



COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE PERFORMANCE OF SMALL POULTRY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic has affected market share and competitive advantages of most small businesses around the world which Nigeria is no exception. The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of Covid-19 Pandemic on the performance of the Small Poultry Business Enterprises (SPBEs) in Ojo LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria. The independent variable is Covid-19 Pandemic while dependent variables are market share and competitive advantages. The research design for the study was descriptive survey design. The population of the study includes all the small poultry business, veterinary experts, feed producers and equipment/input suppliers in Ojo LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria. Convenient sampling technique was chosen for the study since the population is not certain. The sampling size of the study was three hundred and eighty-four (384) using Saunder, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) formula. With an addition of 10% of 384 of the sample size derived, making a total of four hundred and twenty-two (422) respondents sampled. A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of COVID-19 on market share. A one-way ANOVA reveals that the difference is positive and hence there was statistically significant difference between COVID-19 and market share ($F(12, 354) = (50.577)$, $p = 0.02$). A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of COVID 19 pandemic on competitive advantage. Also, the one-way ANOVA reveals that the difference is positive and hence there was statistically significant difference between COVID-19 pandemic and competitive advantages ($F(12, 354) = (47.674)$, $p = 0.02$). Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations among others were made, that: Small poultry business owners and managers should leverage on the gains of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to boast their operations, this would go a long way in boasting sales turnover and profit in the long run; small poultry business owners should applied backward integration strategy in the aspect of poultry feed to enable them cope with rising cost of foreign and imported feed and government and corporate bodies should help the farmers with loans and subsidies to enhance growth and sustainability of poultry business in Ojo LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria.

Keywords: *Competitive Advantage, Covid-19, Small Poultry Business Enterprises and Performance.*

1. Introduction

Lagos State is the commercial nerve centre of Nigeria, a home to about 20 million people, and indeed the epicenter of COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria (Vanguard, 2020). Crop farming, Poultry and other species of livestock and fisheries are produced in the state including Ojo Local Government Area (LGA) with some identified critical problems ranging from the ageing farm settlements, lack of infrastructure, post-harvest losses and under- developed aqua-cultural system but recently COVID-19 pandemic has become one of the major challenges facing not just poultry industry but agriculture as a whole globally including other sectors of economy.



The virus since its outbreak in November 2019 has caused a lot of damages to the world virtually in all aspects of life or sectors of economy Alawode (2020) notes that World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March, 2021 having impacted negatively (still impacting) on lives, family, businesses and communities at large. Obese, Osei-Amponsah, Timpong-Jonas and Bekoe (2020) posit that the outbreak of the disease has caused widespread damage to the world. Bissan and Hambleton (2020) explain that aside from health implications of the disease, other important area such as livestock production has been grossly affected.

Sasson in Fafolu and Alabi (2020) point that achieving a sustainable food production to feed this massive growing population has been posing a serious challenge to most developing countries across the globe particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Agriculture accounts for 35% of Nigeria Gross Domestic product (GDP) but Nigeria poultry industry contributes approximately 25% to the agriculture GDP and as well employs about 14million Nigerians in direct and indirect employment (Netherland Enterprise Agency, 2019). Poultry is the term used to describe group of birds kept for meat and egg (example chicken) or reared or hunted for a useful purpose (Adebiyi, Matanmi and Njidda, 2020). According to Nigeria Bureau of Statistic (2019), the sector grew by 14.88% year-on-year in nominal terms in third quarter (Q3) 2019, showing a decline of -3.44% points from the same quarter of 2018. Compared to the preceding quarter's growth rate of 17.76%, this represents a decline of -2.89% points. Crop Production remained the largest driver of the sector, accounting for 91.6% of sector in the third quarter of 2019. Quarter on Quarter growth stood at 44.12%. Agriculture contributed 25.88% to nominal GDP during the quarter, higher than the rates recorded for the third quarter of 2018 and the second quarter of 2019 which recorded 25.52% and 19.39% respectively. Agriculture real growth in real terms, the agricultural sector grew by 2.28% (year-on-year) in the third quarter of 2019, an increase by 0.37% points from the corresponding period of 2018, and 0.49% points from the preceding quarter which recorded a growth rate of 1.79%. In terms of contribution, the sector contributed 29.25% to overall real GDP during the quarter, same as contribution in the third quarter of 2018 but higher than the second quarter of 2019 which stood at 22.78%. Compared to the second quarter of 2019, the contribution in Q3 2019 rose 6.46% points.

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, the Nigeria poultry industry has witnessed tremendous technical improvement over the last decade and continues to contribute to achieving Nigeria's food sufficiency and economic growth. Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations, FAO (2020) explained that the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on livestock sector cut across both in the production, processing, transport, and sales and consumption. FAO (2020) further noted COVID-19 pandemic reduces access to animal feeds, reduces access to inputs and services, reduced processing capacity, compromised storage and conservation and as well constrained national and international transport, modified retailing and product demand, reduced consumer purchasing power and as well reduced demand and public procurement.

Furthermore, Small Business Enterprises (SBEs) are instrumental to the economic growth of any country because they provide the required support and assistance towards the overall sustainability of business growth and development. SBEs are influential in creating a substantial amount of employment and, therefore, serve as a vehicle for addressing poverty in most of the underdeveloped economies of the world, including Nigeria (Okpara, 2011). According to National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2010). SBEs comprises of more than 90% of Nigerian businesses,



resulting in the creation of a substantial number of jobs. Therefore, most nations of the world regard SBEs to be the impetus for sustainable economic growth and development through their capacity for employment generation, poverty reduction, increased opportunities for technological advancement, and an overall increase in the level of production, which leads to a higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Gbandi & Amisssah, 2014).

The organizations that considers the competitive advantage are directed, on the one hand, to controlling their main resources and capabilities and, on the other hand, to protect the stakeholders' interests (customers, employees, suppliers, distributors, shareholders, etc.) focusing on the multifaceted skills of the organization and encouraging innovative ideas. In the above context, the paper aims to highlight the importance of the competitive advantage for the purpose of selecting the organization's strategy (Negulescu 2019). It presents the main sources of the competitive advantage and analyzes some analysis models of the competitive advantage of the organization in correlation with the alternative strategy to choose.

Effectiveness oriented companies are concerned with output, sales, quality, creation of value added, innovation, cost reduction. It measures the degree to which a business achieves its goals or the way outputs interact with the economic and social environment. Usually effectiveness determines the policy objectives of the organization or the degree to which an organization realizes its own goals (Zheng, 2010). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) analyzed organizational effectiveness through organizational commitment. Commitment in the workplace may take various forms, such as relationship between leader and staff, employee's identification with the organization, involvement in the decision making process, psychological attachment felt by an individual. Shiva and Suar (2010) agree that superior performance is possible by transforming staff attitudes towards organization from lower to a higher plane of maturity, therefore human capital management should be closely bonded with the concepts of the effectiveness.

Sasson in Fafolu and Alabi (2020) posit that achieving a sustainable food production to feed the massive growing population has been posing a serious challenge to most developing countries across the globe particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa such as Nigeria. Nigeria is seen as one of the countries where the increase in the world population will be concentrated. It is expected that the population will double from 201 million in 2019 to 401 million in 2050 (Netherland Enterprise Agency, 2019). Netherland Enterprise Agency (2019) similarly noted that Agriculture accounts for 35% of Nigeria gross domestic product (GDP) but Nigeria poultry industry contributes approximately 25% to the agriculture GDP but unfortunately the subsector is faced with many constrains which according to Osuji (2019) include high cost of feed, lack of fund, outbreak of disease and high transportation cost.

Similarly, FAO (2020); and Fafiolu and Alabi (2020) pointed that the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on livestock sector are still largely unquantifiable and yet to be fully felt. FAO (2020) further notes that formal assessments on the effects have not yet been possible but current observations reveal disruptions to livestock value and supply chains with respect to the production, processing, sales and consumption and amongst others. Most of the related studies on the subject are less and non-empirical. The study will be beneficial to government in terms of revenue generation, poultry farmers and potential academic researchers as a reference point. Hence, this study examines the effect of Covid-19 Pandemic on the performance of Small Poultry Business Enterprises (SPBE) in Ojo LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria



The following null research hypotheses are formulated to guide this study.

- i. COVID-19 pandemic has no significant impact on the competitive advantages of Small Poultry Business Enterprises (SPBE) in Ojo LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria.
- ii. COVID-19 pandemic has no significant impact on the market share of Small Poultry Business Enterprises (SPBE) in Ojo LGA of Lagos State, Nigeria
- iii. COVID-19 pandemic has no significant impact on market share of SPBEs in Ojo LGA of Lagos State.

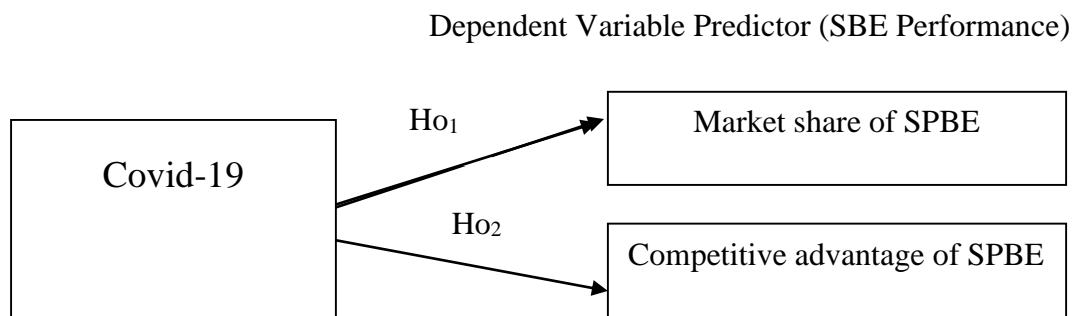
2. Literature Review and Theory

According to Adebisi *et al.* (2020) some of the problems of poultry business in Nigeria include: Scarcity and high cost of day-old chicks (DOC), pouts, ducklings etc. The cost of purchase of DOC is always very high especially when the festive period is on sight and this eventually affect the total cost of production. Adebisi *et al.* (2020) further add that poor quality of birds available for meat and egg production. This is also a major problem faced by the poultry industry because our indigenous breeds have not been genetically improved upon to grow rapidly especially for the meat type to meet the population increase requirement. Indigenous breeds are also broody in nature and this limit the numbers of eggs laid. Poultry management/production systems in Nigeria according to Adebisi *et al.* (2020) entails: *Housing/Building, Poultry Equipment, Incubator, Poultry Feed/Feeding and Vaccines and Drugs.*

2.1 Small Business Performance

Adeleke, Ogundele and Oyenuga (2008) as well as Ogundele (2012) define business performance as a process or set of process for establishing shared understanding about what is to be achieved or of managing and developing people in a way which increases the profitability that will be achieved in the short and long term. It is about improving both results and the quality of working relationships. Adeleke *et al.* (2008) and Ogundele (2012) further posit that performance measurement of an organization needs to recognize both financial (economic) and non-financial (behaviorial) measures of performance and be balanced in its approaches. Adeleke *et al.* (2008) posit that performance management is a means of obtaining better results from the organization, teams and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, objectives and standards of achievement and competent methods of measuring business performance. The research model for this study as follow.

Figure 1: Research Model for the Study



Source: Developed by the Researcher, 2021



2.2 Review of Empirical Literature

FAO (2020) in a study mitigating the impacts of COVID-19 on the livestock sector argues that the effects of COVID-19 on the livestock sector are still largely un-quantified and yet to be fully felt which include reduced access to animal feed, reduced access to inputs and services, reduced access to markets, reduced access to capacity, compromised storage and conservation, constrained national and international transport, modified retailing and product demand, reduced consumer purchasing power and reduced demand and public procurement. This finding was corroborated by the findings of Fafiolu and Alabi (2020) in a study ‘beyond COVID-19 pandemic period: strategies for sustainable livestock feed and food production’.

Marchant-Forde and Boyle (2020) in a descriptive study carried out in USA examined the COVID-19 effects on livestock production, states that in Germany, corona virus infected more than 1,500 workers in one of Europe’s largest meat processing plants and COVID-19 associated general trends included increased meat, egg, and dairy retail sales with a sharp upward spike as lockdowns were announced but then sustained sales when compared with year-on-year, from early March to July, where records are available. They however stated that the greatest impact of COVID-19 on the livestock product supply chain commenced with disease outbreaks among processing plant workers, leading to plant closures and effects up and down the food chain. They further stated the processing portion of farm-to-fork production is inherently more dangerous than non-food system industries. Marchant-Forde *et al.* (2020) further states the when processing plants started closing down, the affected workers faced financial uncertainty. Workers elsewhere in the supply chain also faced a period of insecurity when the effects of plant closures became apparent, including job losses, financial impacts, loss of animals, etc. Where plants were still working but with reduced staffing, workloads were increased or duties changed, both likely to increase risk of injury.

Olufemi (2020) in an empirical study ‘the financial impact of COVID-19 on poultry industry in Nigeria’ using primary data analyzed using descriptive regression analysis and adjusted coefficient of determination of 0.977 indicates that the four factor proxies of COVID-19, namely business plan and continuity, market and demand, government policies and logistics/security affect the financial health of the poultry industry while the remaining 2.3% is due to other external factors not considered in the study. The positive relationship as denoted by the positive integers indicate that when there is business plan and continuity, market and demand, government policies and logistics/security well-articulated and revised will lead to an increase and or improvement in the financial health of the poultry industry in Nigeria (Hafez and Youssef, 2020).

Obese, Osei-Amponsah, Timpong-Jones and Bekoe (2021) in a study to examine the impact of COVID-19 on animal production in Ghana points that COVID-19 has affected the importation of animals and livestock products into Ghana with the potential of lowering the consumption of animal protein, there has been a reduction in the availability of feed resources and farm inputs for animal production, leading to price increases. Animal production activities, including feeding, management, and disease control, have been adversely affected as a result of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Capacity building programs in animal breeding have had challenges as a result of restrictions, leading to the rescheduling of most programs. They note that Ghana imports most livestock products including day-old-chick (DOC) from neighboring West African countries, the United States, Brazil, and the European Union. Livestock trade mainly from the Sahel regions of West Africa into Ghana has been severely affected as a result of the closure of the land borders.



In addition to the impacts, COVID-19 brought about by the changes in consumer demand, the processing sector is particularly vulnerable to disruptions caused directly by the virus. The processing sector has significantly less opportunity to physically distance its employees than other parts of the value chain. In addition, there is a relatively high degree of concentration, which means that product flows through a smaller number of players on the way to the consumer. If one of those processing plants were to close or be restricted, then there could be a disruption, with the extent of the impact being largest on perishable goods such as milk and smaller on chicken, which can be frozen and stored. The degree to which the flow would be altered by the closure of a processing plant also depends on the ease of finding other processors, which is influenced by the degree of specialization and concentration (Weersink *et al.*, 2020).

FAO (2021) in a study carried out to highlight the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the measures adopted by corporative to mitigate its impacts stated that unlike any other crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted food value chains at all levels (production, processing, logistics and even consumer behaviour to name a few) .The impacts vary across countries and are constantly changing with the spread of the pandemic as governments, stakeholders and other actors in value chains adopt and implement a broad spectrum of measures to manage the spread of the virus and mitigate its impacts on food insecurity and poverty.

2.3 Theoretical Framework of the Study

Ivanov and Avasil (2013) note that in recent years, because of the dynamic of the environment where organizations compete, more and more of them developed a considerable interest for performance measurement. The main role of performance measurement is to assess the current position of the organization and also to help managers create and implement a better strategy. On a changing market, where many companies adopt about the same strategies, or have similar products or services; the only way to obtain long-term performance is to innovate. This study is therefore anchored on the Balanced Scorecard Model developed by David Norton and Robert Kaplan in 1992.

Balanced Scorecard: Balanced Scorecard model is a useful tool for the managers to obtain a competitive advantage. These days, organizations are competing into a dynamic and complex environment (as witnessed during the prime of COVID-19) where understanding the objectives and the way they can be achieved are vital. The Balanced Scorecard translates the mission and the organization strategy into a set of performance indicators that offers a model for the performance measurement system. The model assesses the organizational performance through four perspectives: financial, clients, learning and growth and internal processes (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). The indicators represent a balance between external indicators for stakeholders and the internal indicators of critical processes, innovation learning and development. The indicators and their importances are explained as follow:

Customer perspective: It is very important to understand what customers want in terms of quality, costs and distribution, and the most important thing, what they want in the future from the organization.

Financial perspective: Managing financial resources is very important for the success of the organization. Knowing how to attract the fund and how to invest them as good as possible is vital.



Internal processes perspective: Understanding how internal processes work will help the organization achieve its objectives and how to add the expected value to the products or services that the customers buy. Improving the internal processes will help the organization to improve its all-around performance.

Learning and growth perspective: In a shrinking budget, training and development are eliminated first. During a crisis, like what was witnessed during COVID-19 prime, the organizational capabilities are often sacrificed. This is one of the most important perspectives because it influences all the other perspectives. With the Balanced Scorecard Model, the innovation can be analyzed through internal processes and learning and growth perspectives. This model therefore provides strong explanations of how businesses can maneuver during pandemic or crisis situation.

3. Research Methodology

The research design for the study was descriptive survey design. This design is considered suitable because it provides a clear, detailed and vivid description of the situation and phenomenon under investigation (Omotayo, *et al.*, 2016). The population of the study includes all the Small Poultry Business owners, veterinary experts, feed producers and equipment/input suppliers in Ojo LGA of Lagos State. This is because this area of the state accommodates a lot of poultry farmers due to the availability of spacious land for such activities.

Convenient sampling technique was chosen for the study since the population is not certain. Convenient sampling is a non-probability technique where respondents are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. The sampling size of the study was three hundred and eighty four (384) using Saunder, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) formula. However, the researcher added 10% of 384 of the sample size due to poor attitude toward return of questionnaire in Nigeria. Thus, a total of four hundred and twenty two (422) respondents sampled.

$$n = p\% \times q\% \times [z/e\%]^2$$

Where:

n = the minimum sample size required

p% = the proportion belonging to the specified category =50%

q% = the proportion of not belonging to the specified category = 1-50% = 50%

z = the z value corresponding to the level of confidence required = 1.96

e% = the margin of error required = 5%.

$$\begin{aligned} n &= 50 \times 50 \times [1.96/5]^2 \\ &= 2500 \times (0.392)^2 \end{aligned}$$



$$= 2500 \times 0.153664$$

$n = 384$ *Approximately.*

3.1 Methods of Data Collection

The data for the study were collected by the researcher along with research assistants by administering the questionnaire to the respondents personally along with research assistants in order to get accurate and reliable data from respondents.

The research instrument for the study was a self-developed questionnaire “titled COVID-19-POULTRY BUSINESS QUESTIONNAIRE” which will have two sections A and B. Section A deals with demographic information of the respondents of four items, section B deals on the dependent and independent variables.

4. Results and Discussions

Table 2. Reliability Coefficients of Variables

S/No	Dimensions/Measures of the study variable	Number of items	Number of cases	Cronbach’s Alpha
1	Covid 19 Pandemic	4	367	0.790
2	Market share	5	367	0.872
3	Competitive Advantages	5	367	0.893

Source: Authors Computation using SPSS-23

Table 2 shows the reliability coefficients of independent variables and dimensions of dependent variables. The table shows independent variable of COVID-19 pandemic has four (4) items, 365 cases and coefficient of Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.790. The table further shows that dimensions of dependent variables market share and competitive advantages have five items each and coefficient of Cronbach’s Alpha 0.872 and 0.893 respectively.

4.1 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The result of the ANOVA analysis on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the small business is presented below. This result simply shows the impact of the predictor variable on the measures of the criterion variable which is used to test the hypotheses (See Table 3).



Table 3. ANOVA (Pandemic and Market share)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	307.255	12	25.605	50.577	.000
Within Groups	179.214	354	.506		
Total	486.469	366			

a. Dependent Variable: Market share

b. Independent Variable: Covid-19 pandemic

Source: Authors Computation using SPSS-23

Test of Hypothesis One:

H₀₁: COVID-19 pandemic has no significant impact on market share of SPBEs in Ojo LGA of Lagos State.

The one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on market share. The one-way ANOVA reveals that the difference is positive and hence there was statistically significant difference between COVID-19 pandemic and market share ($F(12, 354) = (50.577)$, $p = 0.02$). This implies that the hypothesis (null) is rejected and hence re-stated as follows: COVID-19 pandemic has a significant impact on market share of SPBEs.

Table 4. ANOVA (Pandemic and Competitive Advantage)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	260.884	12	21.740	47.664	.000
Within Groups	161.465	354	.456		
Total	422.349	366			

a. Dependent Variable: competitive Advantage

b. Independent Variable-COVID-19 pandemic

Source: Authors Computation using SPSS-23

Test of Hypothesis Two:

H₀₂: COVID-19 pandemic has no significant impact on the competitive advantage on SPBEs in Ojo LGA of Lagos State.

Table 4 showed one-way ANOVA performed to compare the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on competitive advantages of SPBEs in Ojo LGA of Lagos State. A one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on competitive advantage. A one-way ANOVA revealed that the difference is positive and hence there was statistically significant difference between COVID-19 pandemic and competitive advantages ($F(12, 354) = (47.674)$, $p = 0.02$). This implies that the hypothesis (null) is rejected and hence re-stated as follows: COVID-19 pandemic has a significant impact on competitive advantages of SPBEs in Ojo LGA of Lagos State.



4.2 Discussion of Findings

The study considered the impact of COVID-19 on the performance of small poultry businesses in Ojo LGA of Lagos State. The findings reveal that Covid-19 significantly impacted the performance of small business in Ojo Local Government Area, Nigeria with respect to market share and competitive advantages.

The findings of the study agree with that of Arnesh, Megashnee and Popopo, (2020) who were of the view that the resolution of this unprecedented challenge posed by the pandemic does not seem to be in the short-term horizon but rather something the globe has to live with.

Similarly, Gerard *et al.*, (2020) also supports our findings as they were of the view that more than any other dimension of food security, poultry products access has arguably been the most affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The global economic recession triggered by lockdowns has had a very negative impact on people's ability to access these products. As the crisis drags on, short-term coping strategies (e.g., savings, the selling of animals and assets) are reaching their limits or have been exhausted, and in developing countries have limited capacity to provide extensive social safety nets.

Furthermore, Moseley and Battersby, (2020) argues that poor households operate on tight budgets with little to no discretionary spending. This means that, in the absence of social safety nets, spending on food declined as incomes declined during the COVID-19 pandemic. These losses have affected low waged workers, some farmers, and informal traders and hawkers. Food price rises, where they occurred, have directly affected households' ability to purchase enough food and poultry products and this add justification to our findings.

Marchant-Forde and Boyle (2020) in a descriptive study carried out in USA examined the COVID-19 effects on livestock production, stated that in Germany, coronavirus infected more than 1,500 workers in one of Europe's largest meat processing plants and COVID-19 associated general trends included increased meat, egg, and dairy retail sales with a sharp upward spike as lockdowns were announced but then sustained sales when compared with year-on-year, from early March to July, where records are available. They however stated that the greatest impact of COVID-19 on the livestock product supply chain commenced with disease outbreaks among processing plant workers, leading to plant closures and effects up and down the food chain. They further state that the processing portion of farm-to-fork production is inherently more dangerous than non-food system industries.

Olufemi (2020) in the study the financial impact of COVID-19 on poultry industry in Nigeria indicates that the four factor proxies of COVID-19, namely business plan and continuity, market and demand, government policies and logistics/security affect the financial health of the poultry industry. The positive relationship as denoted by the positive integers indicate that when there is business plan and continuity, market and demand, government policies and logistics/security well-articulated and revised will lead to an increase and or improvement in the financial health of the poultry industry in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the study carried out by Obese, Osei-Amponsah, Timpong-Jones and Bekoe (2021) corroborate our findings. In a descriptive study to examine the impact of COVID-19 on animal production in Ghana pointed they found out that COVID-19 has affected the importation of



animals and livestock products into Ghana with the potential of lowering the consumption of animal protein, also, there has been a reduction in the availability of feed resources and farm inputs for animal production, leading to price increases. Animal production activities, including feeding, management, and disease control, have been adversely affected as a result of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Capacity building programmes in animal breeding have had challenges as a result of restrictions, leading to the rescheduling of most programs. They noted that Ghana imports most livestock products including day-old-chick (DOC) from neighboring West African countries, the United States, Brazil, and the European Union. Livestock trade mainly from the Sahel regions of West Africa into Ghana has been severely affected as a result of the closure of the land borders.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The prospects of small businesses in contributing to Nigeria growth, development and industrialization, wealth creation, poverty reduction and employment creation is staggering. The realization of its significance requires drastic measures for survival of these small businesses in the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic. The advent of COVID- 19 and its prevalence has had an adverse effect on activities of small and medium businesses and the economy of the nation. Consequently, an emergency response is needed to save Nigeria's economy which is dependent on the activities of small businesses from though already inimical situation but necessary as it is almost sliding towards economic recession.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the study recommends that:

- i. Small poultry business owners and managers should leverage on the gains of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) boost their operations. They can utilize the platforms to create awareness for their goods and service. The reach would be wide and the cost would be minimal. This would go a long way in boasting sales turnover and profit in the long run.
- ii. Small poultry business owners should apply backward integration strategy in the aspect of poultry feed to enable them cope with rising cost of foreign and imported feed. This will also help in tackling poor content of most of the poultry feed in the market.
- iii. Government and corporate bodies should help the farmers with loans and subsidies to enhance growth and sustainability of poultry business in Lagos State, Nigeria.
- iv. Government should come up with intervention programmes such as poultry education and involving of poultry expertise and extension workers that will help the farmers to acquire the required skills and knowledge.

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