands. Discuss on the role of innovation in leadership indicates that leaders who embrace innovation can effectively manage and improve school administration. The mean value of 4, with a standard deviation of 0.69 suggests the need for dynamic leadership in private schools.

Private schools should appoint innovative heads who can drive administrative changes and improve school management. Private school owners should appoint leaders who are capable of driving administrative changes and innovations.

Maintain and sustain good interpersonal relationships

Heads are to maintain and sustain good interpersonal relationships and orderly teaching and learning environment. The responses showed 3 were not really sure, 23 agreed, 24 strongly agreed.

Maintaining good interpersonal relationships is crucial for an orderly teaching and learning environment. In “The Leadership Challenge” (2007), James Kouzes and Barry Posner highlight the importance of interpersonal skills in leadership. Their work suggests that leaders who build strong relationships can create more effective and harmonious educational environments. The mean score of 4, with a standard deviation of 0.74 indicate that good interpersonal relationships are essential for a

productive learning environment. This finding aligns with Hoy and Miskel (2008), who emphasize the importance of a supportive and collaborative school culture.

Good interpersonal relationships are essential for maintaining an orderly teaching and learning environment. School heads must focus on fostering strong relationships with staff and students. Good interpersonal relationships are essential for an orderly teaching and learning environment. Kouzes and Posner's (2007) emphasis on interpersonal skills in leadership suggests that strong relationships can lead to more effective and harmonious educational environments. School heads should focus on building and maintaining strong interpersonal relationships to ensure a harmonious educational environment.

4.5 Chapter Summary

The findings from this study highlighted the importance of enhancing managerial skills, conducting periodic workshops, improving planning and management efficiency, and attaining professional knowledge in educational administration.

Creating an environment of orderliness and mutual respect, fostering collaboration between district assembly offices and schools, granting flexibility and independence to private schools, appointing innovative heads, and maintaining good interpersonal relationships are all crucial for improving educational outcomes during and beyond pandemic situations. By implementing these suggestions, educational institutions can better manage the challenges posed by pandemics and improve overall educational outcomes. The next chapter of chapter five gave a summary, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the summary of key findings from the research questions posed, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the data collected from the respondents, the limitation of the study, and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the management practices of private basic school headteachers in educational emergencies in the era of Covid-19 in the Gomoe East District for effective teaching and learning in the Central Region.

The objective of the study was to examine the management practices of private basic school headteachers in the era of Covid-19 in selected districts in the Central Region. The study investigated the management practices of private basic school headteachers during the Covid-19 pandemic, identified the management challenges of private basic school headteachers during the Covid-19 era, examined the supports provided to the headteachers to manage their school during Covid-19 era and explored the strategies that can be adopted to improve the management practices of private basic school headteachers after the Covid-19 era.

Relevant literature was reviewed around contingency theory, management practices in schools, management challenges of schools during Covid-19, support for basic schools during Covid-19, and strategies adopted to improving schools after Covid-19. A contingency theory was used, which suggests that the effectiveness of leadership is contingent on the context and environment, is particularly relevant.

This theory underscores the importance of adaptable and flexible leadership styles in crisis situations (Fiedler, 2010).

Additionally, the Resilience Theory, which focuses on the capacity of systems to withstand and recover from disruptions, provides a framework for understanding how schools can maintain functionality and improve through crises (Masten, 2014). Contingency theory rooted in organizational behavior and management science, posits that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to management; instead, the effectiveness of leadership is contingent upon various internal and external factors.

This theory emphasizes the importance of adapting leadership styles and management practices to align with the specific circumstances faced by an organization. The Covid-19 pandemic necessitates an examination of crisis management theories to understand how private basic school headteachers can work through uncertainties.

The works of theorist Kotter (1990) provide insights into crisis planning, response, and recovery within educational settings.

Prominent scholars such as Fred Fiedler (1967) emphasized that organizational effectiveness depends on aligning leadership styles with situational variables. This practice aligns with Fiedler's (1967) emphasis on matching leadership styles to situational demands, ensuring that school leaders were equipped to handle the evolving challenges of the pandemic.

Woodward's (1965) studies on technology and organizational structure further reinforced contingency theory. She found that the effectiveness of management practices is influenced by the type of production technology employed by the

organization. These foundational insights underscore the importance of adapting management practices to specific situational factors, which is particularly relevant in the dynamic environment created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Oduro & MacBeath, (2003), every management practice has three key objectives. The first objective is ensuring that the goals and targets of the organization are met with the least possible cost; the second objective deals with looking after the health, welfare, and safety of staff, while the third is protecting the resources and machinery of the organization.

To achieve these objectives of management, a manager must carry out a number of functions. The fundamental functions of management are planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, while for Henri Fayol, management functions involve planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling (Amuzu-Kpeglo, 1990).

The most widely accepted functions of management are those proposed by Koontz and O'Donnell, and they include planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling (Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2004).

Although managerial functions can be very challenging, the skills one gains through principles of management (consisting of the functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling) will help one to meet these challenges (Carpenter, 2020).

The management styles and the adopted principles by the manager depend largely on the kind of manager (Bush, 2008). To be effective, a manager must have technical, human, and conceptual skills (Babayemi, 2006). Technical skills deal with

things, human skills deal with people, while conceptual skills deal with ideas (Darvas & Balwanz. (2014).

No manager is born with these skills (Harris, et al., 2020), but rather they acquire them through training and experiences.

A similar view is held by Amadi (2008) who opined that the delivery of efficient, accessible, frequent and content rich managerial training is very important in developing managerial capabilities. Managerial training is indeed a driver of performance both at the firm and individual level.

Eleftheria & Theodore (2021) presented an article on Managing Open School Units amid Covid-19 pandemic through the Experiences of Greek Principals; Implications for current and future policies in public education. The study examined the experiences of primary and secondary Greek school principals, regarding the management of their school units at the beginning of the school year 2020–2021, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A qualitative study of 57 principals was used, and the following questions were explored:

- (a) What were the difficulties and obstacles that principals faced during the management of the school unit from the beginning of the school year?
- (b) What factors helped them to manage these difficulties?

The findings indicated that, the principals had to respond to an unprecedented crisis context, under tremendous pressure, with limited resources. They faced a variety of difficulties, both on a personal level and in the context of their professional role.

In response to these challenges, various forms of support were provided to basic schools. Internationally, organizations such as UNICEF and UNESCO launched

initiatives to ensure continued learning. UNICEF (2020), reports that they distributed learning materials and supported the establishment of online and radio-based educational programs in several countries, including Ghana.

The Ghanaian government also took steps to mitigate the impact of school closures. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service (GES), implemented the Ghana Learning TV and Ghana Learning Radio programs, which provided curriculum-based content to students nationwide. These initiatives aimed to reach students without internet access. As Oduro (2020) asserts, “These programmes were crucial in maintaining educational continuity, particularly for students in rural areas.

Adu-Gyamfi et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of ongoing professional development programs to equip teachers with the necessary skills to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices.

Moreover, there is a need to address the emotional and psychological impacts of the pandemic on students. Adarkwah (2021) suggests that schools should incorporate mental health support into their programs. He notes, “The psychological well-being of students is crucial for their academic success and overall development” (Adarkwah, 2021).

Community involvement is also vital. Engaging parents and local communities in the educational process can help bridge gaps and provide additional support to students. As Oduro (2020) points out, strengthening community-school partnerships, can enhance the learning environment and provide a support system for students.

Other strategies can enhance the resilience and effectiveness of post-pandemic school management. These include investing in digital infrastructure, fostering collaborative leadership, and prioritizing professional development for educators (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). Again emphasizing on socio-emotional learning and community engagement will also be crucial in addressing the long-term impacts of the pandemic on students' well-being and academic performance.

5.3 Summary of Key Findings

On a theoretical front, the study was premised on contingency theory which suggests that The Contingency Theory, which suggests that the effectiveness of leadership is contingent on the context and environment, is particularly relevant. This theory underscores the importance of adaptable and flexible leadership styles in crisis situations (Fiedler, 2010). Additionally, the Resilience Theory, which focuses on the capacity of systems to withstand and recover from disruptions, provides a framework for understanding how schools can maintain functionality and improve through crises (Masten, 2014).

The study responded to the four research questions asked in the chapter one.

The first research question sought to investigate the management practices of private basic school headteachers during the Covid 19 pandemic. It emerged that; headteachers of private basic schools provided supplementary regular classroom instruction as a management practice to students, headteachers of private basic schools provided a counselling session to students, headteachers of private basic schools vetted and marked teachers' lesson notes and scheme of work. Again headteachers of private basic schools conducted regular classroom monitoring and

supervision of lessons, and headteachers of private basic schools organized School Based In-service training for teachers on good practices.

The second research question also sought to identify the management challenges of private basic school headteachers during the Covid 19 era. It was found that Headteachers of private basic schools managing both students and teachers during the Covid period was a challenge. Headteachers of private basic schools managing the stress and fear of Covid-19 infection was a challenge. Headteachers of private basic schools managing the cost associated with the Covid-19 management was a challenge. Headteachers of private basic schools managing the change in learning process of students was difficult and headteachers of private basic schools managing school hours to ensure that protocols are followed was a challenge.

The third research question sought to examine the supports provided to the headteachers to manage their school during Covid-19 era and it was found that, parents' support for the provision of PPEs to their wards during the period was not encouraging also Parent Association did not provided facilities to support school. It was also found that GES officers provided enough PPEs to students to fight Covid as supplied by the government also GES provided information on the management of the Covid 19 to the school. Also GES officers were not able to fully monitored the observation of Covid-19 restrictions.

The fourth research question sought to explore the strategies that can be adopted to improve the management practices of private basic school headteachers after the Covid-19 era. It was established that; there should be a periodic workshop to improve the capacity of headteachers and staff and planning and management efficiency in delivery of teaching and learning should be improved. Again

headteachers should attain professional knowledge in educational administration or leadership skills and District Assembly offices should collaborate with schools to provide resources to manage the occurrence of pandemics. Private school owners should appoint active and innovative headteachers who can make changes in school administration.

5.4 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions have been drawn with particular reference to Gomoa East district education directorate.

1. The study established that during the COVID-19 pandemic, headteachers of private basic schools in the Gomoa East district demonstrated proactive management practices to sustain teaching and learning amidst the crisis. These practices included providing supplementary regular classroom instruction, delivering counselling sessions to support students' psychosocial well-being, vetting and marking teachers' lesson notes and schemes of work, conducting regular classroom monitoring, supervising lessons, and organizing in-service training for teachers on effective pedagogical practices. These efforts reflected a strong commitment to maintaining educational continuity and quality despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the pandemic.
2. The study again revealed that headteachers of private basic schools in the Gomoa East district encountered significant management challenges during the COVID-19 era. These included balancing the needs of both students and teachers, managing heightened stress and fear of infection, and addressing the substantial costs associated with implementing COVID-19 protocols. Furthermore, adapting to new modes of teaching and learning proved

difficult, while ensuring strict adherence to safety protocols required extended working hours. These findings highlight the demanding and multifaceted nature of leadership in educational emergencies, particularly within the context of private basic education, where resources are often limited.

3. The findings indicate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, headteachers of private basic schools in the Gomoa East District received limited external support in managing their schools. Although some parents contributed by providing personal protective equipment (PPE) for their wards, this assistance was neither consistent nor adequate. Parent–Associations also failed to provide substantial facilities or resources to strengthen school safety measures. Again while the Ghana Education Service (GES) provided some PPEs, these were insufficient, and its officers were unable to fully monitor compliance with COVID-19 protocols at the school level. This limited and inconsistent support left headteachers to shoulder most of the burden of safeguarding students and staff during the crisis.
4. The study found that strengthening the management practices of private basic school headteachers beyond the COVID-19 era requires a multi-pronged approach. Capacity development emerged as a central strategy, with periodic workshops identified as essential for enhancing the leadership and management competencies of headteachers and their staff. The findings also highlight the importance of improving planning and management efficiency in the delivery of teaching and learning, as well as the need for headteachers to acquire professional qualifications in educational administration and leadership. Furthermore, the study underscored the value of stronger

collaboration between district assembly offices and schools for resource provision during emergencies, and the necessity for private school owners to appoint proactive and innovative headteachers capable of adapting to changes in school administration.

In summary, the study of management practices of private basic school headteachers during Covid-19 suggested a need for enhanced training in digital tools, crisis management, communication, mental health support, equity, innovative teaching, community engagement, and policy preparedness. These insights can inform future strategies to improve school leadership and ensure better preparedness for any future disruptions.

5.5 Recommendations

From the conclusions, the following recommendations are made for possible consideration and implementation in the study area:

1. It is recommended that such management practices be documented as part of a comprehensive emergency preparedness and response framework for private basic schools. The Ghana Education Service (GES) and other stakeholders should provide continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities for headteachers, focusing on crisis-responsive leadership, teacher supervision, and student support services. Additionally, a viable channel for sharing best practices among schools in the Gomoa East district should be strengthened to ensure that the proactive measures demonstrated during COVID-19 become a standard component of school management in future educational emergencies.

2. It is recommended that the Ghana Education Service, in collaboration with Gomoa East GNAPS, develop a targeted capacity-building programme to strengthen crisis management competencies among headteachers. The Gomoa private school associations in consultation with the Gomoa East district education directorate should liaise with University of Education, Department of Educational Administration and Management (DEAM) to organize a-week special training programme for headteachers under the Profesional Education Leadership Programme (PELP) at the DEAM.
3. It is recommended that in future educational emergencies, a coordinated support framework be established between the Ghana Education Service, Parent Associations, and community stakeholders to ensure timely and adequate provision of resources such as PPEs, sanitation facilities, and health supplies. The GES should also strengthen its monitoring mechanisms by deploying dedicated teams to regularly assess and support protocol compliance in schools. Additionally, capacity-building workshops should be organized for parents, teachers, and school leaders to promote shared responsibility in implementing safety measures. Such collaborative approaches would enhance the resilience and preparedness of private basic schools in managing future crises effectively.
4. It is recommended that the Ghana Education Service, in partnership with private school associations, institutionalize regular capacity-building workshops focused on crisis leadership, instructional management, and adaptive planning. Policies should encourage and support headteachers to pursue advanced qualifications in educational administration and leadership. District assemblies should develop formal partnership frameworks with

private schools to ensure timely provision of resources and technical support in emergencies. Additionally, private school proprietors should adopt merit-based appointment processes to select visionary and innovative leaders who can effectively respond to change and drive sustainable school improvement.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The study relies on self-reported data from headteachers, which may be subject to bias and social desirability effects. Headteachers may provide responses that align with perceived expectations or reflect positively on their management practices, potentially skewing the accuracy and reliability of the data.

The findings of this study may be influenced by contextual factors specific to the Gomoa East district, such as cultural norms, socio-economic conditions, and educational infrastructure. While efforts will be made to contextualize the findings within the broader literature, the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other contexts may be limited.

The data which was used in the study was collected within a period of four months. This implies that even though findings of the study depicted the situation as it was at that particular time, a study of a longer period of time would produce more representative results. Due to the vast geographical dispersion of schools in the district, the researcher was not in a position to have a larger sample size for better representation. However, the sampled schools were used to represent the sampled population for the study. There are other factors that affect management practices of private basic school headteachers however; the researcher was limited to headteacher's management practices during the Covid-19 period due to the limited study period.

This study specifically focused on private basic school headteachers in the Gomoa East district, limiting its generalizability to other geographic regions. While the findings may offer valuable insights into the management practices of headteachers in similar contexts, caution should be exercised when extrapolating the results to other districts or regions with different socio-economic and educational landscapes.

The study exclusively examines management practices within the private basic school, excluding public schools from its scope. While private schools face unique challenges due to their funding mechanisms and governance structures, comparative analyses with public schools could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the broader educational landscape during the Covid-19 pandemic.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher based on the findings and conclusion on the study hereby put forward the following suggestions for further studies.

- i. The study covered only Gomoa East district education in the Central Region of Ghana. The researcher therefore suggests that there should be a replication of the study in other District/Municipal /Metropolitan or Regions outside the district to ascertain the validity of such study.
- ii. The study investigated the management practices of private basic schools in the Gomoa East district using headteachers as participants. It is suggested that another study be carried out on Teachers, students and SISOs as respondents.

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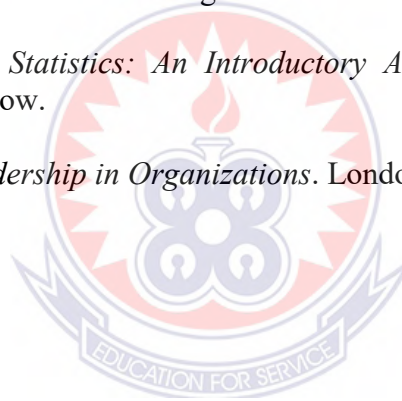
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APPENDIX A

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Topic: Management practices of basic school headteachers in the era of COVID-19. A case of private basic school headteachers in the Gomoa East district education

Dear Sir/Madam,

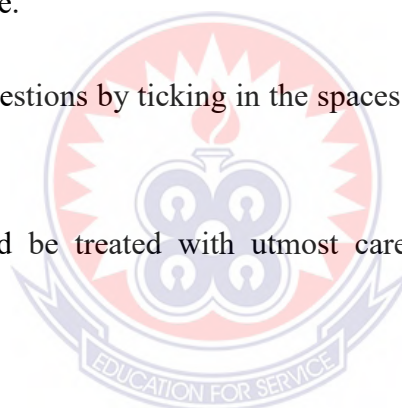
This questionnaire is designed to investigate the Management practices of private basic school headteachers in the Era of COVID-19.

I would be very grateful if you complete this questionnaire accurately and objectively as possible.

Kindly answer the questions by ticking in the spaces provided to provide the needed information.

Your response would be treated with utmost care and be accorded the needed confidentiality.

Thank you.



SECTION A PERSONAL DATA

1. Sex (M/F)
2. Highest qualification.....
3. Years of service in GES.....
4. For how long have you been a Head.....
5. Location of School..... (Urban/Rural)

SECTION B MANAGEMENT PRACTICES DURING COVID 19

This section elicits data on the Management practices adopted by the Headteachers used during Covid 19 era. Please kindly tick (✓) the item you consider to be True, Untrue or otherwise.

Key: Strongly Disagree —1, Disagree —2, Not Sure —3, Agree —4, Strongly Agree—5,

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	SD	D	NS	A	SA
The Head ...					
Provided supplementary regular classroom instructions.					
Provided a counselling session to students.					
Distributed resources to teachers to promote teaching and learning.					
Conducted regular classroom monitoring and supervision of lessons.					
Spent money to manage the school and its activities.					
Vetted and marked teachers' lesson notes and scheme of work.					
Organized SBI -service training for teachers on good practices.					
Inspected students' exercise books to ensure adequate class exercise					
Ensured punctuality of students to school					
Ensured punctuality of teachers to school.					
Ensured regularity of attendance of students to school.					
Ensured regularity of attendance of teachers to school.					
Ensured clean environment to promote safe schools.					

SECTION C CHALLENGES OF COVID 19

This section elicits data on challenges faced by the headteachers in managing the school during the Covid 19 era. Please kindly tick (✓) to indicate the level at you which you consider the item to be True, Untrue or otherwise.

Key: Strongly Disagree —1, Disagree —2, Not Sure —3, Agree —4, Strongly Agree—5,

CHALLENGES The Head had a challenge with	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Limited infrastructural challenges during the Covid 19 era.					
Managing both students and teachers during the Covid period.					
Managing the change in learning process of students.					
Monitoring and supervising teachers who did online teaching.					
Managing the cost associated with the Covid 19 management.					
Increased in the responsibilities and workload during the era.					
Managing the stress and fear of COVID-19 infection.					
Making provision for different breaks in teaching hours.					
Managing school hours to ensure that protocols are followed.					

SECTION E: SUPPORT PROVIDED TO PRIVATE BASIC SCHOOL

This section elicits data on the support that was provided to the Headteachers to manage their school during Covid-19 era. Please kindly tick (✓) to indicate the level at you which you consider the item to be True, Untrue or otherwise.

Key: Strongly Disagree —1, Disagree —2, Not Sure —3, Agree —4, Strongly Agree—5,

SUPPORT	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Parents provided enough PPEs to their wards during the period.					
GES officers monitored the observation of Covid 19 restrictions.					
Parent Association provided facilities and other support.					
GES officers provided enough PPEs to students to fight Covid.					
GES officers provided teaching support to schools.					
GES provided information on the management of the Covid 19 to the school.					

SECTION F: STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF PRIVATE BASIC HEADTEACHERS DURING SIMILAR SITUATIONS

This section elicits data on strategies that can be adopted to improve the Management Practices of Basic Private Headteachers during similar situations. Please kindly tick (✓) to indicate the level at which you consider to be True, Untrue or otherwise

Key: Strongly Disagree —1, Disagree —2, Not Sure —3, Agree —4, Strongly Agree—5,

STRATEGIES	SD	D	NS	A	SA
Improve upon their managerial skills on pandemic management.					
Periodic workshop to improve the capacity of Heads and staff.					
Improve planning and management efficiency in delivery of teaching and learning.					
Attain professional knowledge in educational administration or leadership skills.					
Create an environment of orderliness, mutual respect, and success.					
District Assembly offices should collaborate with schools to provide resources to manage the occurrence of pandemics.					
District Assembly offices need to allow private basic schools flexibility and independence in making decisions about instruction and other educational practices.					
Private school owners should appoint active and innovative heads who can make changes in school administration.					
Heads are to maintain and sustain good interpersonal relationships and orderly teaching and learning environment.					

Thanks for your honest response to the questions.

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

 **UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
P.O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana. deam@uew.edu.gh

UEW/EAM/INT/27

Date: 30th July, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

We write to introduce **Patrick King Lumumba Lekey**, a student on the M.Phil Educational Administration and Management programme of the Department of Educational Administration and Management.

Patrick King Lumumba Lekey, is currently working on a research project titled:

'MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF BASIC SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS IN THE ERA OF COVID-19: A CASE OF GOMOA EAST DISTRICT EDUCATION DIRECTORATE'


Salome O. Essuman (Prof.)
Head of Department



APPENDIX C

DATA REQUEST LETTER

POST OFFICE BOX 29,
GOMOA POTSIN,
3RD AUGUST, 2021.

THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR
GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE
GOMOA EAST DIRECTORATE
GOMOA POTSIN

REQUEST FOR DATA ON PRIVATE BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT

I would kindly be very grateful if the above requested data is provided.

I am currently undertaking an M. Phil research work from the University of Education, Winneba on the topic ***Management Practices of Private Basic School Headteachers in the Era of Covid 19 Pandemic, a Case of Gomoa East District Education Directorate, Potsin.***

The Private school Headteachers would be my participants for the study.

This research is part of my work for the partial fulfillment of Master of Philosophy in Educational Administration and Management.

I would be grateful if the data is provided in the form below to facilitate my work.

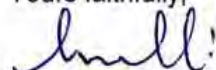
S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	NAME OF HEAD	CONTACT
1				
2				

I have kindly attached the introductory letter from the University of Education, Winneba for your perusal.

I would be very grateful if my request is granted.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Patrick King Lumumba Lekey

0249876319

APPENDIX D

LETTER FROM GES

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

In case of reply the
Number and date of this
letter should be quoted



Republic of Ghana

Gomoa East District Education Office
P. O. Box 29,
Gomoa Potsin

My Ref. No...GES/ CR/GEDO/14/Vol.1/46

13th August, 2021

Your Ref. No.....

Email : gomoaest@ges.gov.gh
(+233) 205-755-752 / (+233) 55-949-4393

Digital Address: CG 7021-7558

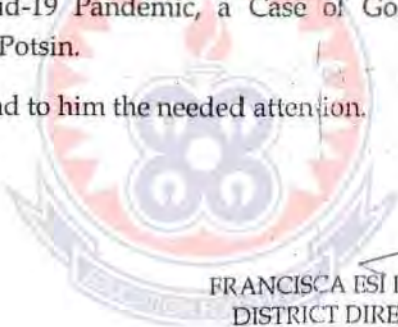
INTRODUCTORY LETTER

MR. PATRICK KING LUMUMBA LEKEY

I write to introduce to you Mr. Patrick King Lumumba Lekey a Master of Philosophy in Education Administration and Management Student of the University of Education, Winneba who is doing his research work on a topic Management Practices of Private Basic School Headteachers in the Era of Covid-19 Pandemic, a Case of Gomoa East District Education Directorate, Potsin.

Please, extend to him the needed attention.

Thank you.



FRANCISCA ESI DEGRAFT-JOHNSON (MRS)
DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
GOMOA EAST

DISTRICT DIRECTOR
GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE
GOMO EAST DISTRICT
GOMOA POT SIN

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

23/8/2021

daa