



Covid-19 Pandemic Implications on Food Security in Nigeria: Assessment of Views and Opinions

Baba Salisu Audu ^{a*}

^a *Department of Agricultural Education, School of Undergraduate Studies, College of Education Zing, Taraba State, Nigeria.*

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

Article Information

Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/91714>

Review Article

Received: 24/07/2024

Accepted: 01/10/2024

Published: 08/10/2024

ABSTRACT

This article reviews COVID-19 pandemic implications on food security in Nigeria. On records, it is known that COVID-19 pandemic has affected the socio-economic status of farmers through the reduction of agricultural activities, health and income. Investigations on the impacts of the pandemic indicate that price increase of consumables like food items of about 13% in Nigeria. Consequently, we suggest that, vulnerable households be assisted with cash transfers through banks and to improve credit access to agricultural inputs supply chains so that the required goal of food security to the population is enhanced.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic; food security; implications; views; opinions.*

*Corresponding author: E-mail: salisubaba50@gmail.com, salisubaba50@yahoo.com, salihubaba@coezing.edu.ng;

Cite as: Audu, Baba Salisu. 2024. "Covid-19 Pandemic Implications on Food Security in Nigeria: Assessment of Views and Opinions". *Asian Journal of Food Research and Nutrition* 3 (4):956-60. <https://www.journalajfrn.com/index.php/AJFRN/article/view/188>.

1. INTRODUCTION

On the 11th of February 2020, WHO declared “COVID-19” a pandemic. The effects of the pandemic are devastating on human socioeconomic activities and livelihoods. Farming activities has received its own festering share in form of reduced farmers’ population. Food security that is known to depend on farmers has also been affected grossly. The lockdowns and other restrictions have affected food’s supply leading to increase in local demand which raise the prices of food.

The World Food Summit (WFS) defined food security as “availability at all times of adequate supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of consumption to offset fluctuations in production and prices” [1]. Again, “Food security being what occurs when citizens of a country at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for productive and healthy life. This definition explains four elements of food chains and security namely: availability, stability, access and utilization” [2].

The COVID-19 pandemic is categorized as a health and human crises that threatens food sufficiency and feeding patterns of millions of people in Nigeria [3,4] and around the world. Hundreds of millions of people were suffering from hunger and malnutrition before the advent of COVID-19 pandemic and unless immediate steps are taken, the world might see a global food crisis and emergency. In the long run, the combined effects of COVID-19 pandemic and the emerging global recession could usher the world into a serious food calamity unless large-scale coordinated actions that facilitate the benefits of food systems and food security are formulated.

Steps to control COVID-19 pandemic outbreaks are already affecting global food supply channels with severe consequences on availability. Border closures and lockdowns are reducing outputs leaving millions of farmers without livelihoods source. Meat slaughtering and consumer markets are forced to close in many countries due to high COVID-19 numbers among workers of various factories. Dairy farmers have been forced to bury perishable consumables sequel to supply chain interruptions and reduced consumer demand. Food prices have risen at a time when people have less income.

- “Food security of countries is measured by the availability of food resources for the entire population. In this case, the most widely used indicators are quantities of available food items compared with the needs of the populace as well as import requirements compared with the country’s capacity to import” [2].
- At the sub-regional levels, food security is measured by comparing regional feeding/nutritional requirements with availability of dietary calories per head/food resources per a citizen-consumer. Furthermore, the problem is increasingly being used in terms of seasonal or local level of food status.
- “At the family level, food security is measured on a household’s access to enough quantities of food ingredients to support mental, prevent diseases and support physical activities of family members within the household. Food security is measured by actual dietary intake of household members using income and expenditure. Food poverty indicator shows the number of individuals living in a household whose access to food is sufficient to provide a dietary intake adequate for growth, activity and good health” [2].

“A comparison of COVID-19 pandemic with the distribution of income status of citizens showed that the average score related with respondents who believed that the distribution of income has been decreased since the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic was 3.572 with a standard deviation of 1.5709 and a standard Error Mean of 0.0397. Against a test value of 3, this resulted in an average dissimilarity of 0.572. A t-test for significance of this average dissimilarity gives the calculated t and a related significant rating of 14.41 ($P < 0.001$). Consequently, this measure gives the average number of citizens that are significantly negatively affected by COVID-19 pandemic in income in Nigeria. This means that at ninety-nine per cent confidence level, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the negative distribution of income in Nigeria” [2].

When COVID-19 pandemic was compared with economic growth, it was shown that those who believed that COVID-19 pandemic has influenced economic status in Nigeria was 3.4375 with a standard deviation of 0.5840 and a

standard Error Mean of 0.0406. Against a test value of 3, this resulted in an average difference of 0.4375.

“The complex dynamics triggered by the lockdowns intended to contain the disease are creating conditions for major disruptions of food systems giving rise to a dramatic increase in hunger. The most recent estimates indicate that between 83 and 132 million people [5,6] including 38-80 million people in low income countries that rely on food imports [7] will experience food insecurity as a direct consequence of the pandemic. At least 25 countries including Lebanon, Yemen and South Sudan are at risk of significant food security deterioration because of secondary socio-economic impacts” [2].

2. RECENT DISCUSSIONS ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTS IN NIGERIA

COVID-19 pandemic has negative impacts on the Nigerian economy as in other parts of the world. The FGN's policy steps and directions included travel restrictions between states and intra-state, 24 hours lockdowns and restrictions on economic and social activities aimed at reducing and controlling the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic had influenced the day-to-day means of living especially farmers and food security of rural-smallholders in Nigeria [8]. Results showed that 88% of families lost half of livelihoods and standards of living due to COVID-19 pandemic. Travel restrictions caused disruptions in agricultural activities and supply chains as farmers planted fewer crops in the 2019/2020 farming seasons. In terms of the household's food security, COVID-19 pandemic significantly worsened food security situation of households in Nigeria especially poorer households [9].

The COVID-19 crisis unlike any other previously experienced pandemic has pushed over 100 million people into extreme poverty and food insecurity in 2020. Domestic food prices remain high in Nigeria. In August 2022, food inflation has triggered millions of Nigerians into extreme poverty. Rising food prices has a greater impact on Nigerians since a larger share of their income is spent on food. Both maize and wheat prices are two percent higher compared while rice price is six percent higher [3].

3. WORLD BANK INTERVENTIONS

“The World Bank short, medium and long-term plans to boost food and nutrition security, reduce

risks, and strengthen food systems. The World Bank Group and the G7 Presidency convened the Global Alliance for Food Security which aims to catalyze an immediate and all efforts respond to the unfolding global hunger crisis [10,11]. As part of a comprehensive, global response to the ongoing food security crisis, the World Bank Group is making up to \$30 billion available in the on-going and new projects in areas such as agriculture and food, nutrition, social protection and investments, water and irrigation [12]. This financing includes efforts to encourage food and fertilizer production, enhance food systems and support vulnerable households, farmers and producers” [2] and Lucas [13]. The World Bank is assisting nations to increase food production and improve nutrition security during the current crisis of COVID – 19 pandemic including:

- a) A Three Hundred Million Dollars (300M\$) financial aid in Bolivia to improve food security, market indices and the adoption of sound climate-smart agricultural activities and actions.
- b) A Three Hundred and Fifteen Million Dollars (315M\$) Credit Financial Supports to Three (3) African Countries of: Chad, Ghana and Sierra Leone to raise their readiness toward Food Security to improve the resilience of food programmes including improved markets.
- c) A Five Hundred Million Dollars (500M\$) Emergency Food Security and Resilience Support Project for Egypt's efforts to ensure that low income - poor and vulnerable households have access to basic necessities of bread, help strengthen the country's resilience to Food Security.
- d) A One Hundred Thirty Million Dollars (130M\$) loan support for Tunisia, aiming to reduce the influence and consequence of the Ukraine war.
- e) A Two Billion and Three Hundred Million Dollars (2.3B\$) Food Systems Resilience Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa to help countries increase the resilience of the region's food systems and ability to improve Food Security [14] and The World Bank [15].

4. CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected food security and health of Nigerians with skyrocketing increase in the prices of essential food materials. The fallout of the COVID-19

pandemic has negatively influenced economic activities in Nigeria and globally in general. The Socio-economic statuses were heavily affected by the pandemic to the extent of reducing the availability, accessibility, and utilization of dietary food materials, by implications causing food insecurity in the country due to high increased inflation of prices of foodstuffs despite several palliatives both in kinds and cash. As a result, farming outputs in majority farming population in the rural areas of Nigeria is reduced giving rise to increased Food Insecurity. It is suggested that there should be government support for vulnerable farmers to influence the implications of income reduction and loss through cash transfer or improved credit availability for genuine farmers. Again, government interventions to be given to farmers to improve agricultural inputs supply chains to ease the pandemic's impact on production; and support food insecure households through direct food distribution.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

I DR. SALISU AUDU BABA hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. United Nations (UN). The impact of COVID-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean. Policy Brief; 2020. Available: <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-impact-covid-19latin-america-and-caribbean>).
2. Schmidhuber J, Tubiello FN. Global food security under climate change. *Proc Natl Acad Sci. USA.* 2007;104(50):19703–19708.
3. NCDC (Nigeria Centre for Disease Control). First case of corona virus disease confirmed in Nigeria. Abuja, Nigeria: NCDC; 2020. Available: <https://ncdc.gov.ng/news/227/first-case-of-corona-virus-disease-confirmed-in-Nigeria>.
4. Nigeria centre for disease control (NCDC, 2020). Daily update on corona virus pandemic @COVID- 19, ncdc.gov.ng, Abuja, Nigeria; 2020.
5. FAO & WFP. FAO-WFP early warning analysis of acute food insecurity hotspots. Rome, FAO & WFP; 2020. Available: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb0258en>).
6. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets. Rome, FAO; 2020. Available: <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9692en>
7. Torero M. Prepare food systems for a long-haul fight against COVID-19. [online]. Washington, DC, IFPRI; 2020. Available: <https://www.ifpri.org/blog/prepare-foodsystems-long-haul-fight-against-covid-19>) [Accessed on 31 August 2020].
8. Bedru B, Motunrayo O, Adebayo O, Adetunji F, Hyacinth E, Joel A, Kwaw A. The effects of COVID-19 policies on livelihoods and food security of smallholder farm households in Nigeria Descriptive Results from a Phone Survey, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). IFPRI Discussion Paper 01979; 2020.
9. FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization). Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action; 1996. Available: <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/W3613E/W3613E00.HTM>.
10. Kwaw A, Hyacinth E, Victor O, Karl P, James T. Estimating the economic costs of COVID-19 in Nigeria, Strategy Support Programme [Working Paper NO. 63, The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Nigeria; 2020.
11. World Bank. The World Bank Group: Responding to the Covid-19 Pandemic and Rebuilding Better, An Unprecedented Global Effort; 2022. Available: www.worldbank.org/coronavirus, www.worldbank.org/vaccines, www.worldbank.org/changinglives.
12. World Bank. Food Security Update, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 1818 H Street NW, Washington DC 20433, Telephone. 2022;202-473-1000. Available: www.worldbank.org, Update July 29, 2022.
13. Lucas B. Impacts of COVID-19 on inclusive economic growth in middle-

- income countries K4D Helpdesk Report 811 Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK, Google Scholar; 2020.
14. HLPE. Impacts of COVID-19 on food security and nutrition: developing effective policy responses to address the hunger and malnutrition pandemic. Rome; 2020. Available:<https://doi.org/10.460/cb1000en>.
15. The World Bank. Food security update, understanding poverty, food and agriculture (FAO); 2022.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of the publisher and/or the editor(s). This publisher and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

© Copyright (2024): Author(s). The licensee is the journal publisher. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
<https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/91714>