

Livelihood resilience among street hawkers during Covid-19 lockdown in the Awutu Senya East Municipality, Ghana

Journal of
Humanities and
Applied Social
Sciences

Adjoa Afriyie Poku, Kofi Sarkodie and Joe Mensah
*Department of Geography Education, University of Education,
Winneba, Winneba, Ghana*

Richard Sam-Mensah
*Department of Management Sciences, University of Education,
Winneba, Winneba, Ghana*

Jesse Jones Quayson
*North Campus Library, University of Education, Winneba, Winneba, Ghana, and
Kwasi Poku*

*Department of Accounting and Finance, School of Business,
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana*

Received 3 October 2023
Revised 9 February 2024
4 March 2024
Accepted 13 March 2024

Abstract

Purpose – The study assesses the livelihood resilience strategies among street hawkers during COVID-19 lockdown in the Awutu Senya East Municipality in Ghana.

Design/methodology/approach – Using the explanatory case study approach, 12 participants (hawkers) were sampled with the aid of the purposive and convenience sampling techniques. An interview guide was used to collect data.

Findings – The study found that street hawking business, prior to the COVID-19 lockdown was a lucrative venture. The COVID-19 lockdown however had mental, psychological and economic effects on the street hawkers in ASEM causing stress, anxiety, loneliness, loss of business capital, and loss of jobs. Hawkers nevertheless demonstrated resilience in their psychological well-being by adopting strategies such as patronizing digital/social media platforms for funny content and entertainment. Hawkers also showed economic resilience through selling products on digital/social media platforms, relied on personal savings, received social support from family members and religious bodies. Government policies and interventions in the form of free water and electricity played a crucial role in building resilience of street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Practical implications – The study shows that hawking is a vital avenue for entrepreneurial engagement reducing barriers to entry in formal trading, hence should be considered as key economic venture in the country's economy. Again, the findings of the study deepen the understanding of stakeholders on the effects of COVID-19 on the psychological and economic life of street hawkers and offers insights into managing both psychosocial and financial stress during crises, emphasizing the potential benefits of resilient strategies for more effective crisis management. The study findings provide insights for government and policymakers on the experiences and coping mechanisms of the vulnerable groups and communities, particularly hawkers during the pandemic.

© Adjoa Afriyie Poku, Kofi Sarkodie, Joe Mensah, Richard Sam-Mensah, Jesse Jones Quayson and Kwasi Poku. Published in *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*. Published by Emerald Publishing Limited. This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

The authors acknowledge the support from the street hawkers in Awutu Senya East Municipality. We are also appreciative of the time participants dedicated to respond to questions. There was no funding for this paper.



Journal of Humanities and Applied
Social Sciences
Emerald Publishing Limited
2632-279X

DOI 10.1108/JHASS-09-2023-0125

Originality/value – The study qualitatively assesses the psychological and economic effects of the COVID-19 lockdown and the livelihood resilience strategies employed by street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown in ASEM, Ghana.

Keywords COVID-19, Livelihood, Lockdown, Resilience, Street hawkers

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a cascade of vulnerabilities across social, political, and economic landscapes globally (Khambule, 2023). These disruptions have been particularly impactful on marginalized communities, such as the urban poor in developing countries. One of the sectors most affected by these changes is the informal economy, notably street hawkers in developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This study concentrates on this specific group within the Awutu Senya East Municipality in Ghana, examining their livelihood resilience strategies during the pandemic.

The concept of livelihood resilience has gained prominence as a framework for understanding how individuals and communities cope with various shocks and pressures, including food security, shelter, and pandemics (Mitchell *et al.*, 2021). While the pandemic has prompted the use of lockdowns as a public health measure globally, its repercussions on economic activities are significant. The lockdown measures, initially instituted in Wuhan and later adopted worldwide, have posed threats to the livelihoods of people, particularly those in the informal sector (World Health Organization, 2020; Furuse *et al.*, 2020) due to the fact that they are at high risk during socioeconomic upheavals (Balbuena and Skinner, 2020; Thanh *et al.*, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a series of lockdowns, starting from Wuhan, China, in January 2020 and eventually spreading globally. The World Health Organization declared it a global pandemic in March 2020, leading to widespread implementation of social distancing and lockdown measures. These measures had varied effects on different sectors and populations, but for the urban poor particularly street hawkers, the impact was significant (Rakshit and Basistha, 2020).

The partial restrictions imposed on market operations and people's movement to reduce the spread of the virus also affected the livelihoods of street hawkers (Zougbede, 2020). For street vendors in West Africa, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact, resulting in slower economic growth, more hunger, and difficulties sustaining their livelihoods. Nigeria's local food economy was affected by state-imposed restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19 in communities. Street food vendors and consumers are among local food actors impacted by such restrictions because their livelihood and sustenance were contingent on daily operations on the street (Oloko and Ekpo, 2021). According to Busiinge (2020), Uganda's street vendors became more vulnerable as a result of the government's implementation of such lockdown regulations. Apart from micro-industries (employing less than ten people), informal laborers were the hardest hit. The drop in demand for products and services induced by the pandemic and its accompanying restrictive measures resulted in income and job losses for informal workers whose livelihood is dependent on consumption-driven economic activity (ILO, 2020). In this regard, West African governments have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by enacting a number of social protection policies designed to assist groups who are particularly vulnerable. These strategies include food assistance programs, cash transfers, unemployment insurance, and healthcare support. For instance, the National Social Safety Net Program (NASSP) was established by the Nigerian government to give financial transfers to households who were at risk of being affected by the pandemic (Apera *et al.*, 2021). In a similar vein, Senegal's government launched food aid and emergency cash transfers to assist low-income families affected by the crisis (Bouët *et al.*, 2021). Encouraging

research on the pandemic's effects on West Africa is essential to developing the evidence-based policies required to increase the region's readiness for shocks and crises (El Bilali *et al.*, 2023) that affect the informal sector, especially street hawkers. Similar to other countries within the sub-region, Ghana is one of the developing countries in West Africa that was hit by the COVID-19.

Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth was estimated to slow to 3.2% in 2022, down from 5.4% in 2021, and with accelerated inflation, the overall fiscal deficit (on a cash basis) reached 9.9% of GDP, exceeding the target of 6.7% (World Bank, 2022a, b). Despite these economic challenges, street hawkers have continued to operate as a critical part of the informal sector, contributing significantly to the country's GDP and serving as a primary source of income for the majority of urban poor people in Sub-Saharan Africa. Street hawking is a popular trading practice which constitutes a greater proportion of the informal workers in SSA and many developing economies, including Ghana (Abdullah *et al.*, 2020; Thanh *et al.*, 2022). This prevalent economic activity in the region, serves as a lifeline for many urban poor and impoverished people (Romero-Michel *et al.*, 2021) contributing significantly to Ghana's economy (Dlamini, 2018). Also, this economic venture functions as an entrepreneurial incubator, fostering the development of family enterprises as well as facilitating social interactions (Lemessa *et al.*, 2021).

Prior to the emergence of COVID-19 and the imposition of the 21-day partial lockdown in Greater Accra, Greater Kumasi, Tema Metropolis and Kasoa, hawkers engage in their trading activities to make income for survival (Dosu, 2015). Though not enough income is made, the earnings made served as a life-support for these hawkers. The informal sector employs approximately 90% of the working population who engage in micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (Ghana Statistical Service, 2016) and it also contributes roughly 20–40% of the GDP to the economy of Ghana (Boeh-Ocansey and Cudjoe, 2005). With hawking being the livelihood for some sections of the urban poor, the lockdown during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana has really impacted on the livelihood of the hawkers (Amoah-Nuamah *et al.*, 2020) including those in the Awutu Senya East Municipality (ASEM), especially hawkers in Kasoa, the capital. In an effort to curb the global pandemic, several measures notably quarantines, social distancing, ban on transportation and lockdowns were adopted by countries including Ghana.

These interventions have had a ripple effect across all economic sectors, not least the informal sector (Chen, 2020; Laing, 2020; Rakshit and Basistha, 2020). For street hawkers, these disruptions translate into a significant financial strain, intensified by their limited skills, resources, and effective strategies for coping and mitigation (Lemessa *et al.*, 2021; Mustafa *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, studies suggest that if informal markets were to shut down, this would adversely affect the income of informal suppliers (Dzawanda *et al.*, 2021; Wegerif, 2020). Consequently, it becomes imperative to grasp the financial and psychosocial trauma imposed by the pandemic on street hawkers. This understanding is critical not only for their own economic well-being but also for the livelihood and welfare of other stakeholders involved (Dzawanda *et al.*, 2021; Wegerif, 2020).

The lack of social protection coverage for informal sectors makes it more difficult for developing nations with significant informal sectors to build resilience to the Covid-19 outbreak and recover swiftly from the economic impact (Romanello, 2022). The implementation of social protection interventions including cash transfer programs, food assistance and safety nets and free electricity by many African countries to support informal workers and other vulnerable populations during the pandemic helped to address food insecurity and malnutrition and mitigate the economic impacts of lockdowns and social distancing measures (World Food Programme, 2022; World Bank, 2021).

Previous studies conducted in the Awutu Senya East Municipality has primarily focused on diverse topics ranging from the socio-economic conditions of caretaker families

(Peprah *et al.*, 2015) to spatial expansion and land use patterns (Doe *et al.*, 2022), as well as waste and energy generation (Bawakyillenuo and Agbelie, 2014) and determinants of national health insurance enrollment (Quartey *et al.*, 2023). Amoah (2021) in his quest to unravel the impact of COVID-19 on the informal sector, specifically on street vendors in Ghana, concludes that the main effects of COVID-19 on the livelihoods of street vendors, both men and women, were a decrease in working capital and poor market demand. Once more, street vendors were not eligible for the state's micro, small, and medium-sized business stimulus support package (Amoah, 2021). Additionally, Amoah-Nuamah *et al.* (2021) also contributed to the impact of COVID-19 on the livelihood of informal workers in Ghana by revealing that the temporary shutdown of the informal sector as a result of the COVID-19 impact or lockdown is anticipated to negatively impact the livelihoods of Ghana's urban dwellers, the majority of whom are heavily dependent on the informal sector. Similarly, other studies on the impact of COVID-19 within the sub-region have predominantly concentrated on education system, food security and agriculture and small construction firms (Tadesse and Muluye, 2020; Workie *et al.*, 2020). Despite the extensive body of literature, there is a glaring gap in literature concerning the psychological effect of the COVID-19 lockdown in Ghana. Meanwhile, investigating the psychological effect of COVID-19 can provide insights into the prevalence and nature of mental health issues arising from the pandemic (Jones *et al.*, 2021). By concentrating on street hawkers in the Awutu Senya East Municipality, this study aims to fill this gap by assessing the psychological effect of the COVID-19 lockdown and the livelihood resilience strategies employed by street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown.

First, this study examines the psychological and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on street hawkers. Second, we offer insights into the livelihood resilience strategies that have enabled this community to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated lockdowns in the Awutu Senya East Municipality in Ghana. The findings will inform targeted recommendations for enhancing livelihood resilience policies for the urban poor and street hawkers, particularly in the context of future pandemics and lockdowns and stressing on the relevance of improving livelihood recovery strategies during future pandemics and lockdowns. Furthermore, this study to the best of the authors knowledge being the first study to provide qualitative evidence on the struggles and resilient approaches used by hawkers as coping mechanisms amidst adversities assist policymakers in crafting targeted strategies for this specific population segment and to enrich the existing body of literature on the effects of COVID-19.

Theoretical background

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown measures have had a profound impact on various sectors of society, including street hawkers who rely on daily earnings to sustain their livelihoods. In the face of adversity, the resilience theory provides a lens through which we can examine the ways in which street hawkers navigate the challenges imposed by the pandemic and strive to maintain their livelihoods.

Resilience, as defined by Masten (2001), refers to the ability of individuals or communities to withstand, recover from, and positively adapt to stressors and adversity. It is often described as the capability to bounce back or recover from adversity and achieve positive results despite facing challenging events or circumstances. Street hawkers, as a vulnerable group in times of crisis, have demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of the COVID-19 lockdown. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and find ways to sustain their livelihoods despite the significant disruptions caused by the pandemic highlights the dynamic nature of resilience (Gopaldas, 2020). The theory emphasizes the adaptability and entrepreneurial spirit of street hawkers as they respond to changes in supply and demand, explore new market opportunities, and develop resilient livelihood strategies (Rocha *et al.*, 2020).

Research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that street hawkers have engaged in various strategies to mitigate the negative effects of the lockdown on their livelihoods. For instance, [Gupta and Dutta \(2020\)](#) found that street hawkers formed informal networks to share information about available markets, negotiate with suppliers, and collectively address challenges. This demonstrates the importance of social support networks as protective factors that enable street hawkers to bounce back and find alternative sources of income.

Furthermore, street hawkers have displayed entrepreneurial resilience by adapting their business models to comply with lockdown regulations. [Gopaldas \(2020\)](#) highlighted how street hawkers in India utilized digital platforms, such as social media and online marketplaces, to reach customers and sustain their businesses during the lockdown. This exemplifies their ability to leverage available resources and technological advancements to withstand and recover from the challenges posed by the pandemic. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the resilience of street hawkers is influenced by contextual factors. The socio-economic environment, government policies, access to financial support, and the availability of local markets all play a crucial role in shaping their livelihood outcomes. For instance, [Ahmed et al. \(2021\)](#) emphasized the need for supportive policies and financial assistance to ensure the resilience and sustainable recovery of street hawkers affected by the COVID-19 lockdown.

In the context of this study, the resilience theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the experiences of street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown and their livelihood outcomes. By examining the adaptive strategies, social networks, and contextual factors that influence their resilience, we can gain insights into how these individuals navigate and overcome adversity. This understanding can inform policy interventions and support mechanisms that enhance the resilience of street hawkers, ensuring their sustainable recovery and long-term well-being in the face of future crises.

Materials and methods

Study area

The study was conducted in Kasoa, a peri-urban city and the capital of the Awutu Senya East Municipality (ASEM) in the Central Region of Ghana. The municipality lies between latitude 5°4'S and 6°N and longitude 0°20' W and 0°35' E (see [Figure 1](#)) ([Acquah, 2024](#); [Bawakyillenuo and Agbelie, 2014](#)).

Kasoa, lies at the South-Eastern part of the Central Region and serve as a border town between the Central and the Greater Accra Regions. According to the 2021 population and housing census, the population of the municipality stands at 236,527 with 115,530 male and 120,997 female. Trading and its related activities such as informal sector commerce constitute the leading economic activities in the municipality. The city is reported to be one of the fastest-growing communities in West Africa with the Central Business District (CBD) being overly packed during market days. This made it one of the hotspots for the COVID-19 pandemic during the peak of the disease in the country ([Etikan et al., 2016](#)). With an executive order from the President of Ghana for a partial lockdown in the country, the city was affected, threatening the livelihood of informal workers including street hawkers. Kasoa was purposively selected for this study to ascertain the COVID-19 lockdown and livelihood outcomes of street hawkers in the Awutu Senya East Municipality, Ghana.

Study design

The study used explanatory case study design with qualitative approach. This design is used to explain an issue, event or phenomenon of interest in its natural-real life context ([Crowe et al., 2011](#)). Case studies focus on exploring an individual, group, or event to thoroughly

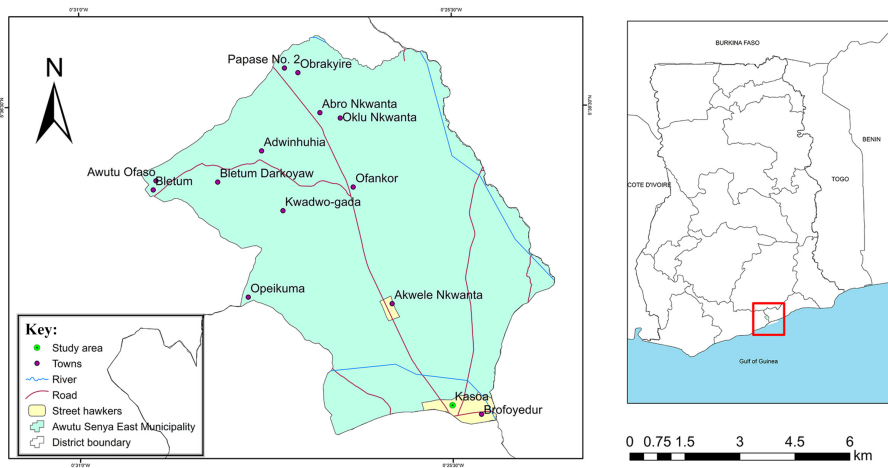


Figure 1.
Study area (ASEM)

Source(s): Acquah (2024)

understand the underlying principles, factors, and dynamics suitable for examining complex phenomena (Creswell, 2014). The researchers used the case study design to investigate livelihood resilience among street hawkers during the Covid-19 lockdown in ASEM. The design also offered in-depth approach to comprehending the nuances of the livelihood outcomes of street hawkers before and during the lockdown. It was therefore adopted to obtain data from the participants using qualitative methods to explain the COVID-19 lockdown and livelihood outcomes of street hawkers in ASEM, Ghana. This design also helped to gather an in-depth information from the participants through collaboration and communication between the researchers and participants resulting in generating a more detailed data to unravel the COVID-19 lockdown and livelihood outcomes of street hawkers in ASEM.

The sample, sampling technique and procedure

Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used by the researchers. The purposive sampling technique helps researchers to identify and select individuals or groups who were affected by the COVID 19 lockdown in ASEM (Adom *et al.*, 2020). Street hawkers affected by the lockdown and were willing to participate in the study were conveniently sampled. In all, the views of 12 street hawkers whose livelihood outcomes were affected by the COVID-19 lockdown in ASEM were sought.

Data generation and ethical consideration

An interview guide was used to gather data from the participants. The participants were initially approached and informed of the purpose of the study. Verbal informed consent was then obtained from each of the participant before the interviews were conducted. The questions on the interview guide were read out and translated into local dialect of the participants who could not read the English language. In-depth interviews were also conducted with participants in the location where the person was recruited, which was mostly on the street. Interviews were conducted in a secure environment free from any third-party interference.

Interviews were conducted in Akan and English Language to serve the needs of the participants with diverse socio-economic and literacy levels. The instruments were developed based on questions related to the objectives of the study. Interviews were audio recorded after participants consented. This helped to record the participants' responses verbatim. Field notes were also taken. The audio records were transcribed into English. Each interview lasted for approximately 45 min. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, no names and personal identifying information were assigned to interviewees or was recorded.

Data analysis

Data gathered from the participants were manually analyzed. The views of the participants were summarized and coded based on themes. Open coding of the data was initially conducted. The open codes that emerged from the data include; effects of COVID-19 lockdown on street hawkers in ASEM (mental and psychological effects and economic effects), resilience strategies and livelihood outcomes of street hawkers during COVID-19 lockdown in ASEM resilience in psychological well-being, resilience in economic well-being digital platforms/social media, financial circumstances, support network/social capital (family support, support from religious groups) and government policies and interventions. These generated a number of themes after thorough multiple readings of the transcripts. The themes were compared with the responses to identify common trends, similarities and differences. Thematic analysis is beneficial for summarizing significant elements of a huge data set since it compels the researcher to handle data in a well-structured manner, resulting in a clear and ordered final report ([Antwi-Bosiakoh and Tetteh, 2019](#)).

Results

Information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the hawkers showed that out of the 12 hawkers, 8 of them were females and 4 of them were males, and they fall within the ages of 24–35 years. Nine (9) of them were married and 3 of them were single. Again, 7 out of the 12 hawkers had no formal education, 4 of them had basic education while 1 of them had attained secondary education. On the source of start-up capital, a majority of them (7) had their start-up capital from personal savings, while 3 and 2 of them had their start-up capital from family support and loan from banks respectively. All the 8 female hawkers sold food items such as bread, sachet water (popularly called pure water in Ghana), fruits and snacks while 1 of the males sold yam tubers, 2 sold car stickers and 1 sold phone accessories.

Street hawking business pre-COVID-19 in ASEM

The street hawking business has become a common livelihood strategy practised in developing countries in Africa ([Abdullah et al., 2020](#)). Participants' views were sought on the street hawking business before the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings revealed that the street hawking business before COVID-19 was good, participants made good sales and were able to make enough savings to stock the business. Some participants explained further as demonstrated by the following quotations:

In fact, I will say that sales were good. There were a lot of people in town and market was booming but not all the time. At times, I made sales of between 300 and 400 Ghana cedis daily but reduces to 100.00 on a normal day. (A-30-year-old bread seller)

I will say the market was good, town was busy so people were buying things. I was able to make good sales every day until we had the lockdown. (A-26-year-old fruit seller)

Yes, I used to save after work. I normally saved 30.00 cedis a day and 300.00 Ghana cedis monthly. I was able to save this amount due to good sales I made during that time. I always made sure I put something down as savings anytime I close from work. (A-35-year-old snack seller)

Daily sales were good. The market was booming and the demand for phone accessories was high. I used to sell a lot in a day before the COVID-19 disease. (A-28-year-old phone accessories seller)

Oh yes, I used to save 50.00 cedis from the daily sales I made. I can't say how much I saved monthly but I used my daily savings to stock my business. (A-32-year-old sachet water seller)

Effects of COVID-19 lockdown on street hawkers during the COVID-19 in ASEM

The views of the participants were sought on the effects of COVID-19 lockdown in the ASEM. The researchers categorized the views of the participants into mental and psychological effects and economic effects.

Mental and psychological effects. The study showed that the mental and psychological effects of COVID-19 lockdown on street hawkers include stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness and reduced people's social connectedness as expressed in the comments:

Yes, I felt lonely and depressed while at home. I was bored at home because we were not allowed go to out to sell". What worries me most was the fact that we were not coming to the market. I had nothing to entertain myself. As I come to work, I interact with sellers and buyers and other people. (A-26-year-old fruit seller)

I really felt lonely, depressed and downhearted since I stayed at home for almost one months. Being at home for a month without any interaction with friends and colleagues made me depressed and downhearted. (A-30-year-old bread seller)

To be frank, I felt lonely, depressed and hungry and had no one to talk to during the lockdown. (A-25-year-old sachet water seller)

Economic effects. The findings on the economic effects of the COVID-19 lockdown on the hawkers showed that, while the general public was not permitted to go to town but stay at home because of the imposition of lockdown, only hawkers who sold food items were allowed to sell and this affected the daily sales, start-up capital, savings of hawkers and even job losses as expressed in the comments:

I will say the lockdown affected my sales because during that time, we were not allowed to sell on the street. People were not coming to town due to the lockdown and so market was quite with few people around. (A-30-year-old bread seller)

I was really hit by the lockdown. I lost my start-up capital during the lockdown people were not allowed to come to town due to the disease so my sales went down and it affected my seed money. (A-30-year-old fruit seller)

Hmmm . . . I couldn't save anything ooas I said, I was saving before the COVID came but during the COVID-19 disease, it was difficult for me to save since my daily sales was very low. (A-35-year-old snack seller)

Yes, many of our boys here have stopped selling. I know of some SIM card sellers and other friends who couldn't resume work after the lockdown was lifted. They sold their SIM cards and used their sales during the lockdown so they couldn't return to continue their business after the government lifted the lockdown. (A-26-year-old fruit seller)

Yes, I have a lot of friends who didn't come back after the lockdown was lifted. Some of the ladies got pregnant and others also misuse their capital during the lockdown. Because, as they were lonely at home during the lockdown they engaged in sex with their partners as the only means of entertainment. (A-28-year-old sachet water seller)

Resilience strategies and livelihood outcomes of street hawkers during COVID-19 lockdown in ASEM

Studies have reported that different resilient strategies were employed by countries, communities and individuals in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic during the lockdown (Adom *et al.*, 2020). The views of participants were therefore solicited on resilience strategies and livelihood outcomes of street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown. The researchers categorized them into resilience in their psychological and economic well-being and government policies and interventions.

Resilience in psychological well-being. The findings showed that, participants showed resilience in their psychological well-being by adopting strategies including patronizing digital/social media platforms for funny content, entertainment. Participants said:

I watched preaching and movies on television. The TV engaged and entertained me during the lockdown period. (A-32-year-old sachet water seller)

I was always online browsing the internet to access news and entertainment stuffs from YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook and other platforms for funny content. Social media actually helped me. (A-26-year-old fruit seller)

Resilience in economic well-being. Participants shown economic resilience through selling products on digital/social media platforms, relied on personal savings (financial circumstances), received social support from family members and religious bodies (social network/social capital).

Digital platforms/social media. The study showed that, participants advertised their products online to reach out to customers. This resilience strategy adopted by the participants enabled them to get income for upkeep during the lockdown period. Some of the participants reported that:

What would I do? I only watched television with the children at home to entertain ourselves. I also had fun with my children since they were at home because of the closure of school at that time. (A-30-year-old bread seller)

In fact, I advertised my goods on my WhatsApp status and fakebook. People who viewed my status ordered for some of my product which I delivered to them. This enabled me to get money from the sales I made through the social media. (A 25-year-old yam seller)

Financial circumstances. The findings of the study revealed that, participants showed resilience through their financial circumstances. Thus, they depended on their savings for upkeep and survival financially. They reported that the savings made became their source of livelihood in the wake of the COVID-19 lockdown. This enabled them to withstand the economic impacts of the COVID-19 on their livelihood outcomes as explained in the comments:

I fell on my savings for my livelihood. The little I saved before is what I used for my upkeep when I was at home. (A-25-year-old car sticker seller)

Hmm, I spent my capital during the lockdown period. Things were tough for me and my family and I used the money for my business to cater for them. (A-30-year-old bread seller)

Social support networks/social capital

Family support. The presence of a supportive social network was critical in developing economic resilience among street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown. The findings of the study showed that participants received monetary and other supports from close relations, family and friends. They reported that the support received in the form of money

and foodstuffs from their close relatives sustained them during and after the COVID-19 lockdown. Some of the participants commented that:

My mother brought food stuffs from the village to me in Kasoa. I remember when they came, they were also affected by the lockdown. I was here with them throughout the lockdown. (A-35-year-old snack seller)

Initially, things became tough for me because I didn't have money to buy the pure water. So, I told my madam and she accepted to help me. Now, I am doing work and pay. I go for the water and sell and pay for the water afterwards. (A-28-year-old sachet water seller)

My parents supported me greatly. They gave me money to start the business after the lockdown was lifted. (A-26-year-old fruit seller)

As I said earlier, my husband supported me with an amount to start my business after COVID-19 lockdown was lifted. (A-30-year-old bread seller)

Support from religious bodies. Religious institutions played an important role in offering support that improved the well-being and resilience of street hawkers. The study revealed that religious bodies especially churches supported street hawkers with money, foodstuffs during the lockdown period. They reported that the monies received from churches helped them to commence business after the lockdown was lifted.

Some participants said:

It is the church and the family that helped me. Anytime I call my mother she sent me something like 10, 20, 30 cedis for my upkeep. The church also provided me with food stuffs such as tomato paste, yam, rice, corn dough and others. I used them to prepare something for my children during the lockdown. (A-29-year-old sachet water seller)

The church I attended supported me with little amount to start the business again. I did not get any assistance from the bank because I had no account or saved with them. (A 25-year-old yam seller)

Government policies and interventions. Government policies and interventions played a crucial role in building resilience of street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown. The findings showed that although, they did not get direct financial benefits or food from government they enjoyed free water and electricity because they fell within the lifeline consumers. They reported that the free water and electricity by the government enabled them to save the little they have since they did not pay for any water and electricity bill during that period and this supported their livelihoods. Pertaining to this finding, some of the participants said:

I only benefited from any free water and electricity from the government. As for the free food, I didn't see anyone who got food from the government in my area. (A-32-year-old sachet water seller)

The only support I had from the government was free water and subsidized electricity tariff. I did not benefit from any free food from the government. (A-28-year-old phone accessories seller)

Discussion

The street hawking business in Ghana before the emergence of COVID-19 has been smooth and people who engage in it earn an appreciable income for survival. The findings on this subject have demonstrated that street hawking before COVID-19 and the imposition of lockdown was lucrative livelihood activity and enough income and profits were made by hawkers. Hawking pays well though those involved would have loved to engage in a more lucrative venture (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). This is an indication that street hawking can be considered a good business avenue and a key socio-economic venture owing to its contributions to the informal sector in the

form of employment avenue and significant contributor to the country's GDP. The findings imply that hawking serves as a crucial avenue for entrepreneurial engagement, highlighting the resilience theory, particularly for those individuals constrained by limited access to formal trading opportunities due to capital and skill-set limitations (Lemessa *et al.*, 2021).

On the livelihood resilience outcomes of street hawkers during the COVID-19 lockdown, the findings of this study revealed that stress, anxiety, depression, and loneliness were the mental and psychological effects of the COVID-19 lockdown on the hawkers in ASEM. The resilient nature of street hawkers in managing their livelihoods during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially at the time of lockdown created substantial mental pressure (Moral *et al.*, 2022) and a more serious impact was suicide (Asante *et al.*, 2022). More to that, UNICEF has earlier stated that, aside job losses and reduction in the income level of people, the pandemic will cause increased stress and mental health burden (UNICEF, 2021). To be able to overcome the mental pressure brought up by the COVID-19 lockdown, our study found that the participants showed resilience in their psychological well-being by adopting strategies such as patronizing digital/social media platforms for funny contents, and entertainment. Accessing social media has been documented to be a source of relief from stress and anxiety (O'Day and Heimberg, 2021). Aside the mental and psychological effects of the COVID-19 lockdown, this study also revealed the economic effects felt on the livelihood of the hawkers in ASEM as there was loss of start-up capital and jobs. The imposition of the COVID-19 partial lockdown in Ghana has had a negative effect on businesses and the livelihoods of Ghanaian workers particularly those in the informal sector (Braithair and Titigah, 2023). This means that the pandemic really affected the psychosocial well-being of the hawkers as well as the business and profit ratio, making them more vulnerable and prone to other adverse conditions. The findings also reveal that some hawkers went into liquidation as a result of the lockdown, implying that the lockdown really affected the hawking business. The study findings corroborate that of similar studies conducted in different sectors and countries (Amoah *et al.*, 2021; Mustafa *et al.*, 2021; Workie *et al.*, 2020) confirming that the pandemic is indeed a great disaster for street hawkers.

With all the predicaments experienced by these hawkers, it is important to understand the resilience strategies adopted and the livelihood outcomes of the street hawkers for survival. In this regard, the study found that, whereas some hawkers showed resilience in their psychological well-being by resorting to watching television and accessing social media to release stress, economically, hawkers build economic resilience by depending on their savings and had social support in the form of food items and cash from close friends and relatives, religious bodies and incentives from the government in the form of free water and electricity which also found in a study by Boateng *et al.* (2022). This demonstrates the importance of social support networks as part of the resilience theory that enable street hawkers to bounce back and find alternative sources of income. Focusing on savings, our study revealed that street hawkers of ASEM were dependant on their personal savings for survival. This enabled them to withstand the economic impacts of the COVID-19 which is a demonstration of resilience for survival. According to statistics, the use of personal savings was identified as the second most common coping strategy used during the peak of the pandemic to cover basic living expenses (Bordi *et al.*, 2021). To be able to overcome the economic challenges as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown, our study found that the street hawkers in ASEM adopted a more resilient and innovative strategy by advertising their products online to reach out to customers. E-commerce has grown significantly throughout the pandemic in addition to social media marketing (Dos Santos *et al.*, 2022). Businesses have had to improve their online presence and optimize their e-commerce systems as a result of limits on in-person retail, which has led many consumers to shift to online buying. In relation to this finding, accessing social media, advertisement of products and having financial security and incentives from the government were thought to be some resilience strategies

adopted by the hawkers during the lockdown (Peter-Brown, 2022). Survival at the end of the day is paramount in the lives of the urban poor, therefore, contrary to what this study found, there has been defiance for the government's lockdown directive as some economically poor and vulnerable groups engage in petty trade during the COVID-19 lockdown (Iwuoha and Aniche, 2020) proving the relevance of livelihood resilience in their lives.

Conclusions

Livelihoods and lives of people remain at risk during pandemics and indeed, it is evident that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the health, economic and social problems globally. These disruptions have been particularly impactful on marginalized communities, such as the urban poor in developing countries, hence making this study imperative. In all, this study has established that hawkers in ASEM had better economic gains from their trading activity before the inception of COVID-19 and its subsequent lockdown. With the adoption of resilience strategies, these hawkers were able to absorb the shocks and pressures that the COVID-19 lockdown brought. The study concludes that, without any unforeseen shocks, street hawking business is a lucrative livelihood approach people engage in to generate wealth through savings. The lockdown which was to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Ghana has had a significant mental and psychological and economic effect on those engaged in the hawking business in ASEM in the form of stress, anxiety and loneliness as well as loss of business capital, and loss of jobs. Thus, unforeseen shocks can however affect the psychological state, social and economic life of street hawkers and make hawkers vulnerable. Relying on resilience strategies, hawkers adopted coping strategies during the lockdown in the form of watching movies, television and accessing funny content and advertisement of products on social media, receiving food, material and financial support from close relations, friends and religious organizations and incentives in the form of free water and electricity from the government.

Implications and recommendations

The outcome of this study shows that hawking is a vital avenue for entrepreneurial engagement for those who face barriers to entry in formal trading sectors, hence should be considered as key economic venture in the country's economy. Again, the findings of the study have deepened the understanding of stakeholders on how and the extent to which street hawkers experienced the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on their social, mental and economic life. The findings of this research recommend street hawkers to explore avenues for creativity and innovation. They should explore and leverage on social media marketing and online businesses as business survival strategies to enable them navigate through crises and uncertainties. These are considered effective means of sustaining businesses as compared to the traditional hawking and also, since some respondents even relied on these digital platforms as a resilient measure during the lockdown. Additionally, the study offers insights into managing both psychosocial and financial stress during crises, emphasizing the potential benefits of the resilient strategies such as family support, social media and religious support for more effective crisis management. Furthermore, the study findings provide insights for government and policymakers on the experiences and coping mechanisms of the vulnerable groups and communities, particularly hawkers within ASEM during the pandemic.

Likewise, the study findings widens the intuitions of policymakers that the hawking business not only serves as an economic microcosm but also integrates vendors and consumers within larger socio-economic frameworks therefore, recommend government and other stakeholders to intensify support not only in the form of subsidized electricity tariffs and free water but also provide financial support in the form of capital and trainings to cushion these people during and after future pandemics and lockdowns.

References

- Abdullah, A., Bentum, H., Dwumah, P., Gyasi-Boadu, N. and Musah, M.N. (2020), "Informal control and safety measures of street hawkers: narratives from costermongers", *Urban Forum*, Vol. 31 No. 4, pp. 515-531, doi: [10.1007/s12132-020-09392-7](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12132-020-09392-7).
- Acquah, E. G. (2024), "Map of Awutu Senya East Municipality", *GIS Laboratory*, University of Education, Winneba.
- Adom, D., Adu-Mensah, J. and Sekyere, P.A. (2020), "Hand-to-mouth work culture and the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Experiences of selected informal sector workers in Kumasi, Ghana", *Research of General Internal Medicine*, Vol. 35 No. 8, pp. 2296-2303.
- Ahmed, S., Ashraf, A. and Mustafa, R.U. (2021), "The impact of COVID-19 on street vendors and government interventions in Bangladesh", *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 67-78.
- Amoah, J.O. (2021), "Covid-19 pandemic, gender and informal work: voices from street vendors in Accra, Ghana", *Decent Work or Decent Income*, Rainer Hampp Verlag, pp. 117-130.
- Amoah, C., Bamfo-Agyei, E. and Simpeh, F. (2021), "The COVID-19 pandemic: the woes of small construction firms in Ghana", *Smart and Sustainable Built Environment*, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp. 1099-1115, doi: [10.1108/sasbe-02-2021-0025](https://doi.org/10.1108/sasbe-02-2021-0025).
- Amoah-Nuamah, J., Musah-Abdul, W. and Sampson, L.E. (2020), "Covid-19 pandemic partial lockdown in Ghana and its implications on livelihoods of informal workers in affected communities", *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 11 No. 8, pp. 35-40.
- Antwi-Bosiakoh, T. and Tetteh, V.W. (2019), "Nigerian immigrant women's entrepreneurial embeddedness in Ghana, West Africa", *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 38-57, doi: [10.1108/ijge-05-2018-0043](https://doi.org/10.1108/ijge-05-2018-0043).
- Apera, I., Daniel, A., Balogun, M., Mohammed, M., Lawal, A., Abdullahi, K. and Nongo, S. (2021), "National social register: an approach to social protection and poverty reduction in Nigeria", *Radic. Stat. News*, Vol. 129, pp. 29-44.
- Asante, D., Twumasi, M.A., Sakyi, A.S.K., Gyamerah, S. and Asante, B. (2022), "A socio-geographic perspective of health and economic impacts of COVID-19 on poor households in Ghana", *GeoJournal*, Vol. 87 No. 5, pp. 4113-4125, doi: [10.1007/s10708-021-10487-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-021-10487-2).
- Balbuena, P. and Skinner, C. (2020), "For world's street vendors, life may never be the same after COVID-19", *Hungry Cities*, (accessed 9 July 2021).
- Bawakyillenuo, S. and Agbelie, I.K. (2014), *Waste as a Resource for Energy Generation in the Ga East and Awutu Senya East Municipalities: The Policy Discourse*, University of Ghana, SAMSET project, available at: <http://samsetproject.site11.com/outputs>
- Boateng, F.G., Kusi, S. and Ametepey, S. (2022), "COVID-19 lockdown defiance, public 'indiscipline', and criminalisation of vulnerable populations in Ghana", *African Review of Economics and Finance*, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 142-159.
- Boeh-Ocansey, O. and Cudjoe, S. (2005), "Private sector development in Ghana: the challenges and the lessons", Accra Roundtable on Private Sector, July (Powerpoint presentation).
- Bordi, D., Knowles, M., Sitko, N. and Viberti, F. (2021), *Assessing the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Livelihoods of Rural People: A Review of the Evidence*, United Nations, Rome, FAO.
- Bouët, A., Laborde, D. and Seck, A. (2021), "The impact of COVID-19 on agricultural trade, economic activity, and poverty in Africa", *Africa Agriculture Trade Monitor/2021 Report*, pp. 136-163.
- Braimah, M.K. and Titigah, G.T. (2023), "The effects of Covid 19 on workers and its implications on socio-economic inequalities in Ghana", *International Journal of Health Sciences*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 21-23, doi: [10.47941/ijhs.1187](https://doi.org/10.47941/ijhs.1187).
- Businge, C. (2020), "Uganda's hungry food vendors: counting the cost of COVID-19", available at: <https://www.iied.org/ugandas-hungry-food-vendors-counting-cost-covid-19>

-
- Chen, C. (2020), "Public health messages about COVID-19 prevention in multilingual Taiwan", *Multilingua*, Vol. 39 No. 5, pp. 597-606, doi: [10.1515/multi-2020-0092](https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2020-0092).
- Creswell, J.W. (2014), *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*, 4th ed., SAGE Publications, California.
- Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A. and Huby, G. (2011), "Avery A, Sheikh A. The case study approach", *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 1-9.
- Dlamini, T. (2018), "Embrace digital but ignore traditional media at your peril", *Biz Community Publication*, available at: <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/15/172985.html> (accessed 20 August 2023).
- Doe, B., Amoako, C. and Adamtey, R. (2022), "Spatial expansion and patterns of land use/land cover changes around Accra, Ghana—Emerging insights from Awutu Senya East Municipal Area", *Land Use Policy*, Vol. 112, 105796, doi: [10.1016/j.landusepol.2021.105796](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2021.105796).
- Dos Santos, E.F., de Carvalho, P.V.R. and Gomes, J.O. (2022), "Interactions between e-commerce users during the COVID-19 pandemic period: what came and what remained", *Work*, Vol. 73 No. s1, pp. S177-S187, doi: [10.3233/wor-211136](https://doi.org/10.3233/wor-211136).
- Dosu, B. (2015), "The implications of road toll to local economic development: a case study of Tabre and Offinso", *Journal of Worldwide Holistic Sustainable Development*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 28-45.
- Dzawanda, B., Matsa, M. and Nicolau, M. (2021), "Poverty on the rise: the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on the informal sector of Gweru, Zimbabwe", *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 71 No. 1, pp. 81-96, doi: [10.1111/issj.12285](https://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12285).
- El Bilali, H., Dambo, L., Nanema, J., Tietiambou, S.R.F., Dan Guimbo, I. and Nanema, R.K. (2023), "Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on agri-food systems in West Africa", *Sustainability*, Vol. 15 No. 13, 10643, doi: [10.3390/su151310643](https://doi.org/10.3390/su151310643).
- Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. (2016), "Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling", *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, Vol. 5, pp. 1-4, doi: [10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11](https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11).
- Furuse, Y., Ko, Y.K., Saito, M., Shobugawa, Y., Jindai, K., Saito, T., Suzuki, M. and Oshitani, H. (2020), "Epidemiology of COVID-19 outbreak in Japan, January–March 2020", *Japanese Journal of Infectious Diseases*, Vol. 26, pp. 2176-9.
- Ghana Statistical Service (2016), "Labour Force Report", Ghana Statistical Service, 2016 December.
- Gopaldas, A. (2020), "From hawkers to influencers: COVID-19 and the rise of the digital street vendor in India. South Asia", *Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol. 43 No. 4, pp. 1-12, doi: [10.1080/00856401.2020.1803027](https://doi.org/10.1080/00856401.2020.1803027).
- Gupta, M. and Dutta, M. (2020), "Street vending in the time of COVID-19: challenges and coping strategies of vendors in India", *World Development*, Vol. 136, 105155.
- ILO (2020), *International Labour Organization. As Job Losses Escalate, Nearly Half of Global Workforce at Risk of Losing Livelihoods*, Press Release, available at: https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_743036/lang-en/index.htm (accessed 11 January 2024).
- Iwuoha, V.C. and Aniche, E.T. (2020), "Covid-19 lockdown and physical distancing policies are elitist: towards an indigenous (Afro-centred) approach to containing the pandemic in sub-urban slums in Nigeria, Local Environment", *The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*, Vol. 25 No. 8, pp. 631-640, doi: [10.1080/13549839.2020.1801618](https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2020.1801618).
- Jones, R., Mougouei, D. and Evans, S.L. (2021), "Understanding the emotional response to Covid-19 information in news and social media: a mental health perspective", *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, Vol. 3 No. 5, pp. 832-842, doi: [10.1002/hbe2.304](https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.304).
- Khambule, I. (2023), "COVID-19 and the informal economy in a small-town in South Africa: governance implications in the post-COVID era", *Cogent Social Sciences*, Vol. 8, p. 1, doi: [10.1080/23311886.2022.2078528](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2078528).

- Laing, T. (2020), "The economic impact of the Coronavirus 2019 (Covid-2019): implications for the mining industry", *The Extractive Industries and Society*, Vol. 7 No. 2, pp. 580-582, doi: [10.1016/j.exis.2020.04.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2020.04.003).
- Lemessa, S.D., Watabaji, M.D., Yismaw, M.A. and Tadesse, A.B. (2021), "Evening street vending and the tragic living conditions of vendors: the case of eastern Ethiopia region", *Cities*, Vol. 108, 102947, doi: [10.1016/j.cities.2020.102947](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.102947).
- Masten, A.S. (2001), "Ordinary magic: resilience processes in development", *American Psychologist*, Vol. 56 No. 3, pp. 227-238, doi: [10.1037/0003-066x.56.3.227](https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.56.3.227).
- Mitchell, V., P. J., Lori, A.S. and Patten, E.V. (2021), "Social media behaviours and experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic: associations with anxiety, depression, and stress", *Journal of Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 217-230.
- Moral, I.H., Rahaman, M.S., Imran, M.S. and Rahman, M.W. (2022), "Mental health of hawkers during COVID-19: a marginal community in Bangladesh", *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Ecology*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 926-939, doi: [10.1108/jec-01-2022-0006](https://doi.org/10.1108/jec-01-2022-0006).
- Mustafa, F., Khursheed, A., Fatima, M. and Rao, M. (2021), "Exploring the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on women entrepreneurs in Pakistan", *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 187-203, doi: [10.1108/ijge-09-2020-0149](https://doi.org/10.1108/ijge-09-2020-0149).
- Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. and Moules, N.J. (2017), "Thematic analysis", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Vol. 16 No. 1, 160940691773384, doi: [10.1177/1609406917733847](https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847).
- Oloko, M. and Ekpo, R. (2021), "Effects of the COVID-19 lockdown on the livelihood and food security of street food vendors and consumers in Nigeria", *Journal of African Studies and Development*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 106-114, doi: [10.5897/jasd2021.0641](https://doi.org/10.5897/jasd2021.0641).
- O'Day, E.B. and Heimberg, R.G. (2021), "Social media use, social anxiety, and loneliness: a systematic review", *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, Vol. 3, 100070, doi: [10.1016/j.chbr.2021.100070](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2021.100070).
- Peprah, C., Oduro-Ofori, E. and Asante-Wusu, I. (2015), "The socio-economic conditions of caretaker families living in uncompleted houses in the Awutu-Senya East Municipality, Ghana", *Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 8 No. 3, p. 309, doi: [10.5539/jsd.v8n3p309](https://doi.org/10.5539/jsd.v8n3p309).
- Peter-Brown, M. (2022), "COVID-19 and socio-economic inequalities among workers in Ghana", *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 10 No. 05, pp. 219-240, doi: [10.4236/jss.2022.105016](https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2022.105016).
- Quartey, T., Peprah, C. and Morgan, A.K. (2023), "Determinants of national health insurance enrolment among people at risk of statelessness in the Awutu Senya East Municipality and Gomoa East District of Ghana", *BMC Health Services Research*, Vol. 23 No. 1, pp. 1-11, doi: [10.1186/s12913-022-08738-0](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-022-08738-0).
- Rakshit, B. and Basistha, D. (2020), "Can India stay immune enough to combat COVID-19 pandemic? An economic query", *Journal of Public Affairs*, Vol. 20 No. 4, e2157, doi: [10.1002/pa.2157](https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2157).
- Rocha, C., Ferreira, J.J. and Van Hoof, H. (2020), "Resilience and entrepreneurial activities in the COVID-19 crisis", *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, Vol. 17 No. 24, p. 9383.
- Romanello, M. (2022), "Covid-19 and the informal sector", in Papyrakis, E. (Ed.), *COVID-19 and International Development*, Springer, Cham, doi: [10.1007/978-3-030-82339-97](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82339-97).
- Romero-Michel, J.C., Mokay-Ramírez, K.A., Delgado-Machuca, M., Delgado-Enciso, J., Aurelien-Cabezas, N.S., Tiburcio-Jimenez, D., Meza-Robles, C., Delgado-Enciso, O.G., Guzman Esquivel, J., Zaizar-Fregoso, S.A., Martinez Fierro, M.L., Rodriguez Sanchez, I.P., Melnikov, V., Barajas-Saucedo, C.E., Lara-Esqueda, A. and Delgado-Enciso, I. (2021), "Health and economic measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic-Effect on street vendors", *The Journal of Infection in Developing Countries*, Vol. 15 No. 02, pp. 198-203, doi: [10.3855/jidc.13465](https://doi.org/10.3855/jidc.13465).
- Tadesse, S. and Muluye, W. (2020), "The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education system in developing countries: a review", *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 8 No. 10, pp. 159-170, doi: [10.4236/jss.2020.810011](https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2020.810011).
- Thanh, P.T., Nguyen, H.T.H., Ngan, L.T.B., Nguyen, D.M.D., Phan, G.H. and Nguyen, T.M.N. (2022), "No one left behind: risk communication to the street vendors during COVID-19 social distancing", *Library Hi Tech*, Vol. 40 No. 2, pp. 357-375, doi: [10.1108/lht-03-2021-0100](https://doi.org/10.1108/lht-03-2021-0100).

-
- UNICEF (2021), *Primary and Secondary Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Ghana*, UNICEF, Accra.
- Wegerif, M.C.A. (2020), "Informal food traders and food security: experiences from the Covid-19 response in South Africa, food security: the science, sociology and economics of food production and access to food, Springer", *The International Society for Plant Pathology*, Vol. 12 No. 4, pp. 797-800, doi: [10.1007/s12571-020-01078-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-020-01078-z).
- Workie, E., Mackolil, J., Nyika, J. and Ramadas, S. (2020), "Deciphering the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on food security, agriculture, and livelihoods: a review of the evidence from developing countries", *Current Research in Environmental Sustainability*, Vol. 2, 100014, doi: [10.1016/j.crsust.2020.100014](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crsust.2020.100014).
- World Bank (2021), "Social protection for the informal economy: operational lessons for developing countries in Africa and beyond", doi: [10.1596/36584](https://doi.org/10.1596/36584), available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/publication/social-protection-for-theinformal-economy-operational-lessons-for-developing-countries-in-africa-and-beyond>
- World Bank (2022a), "Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19 : A Real-Time Review of Country Measures (English)", available at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/110221643895832724/Social-Protection-and-Jobs-Responses-to-COVID-19-A-Real-Time-Review-of-Country-Measures>
- World Bank (2022b), *Overview [Internet]*, World Bank, available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview>
- World Food Programme (2022), "Extreme poverty rises in West Africa due to COVID-19 pandemic", available at: <https://www.wfp.org/news/extreme-poverty-rises-west-africa-due-covid-19-pandemic>
- World Health Organization (2020), "Report of the WHO-China joint mission on coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)", *who-china-joint-mission-on-covid-19-final-report*, pp. 1-40.
- Zougbede, K. (2020), "Coronavirus: improving resilience in West African food systems", The Africa Report, available at: <https://www.theafricareport.com/28356/coronavirus-improvingresilience-inwest-african-food-systems/>

Further reading

- Chen, S., Shi, Y. and van Oort, F. (2021), "The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the global urban street-food industry", *A Social Network Analysis. Sustainability*, Vol. 13 No. 1, p. 153.
- Kuckertz, A., Brändle, L., Gaudig, A., Hinderer, S., Reyes, C.A.M., Prochotta, A., Kathrin, M.S. and Berger, E.S.C. (2020), "Startups in times of crisis -A rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic", *Journal of Business Venturing Insights*, Vol. 13, e00169, doi: [10.1016/j.jbvi.2020.e00169](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbvi.2020.e00169).
- Shepherd, D.A., Saade, P.F. and Joakim Wincent, J. (2020), "How to circumvent adversity? Refugee-entrepreneurs' resilience in the face of substantial and persistent adversity", *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 35 No. 4, 105940, doi: [10.1016/j.jbusvent.2019.06.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusvent.2019.06.001).

Corresponding author

Adjoa Afriyie Poku can be contacted at: aapoku@uew.edu.gh

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:

www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com