

# BEST PRACTICE ONLINE SURVEY AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN MALAYSIA

Nurashma Juatan<sup>1</sup>, Zaikiah Mohd Zin<sup>1</sup>, Abu Bakar Rahman<sup>1</sup>, Mohamad Zaidan Zulkepli<sup>1</sup>, Sheikh Shafizal Sheikh Ilman<sup>1</sup>,  
Nadia Hani Jahaya<sup>1</sup>, Normawati Ahmad<sup>1</sup>, Saiful Adli Suhaimi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute for Health Behavioural Research, National Institutes of Health, Ministry of Health Malaysia.

\*Email: nurashmajuatan@gmail.com

## INTRODUCTION

Malaysia has been placed under Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO), and school operations began to open in stages starting at the end of Jun 2020. Although the school was provided with the detailed SOP, the preventive measures among school children remain unknown. As a result of the full lockdown nationwide following surges cases of COVID-19, face-to-face data collection is a challenge to researchers.

## AIM

This paper aims to describe a method of collecting data using an online survey platform.

## METHODOLOGY

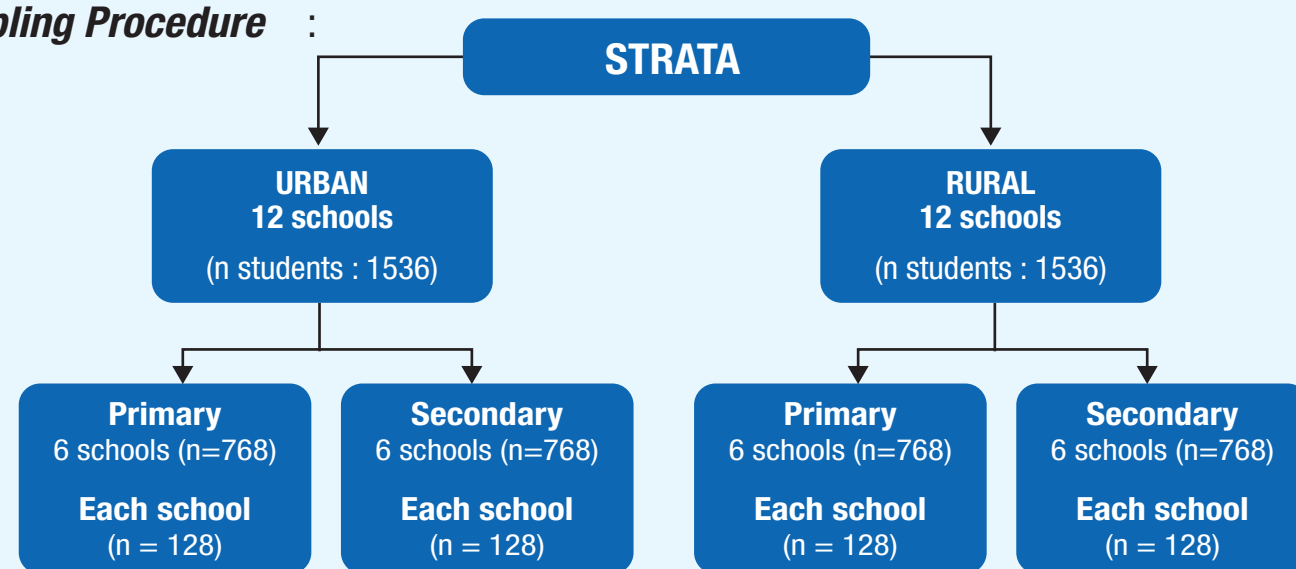
**Study Design** : Cross-sectional (online survey)

**Study Population** : a) Primary School (Year 4 & 5)  
b) Secondary School (Form 1,2,4 & Lower 6)

**Sample Size** : 3586

**Sampling Technique** : Two-stage stratified cluster sampling

**Sampling Procedure** :

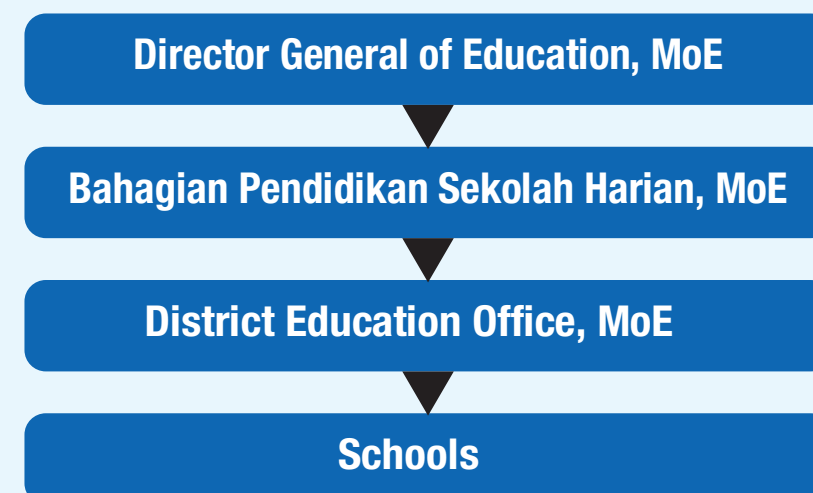


- Primary stratum : Kedah (Northern Region), Selangor (Central Region), Johor Bahru (Southern Region), Kelantan (East Coast), Sabah and Sarawak
- Secondary stratum : Urban and Rural within the primary stratum
- First stage sampling : 24 schools with probability proportionate to school enrolment size.
- Second stage sampling : All classes were selected using systematic random sampling

**Data Collection Period** : 14 until 24 June 2021 (10 days)

**Data Collection Method** : a) **WhatsApp Group** consisting of researchers, State Education Officer and school teachers for monitoring purposes.

b) **Top-Down Approach** for students' recruitment as figure below;



## RESULT

- Of the 3072 required samples, a total of 3586 were participated, giving a study response rate of 117%.
- Data collection method using a top-down approached enable researcher to get immediate attention and response of schools in a short time.
- WhatsApp group was seen to be effective strategy to recruit respondents when it only takes 10 days of data collection.
- Daily updates technique of every school response rate through WhatsApp group has influenced teachers' actions in getting students to respond the survey at a prompt time.
- The approach used for data collection has reduced research costs and saved time as the responses time is almost instant and directly captured into the system, in which margin of error is greatly reduced.
- Teachers did not have the full access to do close monitoring due to lack accountability given that students were not in school, the chances for them just hitting buttons to finish are high.

## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Digital communication such as WhatsApp is a feasible method for two-way communication between the research team and the Ministry of Education Malaysia.

A top-down approached introduced by Ministry of Education has facilitated the communication process throughout the data collection activities.

Study design and sampling frame considerations as presented in the study proved that an online survey could utilize systematic probability sampling in which bias is greatly reduced, increase equal chances selection of respondents and increase the generalizability of the results.

The methods used in data collection and monitoring purposes was feasible despite movement restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the Director-General of Health and Deputy Director-General of Health (Research and Technical Support) Malaysia for given us permission to present this poster. We would also like to express appreciation for all the support from Ministry of Education especially Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian that have contributed directly to complete this study.

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