

Curbing COVID-19 overbearance: Creed, socio-cultural practices and sub-Saharan African nations' food security nexus

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Abstract

The issue of COVID-19 ravaging the global community can be likened to one of the works of the famous Nigerian writer, late Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* with the center despite all efforts, defiling holding together on all aspects of human endeavor. Despite the discovery of Covid-19 vaccines and its consequent administration for mitigating the effects of the pandemic, information is replete about the continuous and astronomical increase in the number of victims of the virus. The multiplier effects of the pandemic on occupation, education, economic, religious, socio-cultural practices, agricultural activities, food production and distribution, among others cannot be over-emphasized, hence, this study. Qualitative design was adopted for this study as action research with eighty participants sampled from Oyo Township of Oyo State, Nigeria through purposive sampling technique among various strata of the society. Participant Observation (PO), Key Informants (KI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) techniques were adopted in data collection analyzed through triangulation of instruments of content analysis and categorization of ideas coupled with tables, frequency counts and simple percentages. Result revealed that: more female than male participated in the study (43/37; 53.75%/46.25%); most participants are above middle age (53.75% and 46.25%); participants cut across the three dominant religious sects (Muslim, 36, 45.00%; Christian, 29, 36.25%; ATR, 15, 18.75%); most of the participants are literate (68, 85.00%). Content analysis and observations indicators revealed that Nigeria is not spared from Covid-19 pandemic; solid relationships exist among religious beliefs, socio-cultural practices, food security and Covid-19 pandemic. Hence, sustainable mitigating measures devoid

of further complications need be pursued in the SSA nations; government, stakeholders and the civil society must be enlisted in the efforts to ameliorate the pandemic.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic; creed; food security; Nigerian SSA nation; socio-cultural practices*

1. Introduction

The Biblical injunction, ‘thou sluggard, go to the ants and be wise’ and ‘the sparrow never plants, sow nor reap, but your father in heaven feed them all is an indication that the place of food in the life of all creature right from the lower animal to the higher animals, the mammalian group to which human beings belong, cannot be over emphasized. The essentiality of food in virtually all human endeavors is seen in the meeting of the primary needs as a prominent component of the psychological needs in the Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of Needs theory. In fact, other needs have to wait until the primary need is satisfied. Thus, the maxim, ‘a hungry man is an angry man’ is but a truism for satisfying other needs on the hierarchy such as safety needs, belongingness, self-esteem and self-actualization denoted as secondary needs. The more reason why in Yoruba

parlance, it is sacrosanct that the issue food should not be toyed with, hence, the saying

that ‘ebi kii wonu koro miran wo’ literally translating to the fact that there is no amount of persuasion or words that can satisfy a hungry person safe for food.

Little wonder, nutritionists in recognition of the place of food, classified food intake into different classes and associated time frame for taking such, hence, breakfast, lunch and dinner expected to be taken in the morning, afternoon and night respectively. Even in the Yoruba socio-cultural practice, balanced diet obtained from food intake is recognized with the sayings such as ‘ounje lore awo’ (talking about food and well-being and skin texture connection), ‘Iyan lonje, oka loogun, airirara lan jeko’ (eulogizing varieties of food such as pounded yam, yam and cassava flour, pap, etc.), ‘tebi ba tan ninu ise, ise buse’ (when hunger is dealt with, poverty will cease), ‘Emi ti ko jata, emi kukuru ni’ (talking about the significance of

pepper to life span). In like manner, food is also being used as a metaphor in driving home points and corrections such as: ‘orile olounje debiti aya’, ‘atojubole tii mobiobe gbe dun’, ‘bolounje barimi to roju koko, ma faijeun dun’, ‘ese girigiri nile anjofe, ofe tan, Medically, it is a known fact that when someone is sick and being attended to by physician, the issue of food is part of the need history during clerking of such person probably to assist in proper diagnosing hence, sick persons are usually asked whether they have taken food or not before administration of drugs especially, injection. It is also customary that one takes adequate food before embarking on energy sharpen activities as well as brain coordination and other tasks. All these are but a pointer to the importance of food to mankind generally, corollary of which necessitates availability of such in quality and quantity and in right dimension and proportion. It is instructive to state that the productivity of food as encapsulated in the above description is a function of food availability especially in the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) nations especially in the word.

For instance, Okunade (2014) while reflecting on Nigerian situation enlisted

ese da’, ‘obirin taa fe losu aga ti nfiyan mole, ooba mbe lomo re yo maa je’. The foregoing literarily translated to acceptable behaviors, honors and values cherished in human relationships.

among other issues relating to unbridle primitive accumulation, oil theft, unauthorized or inappropriate expenditure, unremitted funds, insecurity, insurgency, intolerable level of poverty, unemployment, illegal killings, to mention few as plaguing the country, this is not without concomitant effect for food security. Oladiti (2011) had earlier fingered among others, chronic food crisis rocking the global community as one of the issues affecting Nigerian nationhood in the SSA. Hence, he was of the opinion that the continuous existence of the nation cannot be traded for insecurity, lack of harmonious relationship, improved standard of living, development of which are all tied to adequate food supply in quantity and quality.

The foregoing underscores what HLPE (2017) described as food system which relates to all activities relating to the production, processing, distributing, preparation and consumption of food categorized under three constituent elements of food supply chains, food environment and consumer behavior.

Similarly, a number of interactive factors have been identified among food system, food security and nutrition. Prominent here especially arising from Covid-19 saga according to HLPE (2020); Klassen and Murphy (2020); Clapp and Morseley (2020); Larbode, Martin, Swinnen and Vos (2020) are: disruptions to food supply chains, laws of income and livelihood, widening of inequality, disruptions to social protection programme, uttered food environment, and uneven food prices in localized contexts.

Buttressing further on the above, Olusanya (2020) has identified challenges facing national development in Nigeria as it occurs in most SSA nations to include among other challenge of history, religion, bad leadership of ethnical, skewed development, ignorance, language, politics, natural resources, poverty as well as corruption all which are the bare of food security. Oladiti and Ajiboye (2020) further reiterated the pitiable situation and the nation's clamour for a virile nationhood, when they indicate that the milestone in Nigeria's struggle for development and united nation since pre and post-independence has been a mirage resulting from the turbulence bedeviling the nation in her journey to nationhood manifesting

presently in form of insurgence, herdsmen palaver, banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, insecurity, health hazards, environmental issues with attendance effect on food production and food security altogether.

Of grave concern in the present time is the issue of the ravaging monster of Covid-19 pandemic that continued unabated, exacerbating food insecurity. Reiterating this fact, Okafo, Aluko and Asaolu (2020) averred that food insecurity in Nigeria is on the increase arising from plethora of factors such as communal conflicts, violent clashes between herders and farmers, Boko Haram insurgency coupled with the Covid-19 pandemic which has compounded the problem of food security. Giving a vivid picture of the pandemic and its overture on the humanity and global community, Salawu (2020) described Covid-19 in its present form as presenting itself as a form of pandemic effect of which could be correctly and realistically described as a conundrum. Such description is an indication that the pandemic constitutes unto hardship on human endeavors, agricultural activities and food production inclusive.

Similarly, HLPE (2020) averred that the Covid-19 pandemic that has spread rapidly and extensively around the world since late 2019

has had profound implications for food security and nutrition. The unfolding crisis has affected food system and threatened people's access to food via multiple dynamics. They stated further that 'we have witnessed not only a major disruption to food supply chains in the wake of lockdown triggered the global health crisis, but also a major global economic slowdown resulting in lower incomes and higher prices of some foods, putting food out of the reach of many and undermining the right to food and stalling efforts to meet SDGs 2: Zero hunger'. The situation is fluid and dynamic, characterized by a high degree of uncertainty. According to WHO, the worst effects are yet to come (Ghebreyesus, 2020; Khorsandi, 2020). Most analysts (Scydellari, 2020) predict that the virus will continue to circulate for at least one or two more years.

Food insecurity and its attendant factors also cut cross recognitions and socio-cultural activities presently. For instance, identifying problems militating against national integration in Nigeria, Ekanola (2006) submitted that in Nigeria today instead of integration of various of the nation into formidable and cohesive entity, the nation is divided on the platter of ethnic sentiments,

primordial affiliation, religious war, struggle for control of resources and other socio-cultural differences which ordinarily supposed to be harnessed for the development of the country. Resultant effect of such is violent clashes arm conflicts, insecurity which tend to affect food production greatly. This is in the event of the country's unparalleled natural resource blessing hence, the acclaimed paradoxical state of the nation as 'too rich to be poor and too poor to be rich'. Ubong (2013) in his analysis of the state of the nation's natural resource blessing advanced that the country has no business of importing food or engage in unwholesome loan taking.

Subscribing further on the religious and socio-cultural undertone of Nigerian nationhood woes vis-à-vis food security, Adefabi (2020) alluded the challenges facing the nation to divisive tensions, resource control agitations, call for self-determination, ethnic-based identity, religious cleavages as well as the clarion call for restructuring. Salawu (2020) has also reiterated the place of factors such as religious and socio-cultural activities in the Covid-19 era as a pointer to its effect on food production, stating the phenomenon is a global one ravaging the entire world population, economy, politics, religion as well as human

psyche. Little wonder, Azoulay (2020) described Covid-19 outbreak as a global public health issue.

Advancing the menace of Covid-19 pandemic overbearance on food insecurity in Nigeria and most SSA nations as a product of socio-cultural and religious activities, Okafor, Aluko and Asaolu (2020) were of the view that insecurity in the nation is being aggravated continuously by myriads of factor prominent among which is communal conflicts, poor funding for sustainable policies, limited mechanized farming, poor rural development as well as prohibitive practices that disenfranchise women farmers. They went further to analyze the nation's food situation vis: 'About 9 of 10 Nigerians cannot afford a healthy diet. Nigeria has the second highest burden of stunted children across the globe and millions of children suffer from acute malnutrition. The Covid-19 pandemic has worsened the hunger situation particularly by impacting food supply prices.

Driving home this point, UNESCO (2020) presented a catalogue of interactive socio-cultural practices emanating from Covid-19 and its food security implications as follows:

'It tells us scientific cooperation is the key of dealing with global public health issue, that continued education need be ensured as many children are deprived of attending schools, stark reminder of the importance of quality, reliable information at a time when rumors are flourishing, about the power of culture and knowledge in strengthening human fabric and solidarity at a time when so many people around the world must keep social distance and stay at home' (p.1).

Supporting the above, Oladiti (2015) earlier adduced that one of the fast-growing instruments of knowledge explosion and rapid scientific research of the 21st century culminating in advancement in communication with its numerous outlets is the use of social media. Though, a number of abuses have been recorded with its fast-growing usage.

Writing further on the seemingly socio-cultural and religious practices as impacting food production in SSA nations, Nigeria in particular, Okafor, Aluko and Asaolu (2020) fingered dichotomy among male and female plot managers which comes by through factors

like poor infrastructure, limited rural development, credit, land and labour that places women and rural farmers at a disadvantage in agricultural productivity. They reported that from reports, male plot managers in Nigeria are more likely to purchase land, have irrigated land and own larger and valuable livestock and by so doing, earn an average income that is five times higher than their female counterparts who have limited access to labor, hiring of outside labor or make use of family labor also, they are most often not engaged in cash crops.

Such scenario might not be unconnected with some religious and socio-cultural practices, this invariably reduces female contributions to food production, and this is despite their substantive number in the population strata. Similarly, Azoulay (2020) has established some sort of bond between socio-cultural, beliefs system, Covid-19 and food security by stating that UNESCO is fully committed to supporting governments for distance learning, open science, knowledge and culture sharing as fundamental means to stand together and tighten the bonds of our shared humanity. Furthermore, element of socio-cultural practices and religious belief has been canvassed as affecting food

production which is being exacerbated in the ongoing Covid-19 saga. For instance, it was the contention of Chukwu (2014) that the awareness of resource depletion, degradation, pollution, has being on increase with attendance destruction of the fragile ecosystem, displacing communities and increasing the threat to safe and healthy environment. Without mincing words, the implication of such practices for food production and security is enormous. Associated with the foregoing as identified by extant studies such as Keving and Lewis (1995), Oladiti and Ayanwale (2007), Oladiti and Kamarise (2014) in their separate studies is human- induced factors which is not unconnected with religious and cultural practices under the guise of population growth worldwide culminated in the challenged carrying capacity of the environment, this is the bedrock of food insecurity.

Of concern also is the spate of illicit and unguarded advantages of technology which according to UNEP (2013) fingered as resulting in environmental degradation and its concomitant food insecurity. Recounting the level of incivility that has engulfed the nation, it has been pointed out that agricultural activities have been affected negatively leading to hike in prices of food items since violence

(Dogona, 2014) has prevented farmers from going to farm especially in the Northeast and other parts of the country for fear of being attacked or killed by the terrorists. Adetoro (2020) has also enthused some of the problems in Nigerian entity that are inimical to food security requiring urgent solutions. Such include human greed, nepotism, armed banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, bribery and corruption that are pervasive in the nation which need be resolved for nation's development and serves as catalyst of food production and security at large.

In like manner, a number of sociological and demographic features which may not be unconnected with religious and socio-cultural practices have been identified as responsible for food insecurity. To this, Igbanibo (2009) listed conflicts which may be religious or ethnic, terrorism, corruption, environmental degradation, population growth, urbanization, war and political strife, poverty and periodic fluctuations in the production and prices of commodity. Obanisola (2011) enlisted Nigeria's hitherto esteemed social socio-cultural system to include family system, religious practice, political settings, economic activities, festivals, arts and culture, health, education, among others

regarded as social institutions which if allowed to function, are capable of moving the nation forward but alas, the said institutions presently are but the ghost of their previous state.

The resultant effects therefore are the multiplier effects on the nation's economy, agricultural productivity and food security as a whole. Confirming the veracity of the foregoing, National Centre for Disease Control, NCDC and UNESCO (2020) has fingered Covid-19 as having devastating effects, stating that the rapid spread of Covid-19 in Africa has created a sense of urgency in the continent and inspired calls for a coordinated global response to stop the pandemic, mitigate its devastating effects, and thus, lay the foundation for long-term recovery. They further elucidated on the economic aspect, stating that with Covid-19 outbreak in Africa, governments took very stringent measures at containing its spread with huge effects on the countries' economy, the worst recorded after the 2008 global financial crisis with predicted drop in economic growth in the near long-term resulting from wiping out of gains from tourism, aviation, extractive sectors, etc. (p.5). Also, arising from measures put in place in preventing and mitigating Covid-19 impact on the populace in the short-term, in a bid to pave way for addressing the

long-term socio-cultural, political and economic consequences are not but with unintended effects on citizens (p.5).

Dissecting the issue of food system generally, FAO et al, (2019) was of the view that a person is food insecure when they lack physical, social, and economic access to enough safe and nutritious food to meet their nutritional needs and food preferences to live an active and healthy life. Such is also applicable to nation, continent and the global community. Little wonder, FAO (2020) affirmed that the pandemic caused by Covid-19 is bound to be associated with increased hunger and poverty in the community of Latin America and Caribbean states (CELAC) as the region is said to have witnessed worsening food security in recent years with the crisis being of severe impact especially among certain countries and territories.

It is instructive to state here that since inception of COVID-19 pandemic, nothing seems to be same again; the vogue now is 'new normal', a way of encouraging one another to cope with the changes of Covid-19 realities. This also has its own toll on food situation. For instance, it is obvious that

arising from the lockdown occasioned by the pandemic, a lot of the economic sector suffered, agricultural sector inclusive and the consequent reduction in food production. A healthy being is a wealthy being is a popular maxim which has implications for farming activities and the output altogether. Recounting Nigerian experience of Covid-19 saga, Adetoro (2020) submitted that at the onset of the pandemic in Nigeria, people generally experienced psychological trauma which tend to affect people's productivity. As a matter of fact, several degrees of instability occasioned by the pandemic were reported such as fear of imminent collective death, severe insomnia, severe depression, severe anxiety with female showing more post-traumatic stress (Olasemi, Akinsola, Agberotimi & Oguntayo, 2020; Adetoro, 2020).

Commenting on attitude and socio-cultural beliefs and attendant effects on efforts at curbing the Covid-19 overbearance generally, Omiyefa (2020) gave some posers in this regard when he asked about what constitute Nigerian societal values; how much of changes has Covid-19 exerted on Nigerians pre-Covid-19 practice such as character deficit, decline in moral values, religion, education and societal values; finding recourse to COVID-19 and its

attendant effects on the nation's traditional health system in developing possible remedies from herbs with the rider, how much education is needed for such and what values do people attached to such potentials? These and many thought-provoking questions bother on peoples' religious and socio-cultural beliefs towards finding recourse to COVID-19 pandemic. It was also the contention of Ayo-Vaughan (2020) that a serious dichotomy ensues between societal values and education values being taught in school. This goes a long way in remediating the overbearance of the pandemic on the society, confirmation of which is of great effect on human endeavors, food production and security inclusive.

In a graphical presentation of socio-cultural practices on Covid-19 containment in Nigeria and the SSA nations, Olubela (2020) enthused as follows: 'we are religious in most of our dispositions and there is much agitation about religious centers opening, observation of strict compliance is needed. We are caring people; let us show empathy to others affected by the pandemic. We are socialite people; let us endure a bit on social gathering and parties. We are at the community spread stage, let us take personal

responsibility. As Africans, we believe so much in magic, taboos and metaphysical, let us take auction to these issues. Thou, herbs are very potent, let us also take professional health advice in its administration' (p.vi). The foregoing speaks volumes about Africans belief system and socio-cultural practices that if religiously followed, is capable of mitigating COVID-19 overbearance on the society, thereby increasing economic activities and food productivities. Similar view was credited to Omiyefa (2020) who adduced that while a lot of theories, conspiracies and rumors are flying around on the origin of the virus, the major preoccupation should be to device effective measures of containing the virus with our socio-cultural society. Such suggestion is indicative of the place of socio-cultural practices in reducing Covid-19 overbearance for effective productivity. To this end, in a communiqué released on her 2-day Interactive Virtual Discourse for Socio-academic Colloquium, the Social Studies Association of Nigeria, Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo, Oyo State chapter highlighted among others, the dawn of reality of COVID-19 pandemic as a global phenomenon which requires devising effective measures in line with the socio-cultural society, revitalizing the

economic sector through education as well as cultivating positive attitudes and values towards management of human and material resources. All these are akin in mitigating COVID-19 overbearance on the nation and thereby pave ways for increased productivity in all sectors; this will in no small measure ensure food security even in pandemic era.

Recounting the general attitudes of people to the increasing wave of the pandemic, the issue which was initially seen as ‘elites’ predicament’ (Adetoro, 2020) made most Nigerians convinced of the Covid-19 reality as a no respecter of anybody. To this, Ogundipe (2020) reported that the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on the Covid-19 observed that more than 80% of the patients were being treated outside the isolation center which might be predicated on fear of perceived inadequate management in the isolation centers coupled with the strong belief system such as the efficacy of the traditional medicine over that of the orthodox medicine (Adetoro, 2020; NCDC, 2020). Related socio-cultural belief is the one associated (Mbah, 2020) with possible stigmatization especially of the discharged patients after recovery from the pandemic. Appreciating the place of values and attitudes

in mitigating Covid-19 overbearance on the society and general productivity as well as food security in particular, Gbadamosi (2020) canvassed for home-grown solutions to the pandemic in terms of promotion of the societal values of obedience, prudence, dignity of labor among others to reduce the impact of the pandemic. It need be reiterated that some socio-cultural aspects of many SSA nations are said to have their share of the effect of Covid-19 generally which are of great effects on their food security. Buttressing this fact UNESCO (2020) stated that ‘socio-cultural norms and values that are at the center of African societies now face serious risks of disappearing into oblivion (p.vi). Other identified aspects are challenges of communication with regards to covid-19 pandemic; the fragile culture sector of Africans and issues relating to scientific community (p.vii and viii).

From the foregoing analysis, it can be inferred that the issue of the ravaging Covid-19 is a wave that does nobody any good as it continues to rage on in the nations of the world, this is not without concomitant effects on virtually all sectors of the economy. For instance, FAO and CELAC (2020) observed that before the outbreak, some of the people faced food insecurity at moderate or severe level which has

since 2014 being on the increase turning around to contribute major disruption to food system that gave rise to dramatic increase in hunger as evident in the most recent estimate of between 83 and 132 million additional people. Again, FAO and WFP (2020) advanced that at least 25 countries are at risk of significant food security deterioration arising from secondary socio-economic impact of Covid-19. It was also the contention of Torero (2020) that nothing less than 38 to 80 million people in low-income countries that rely on food importation are bound to experience food insecurity as direct result of COVID-19. Again, HLPE (2020) also adduced the possibility of future food productivity being affected as a result of inability to contain COVID-19 resulting from continuity of lockdown measures. More so, ICMSF (2020) affirmed that food is not a vector of covid-19 transmission, however, mitigating measures are of implications on food security, nutrition and food system in form of malnutrition and obesity (HLPE, 2020b).

Since food constitutes a prominent psychological need without which other needs cannot be operative, it behooves on individuals, stakeholders and nations of the

world to find recourse to the overbearance of the pandemic on human endeavors, food production and security inclusive. Achieving this cannot be done in a vacuum. People's attitudes, values, beliefs as well as socio-cultural practices are important actors in this regard which constitute the crux of this study. It is therefore imperative to explore the extent to which the said variables tend to influence the mitigation of the pandemic overbearance on the nation and its food security strategies. To this end, it is pertinent to ask such questions as: To what extent is the prevalence of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria SSA nation? Is there any relationship between creed, socio-cultural practices, Covid-19 overbearance and food security in Nigerian SSA nation?

2.0 Methodology

Qualitative design was adopted for this study as action research, making use of bottom-top approach in finding recourse to the overbearance of Covid-19 on religious, socio-cultural practices and food security among SSA nations. Eighty participants from Oyo Township of Oyo State, Nigeria drawn through purposive sampling technique among artisans, technocrats, religious organizations, health workers, education institutions, market men and women, transporters, agricultural

practitioners and members of the civil society. Participant Observation (PO) and Key Informants (KI), Focus Group Discussion (FGD) techniques were adopted in collecting data for the study which was analyzed through triangulation of instruments such as content analysis and categorization of ideas into convergent and divergent views for qualitative analysis in answering the research questions generated for the study while tables, frequency counts and simple percentages constitute the quantitative analysis for the study which serves as the basis of the results and discussion of findings.

3.0 Results and Discussion

Following the ethic of research, the consent of the participants was sought for the documentation and recording of the activities during the FGD sessions. Thus, recordings, jottings and observations made were transcribed in analyzing data obtained through triangulation of instruments such as content analysis and categorization of ideas expressed by participants.

3.1 Quantitative Analysis

Effort is made in this section of the study to present participants' demographic data.

Table 1
Participants' Demographic Information

S/N	FIELDS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
1. Gender			
	Male	37	46.25
	Female	43	53.75
	Total	80	100.00
2. Occupation			
	Artisans	10	12.50
	Technocrats	09	11.25

Religious organizations	10	12.50
Health workers	08	10.00
Education institutions	06	7.50
Market Men and women	10	12.50
Transporters	07	8.75

Agricultural Practitioners	12	15.00
Members of the <u>civil society</u>	08	<u>10.00</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>100.00</u>

2.	Age Range
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18-27	16	20.00
28-37	21	26.25
38-47	28	25.00
<u>48 and above</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>18.75</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>100.00</u>

4. **Religious Affiliation**

Christianity	29	36.25
Islam	36	45.00
African Traditional Religion	15	18.75

	Total	80	100.00
5. Educational Background			
	Literate	47	58.75
	Semi-literate	21	26.75
	Illiterate	12	15.00
	Total	80	100.00

Source: Author’s Fieldwork 2021

From the result contained in Table I, there are more female than male participants out of the total number of 80 participants that participated in the study (43/37; 53.75%/46.25%) respectively which might not be unconnected with the population of women generally and their attitudes of given attention to issues. On participants’ age range, higher percentages of the participants are above middle age as against those within and below average age (53.75% and 46.25%) respectively with virtually all strata of the society fairly represented with an average of between 7 and 12 (8.75% and 15.00%) respectively. Religious wise, participants cut across the three dominant religious sects with Muslim faithful having the highest frequency followed by the Christian faithful and the

ATR adherents (36, 45.00%; 29, 36.25% and 15, 18.75%) respectively. A good number of the participants are literate as against those that are stark illiterates (68, 85.00% and 12, 15.00%). Findings here is an indication that those involved in the study are well-versed in the issues being studied, hence their contributions as basis of generalizations especially as it relates to the variables of the study in the SSA nations in the Covid-19 pandemic era generally.

3.2 Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1: To what extent is the prevalence of Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria SSA nation?

Prevalence of Covid-19 in Nigeria SSA Nation Content analysis and observations from Nigerian context reveal that Nigeria as SSA

nation is not spared from covid-19 pandemic. A number of indicators as reflected from the content analysis include among others the following:

- (i) Declaration of covid-19 as global health issue;
- (ii) Incursion of an expatriate into Nigerian shore through Lagos entry point;
- (iii) Isolation of persons traced to the first victim of the pandemic;
- (iv) frantic effort by the Federal Government in putting up precautionary measures through test at entry point, compulsory 14 days self-isolation for new entrants;
- (v) Institution of Presidential Task Force (PTF) for overseeing measures at containing the spread of the virus as well as provision of necessary facilities;
- (vi) Introduction and enforcement of partial lockdown in some parts of the country such as Lagos, Abuja, Oyo State, Ogun State, Ondo State and some northern states of the federation;
- (vii) Imposition of curfew in areas prone to the pandemic;
- (viii) Declaration of total lockdown of education activities, religious centers, social activities as well as other socio-cultural practices;

- (ix) Increased awareness drives to forestall further outbreaks of the pandemic;
- (x) Implementation of the World Health Organization's directives in declaring the virus as world health issue;
- (xi) Ban on inter and intra state movements; to mention few.

The foregoing further attested to extant literature on the debut, prevalence and gradual increasing rate of the pandemic to the exponential increase of the pandemic in Nigeria and other SSA nations (Adetoro, 2020; Ayo-Vaughan, 2020; NCDC, 2020; Omiyefa, 2020; Okafor, Aluko and Asaolu, 2020; Salawu, 2020; UNESCO, 2020).

Research Question 2: Is there any relationship between creed, socio-cultural practices, Covid-19 overbearance and food security in Nigerian SSA nation?

In analyzing data obtained in response to this research question, excerpts from the field are presented using content analysis and categorization of ideas expressed by the participants. Without prejudice on the state of things as regards Covid-19 overbearance on SSA nations' food security vis-a-vis other variables such as profession belief system and socio-cultural practices, the participants were of unanimous opinion that there is an

unwavering relationship between the said variables and covid-19 pandemic generally. Basic in the reasons advanced include among others, the following:

(a) As a global health challenge, covid-19 assumption of pandemic is of grave consequences on food system in all ramifications (Azoulay, 2020; HLPE, 2020; FAO et al, 2019);

(b) Food has no direct effect as a carrier of covid-19 virus but the pandemic multiplier effects are capable of increasing people's vulnerability to the pandemic (ICMSF, 2020; HLPE, 2020b);

(c) There exists a sort of dynamisms regarding Covid-19 pandemic effects relating to food productivity arising from attendance disruption of social protection activities, implicit alterations of food environment coupled with differences in prices of food that tend to be at high side (FAO and CELAC, 2020; Clapp and Moseley, 2020; NCDC, 2020; Obanisola, 2015; Klassen and Murphy, 2020; Larbode, et al, 2020);

(d) Finding recourse to Covid-19 pandemic overbearance calls for home-grown way out of the saga, consideration of alternative therapy in addition to way out of the saga

(Adetoro, 2020; Gbadamosi, 2020; Mbah, 2020; Omiyefa, 2020; Olubela, 2020);

(e) Lasting solution to the pandemic still remains a mirage with attendant effect on virtually all human endeavours, food security inclusive (HLPE, 2020; Oladiti and Ajiboye, 2020; Torero, 2020; Salawu, 2020, UNESCO, 2020);

(f) The place of culture, science and belief system in finding recourse to covid-19 pandemic cannot be over emphasized (Azoulay, 2020; Adetoro, 2020, FAO and WFP, 2020; Mbah, 2020; Olubela, 2020, Omiyefa, 2020);

(g) In most cases, preventive and mitigating measures are subjecting people to untold effects cutting across socio-economic, religious, economic, education, socio-cultural practices (FAO and WFP, 2020; HLPE, 2017; HLPE, 2020, Oladiti and Ajiboye, 2020; UNESCO, 2020; UN, 2020a);

(h) Stigmatization arising from the covid-19 pandemic also has its implications for effective mitigation of the pandemic (Adetoro, 2020; Mbah, 2020; Gbadamosi, 2020; UNESCO, 2020);

(i) Aftermath of covid-19 pandemic is poverty, hunger, malnutrition, increased food insecurity, economic recession etc. (FAO and CELAC,

2020; FAO and WFP, 2020; HLPE, 2020; Khorsandi, 2020; Scudallari, 2020; Torero, 2020). The foregoing and many other views unanimously expressed by the participants is indicative of the nexus between creed, socio-cultural practices, food security and covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria and other SSA nations.

Closing Remarks

This study has beam searchlight on the attendance overbearance of covid-19 pandemic on the global community and especially, the SSA nations. The effects of the virus especially on all aspects of human endeavors, economic, socio-cultural, religious, health, education, occupation as well as other socio-cultural practices are grievous. The attendant effects of the foregoing especially on the state of food system and food security altogether cannot be over emphasized. As premiered in this study, solid relationships exist among religious beliefs, socio-cultural practices, food security and covid-19 pandemic, the situation which keeps on unabated with concomitant effects of the mitigating measures in further complications of the whole system therefore calls for a rethink to curtail its overbearance especially in the SSA nations. Government,

stakeholders and the civil society therefore must strive to put in place, sustainable measures to ameliorate the imminent multiplier effect of the pandemic on the Nigeria and other SSA nations.

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