

**COVID-19 PROTOCOL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF OFFICE MANAGERS  
OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES ESTABLISHMENTS IN RIVERS STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study focused on covid-19 protocol and Organizational Performance of office managers in food and beverages establishments in Rivers State, the objectives of the study were to examine the relationship between lockdown and patronage of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State, determine the relationship between lockdown and profitability of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State, ascertain the relationship between lockdown and business expansion of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State, find out the relationship between downsizing and patronage of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State. The study revealed that there is a significant effect of lockdown on organizational performance of office managers of food and beverages firms in Rivers State, there is a significant effects of downsizing on organizational performance of office managers of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State, there is a significant effect of medical protocol on organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages firms in Rivers State and government policy had a great effect on covid-19 protocol and organizational performance of office managers of food and beverages firms in Rivers State. The study concluded that there is significant effect of covid-19 protocol on organizational performance of office managers of food and beverages firms in Rivers State. The study therefore recommended that. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like washing of hands to decrease covid-19 in Rivers State. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like social distancing to decrease covid-19 in Rivers State. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like putting on facemask to decrease covid-19 in Rivers State. Food and beverages firms in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like adopting downsizing of employee to increase their profitability in this covid-19 era. They should adhere to covid-19 protocol like working from home to boost the growth of the organization in this covid-19 era in Rivers State.*

**Keywords: COVID – 19, Protocol, Performance, Establishments and Managers**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Businesses operates in environments susceptible to activities that significantly ignite intense changes that could enhance, retard, stifle or shrink sales, patronage, and profitability as well as transforming marketing operational strategies. It is therefore unavoidable that the novel covid-19 epidemic will have a considerable impact on business performance. A global crisis as the covid-19 pandemic can either paralyze businesses or galvanize them to thrive. In the wake of the covid-19 pandemic, that's exactly the experiences of most businesses. Emphatically, China is the foremost country traced to the stretch of the disease with more than 80,000 people contaminated.

The World Health Organization (WHO) pronounced Covid-19 as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Congressional Research Service, 2020). The disease eruption has multiplied fast and projected to carry on dispersion to all part of the globe. The COVID-19 epidemic is an unanticipated worldwide observable fact, which has terrified countries into sudden disruption and successfully put businesses at a decline. It has affected living and all profitable activities particularly business enterprises as well as manufacturing firms (Sansa, 2020; Ruiz Estrada et al., 2020). Manufacturing firms have been heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, due to the closures and reduced working hours recommended to curb the spread of the virus (IOM, 2020).

Coronavirus is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus. The first known case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The disease has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic Zimmer, (2021). Symptoms of COVID-19 are variable, but often include fever, cough, headache, fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste. Symptoms may begin one to fourteen days after exposure to the virus. At least a third of people who are infected do not develop noticeable symptoms. Of those people who develop symptoms noticeable enough to be classed as patients, most (81%) develop mild to moderate symptoms (up to mild pneumonia), while 14% develop severe symptoms (dyspnea, hypoxia, or more than 50% lung involvement on imaging), and 5% suffer critical symptoms (respiratory failure, shock, or multiorgan dysfunction). Older people are at a higher risk of developing severe symptoms. Some people continue to experience a range of effects (long COVID) for months after recovery, and damage to organs has been observed. Multi-year studies are underway to further investigate the long-term effects of the disease (Agyeman, Chin, Landersdorfer Liew & Ofori-Asenso 2020).

COVID-19 transmits when people breathe in air contaminated by droplets and small airborne particles. The risk of breathing these in is highest when people are in close proximity, but they can be inhaled over longer distances, particularly indoors. Transmission can also occur if splashed or sprayed with contaminated fluids, in the eyes, nose or mouth, and, rarely, via contaminated surfaces. People remain contagious for up to 20 days, and can spread the virus even if they do not develop any symptoms.

Several testing methods have been developed to diagnose the disease. The standard diagnostic method is by detection of the virus' nucleic acid by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR), transcription-mediated amplification (TMA), or by reverse transcription loop-mediated isothermal amplification (RT-LAMP) from a nasopharyngeal swab.

Preventive measures include physical or social distancing, quarantining, ventilation of indoor spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, hand washing, and keeping unwashed hands away from the face. The use of face masks or coverings has been recommended in public settings to minimize the risk of transmissions. The study used lockdown, downsizing and social distancing is used as the dimensions, lockdown is viewed as a security measure taken during an emergency to prevent people from leaving or entering a building or other location. Downsizing is the permanent reduction of a company's labor force through the elimination of unproductive workers or divisions and social distancing is a set of non-pharmaceutical interventions or measures intended to prevent the spread of a contagious disease by maintaining a physical distance between people and reducing the number of times people come into close contact with each other.

Organizational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives). According to Richard et al. (2019) organizational performance encompasses three specific areas of firm outcomes: (a) financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.); (b) product market performance (sales, market share, etc.); and (c) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.). The term effectiveness is broader. Specialists in many fields are concerned with organizational performance including strategic planners, operations, finance, legal, and organizational development. An analysis of a company's performance as compared to goals and objectives. Within corporate organizations, there are three primary outcomes analyzed: financial performance, market performance and shareholder value performance (in some cases, production capacity performance may be analyzed). Organizational Performance is considered to be a construction (Henri, 2014) and the purpose of defining this concept is to determine its properties and dimensions. The notion of organizational performance has an abstract character and its definition is made by reference to other concepts, on which we believe that performance is built. Organizational performance shows the ability to move, thanks to the constant efforts; (3) the word performance is the carrier of an ideology of progress, effort, always make better (Bourguignon, 2017). This definition of Bourguignon (2017) assimilates performance with an

“action”, with a certain “behavior” (in terms of a dynamic view, meaning “to perform”) and not just as a “result” (in terms of a static view).

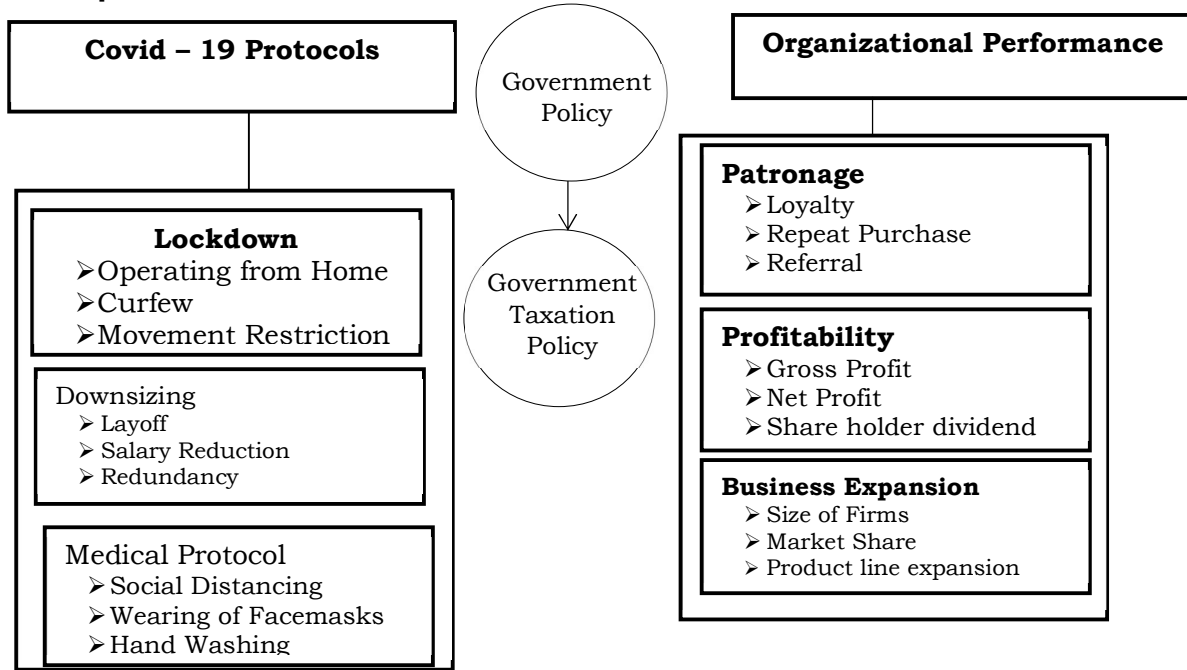
A result is nothing if considered alone, because it cannot be separated from means of its activities and objectives: performance is based on logical action stages, starting with the intention and going till the actual result. Furthermore, we can make a distinction between “performance” and “being efficient” (Vilain, 2013), due to the fact that performance can be described more as a result of the past, while being efficient means to achieve the objectives in the future. Performance involves also the economic concept of creation of wealth or value to the organization. Thus, performance is a relation between cost (operation cost the organization) and the value of benefits obtained (Lorino, 2011). Two of the concepts that dominate modern management organizations are value and performance.

A performance measure is to assess the value and by knowing the causes that generate value we can performance. In conclusion, value and performance are two adjacent concepts (Vilain, 2013). In spite of the fact that numerous different conceptualizations of covid-19 have been proposed in the empirical literature, this study focuses on covid-19 and its impact on organizational performance as a managerial process for which research has been relatively limited. As a result, a great deal of research has been done to investigate the economic benefits of corporate foresight on organizational performance, but little research has been done to investigate the impact of covid-19 on organizational performance, which is the gap in knowledge that the study will fill.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Organizational performance represents an important component of organizational growth (Akinyomi & Tasie, 2011; Malik, Waseem & Kifayat, 2011). Profitability on the other hand from the apriorism expectations of Okeke (2015) is seen as a general measure of a firm's overall financial health over a given period of time. Extant literature revealed that several studies on covid-19 protocol and organizational performance of firms have been conducted both in the advanced market economies and developing economies but this was before the era of COVID19 outbreak. The lockdown of the major cities as a result of COVID-19 outbreak in Nigeria and the current foreign exchange devaluation due to drop in crude oil prices, arising from the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted all sectors in Nigeria. This impact has been mixed as players in Food and Beverage & Pharmaceuticals have been deemed as providers of essential products and services and as such; were allowed to continue operations during the crisis. Based on this, the need to investigate the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on organizational performance of Essential Goods Firms (Health Care Firms and Consumer Goods Firms) in Nigeria becomes imperative as these firms were allowed to continue operations regardless of the outbreak and total lock down in Nigeria. These firms also exploited and took the advantage of increased consumer awareness and consumption of perceived health/medicinal benefits from roots and fruits such as ginger, garlic, lime and lemon as they develop new product concepts. Also, despite the impact of COVID-19 outbreak, we still do not know much about how COVID19 outbreak empirically impacted on the Liquidity and Profitability of Essential Goods Firms (Health Care Firms and Consumer Goods Firms) in Nigeria. And more importantly, there is no known study which had investigated the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on firm's Liquidity and Profitability in developing countries with reference to Essential Goods Firms. Therefore, the goal of this study is to empirically test the impact of COVID-19 on Organizational Performance of Office Managers in Food and Beverages Establishments in Rivers State.

**Conceptual Framework**



Conceptual Framework on Covid-19 Protocols and Organizational Performance

**Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to examine Covid-19 Protocol and Organizational Performance of Office Managers in Food and Beverages Establishments in Rivers State. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the relationship between lockdown and patronage of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State
2. determine the relationship between lockdown and profitability of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State
3. ascertain the relationship between lockdown and business expansion of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State
4. find out the relationship between downsizing and patronage of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State

**Hypotheses**

- H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between lockdown and patronage of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State
- H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between lockdown and profitability of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State
- H0<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between lockdown and business expansion of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Theoretical Framework**  
**Rational Choice Theory**

The Rational Choice Theory is also known as the Choice theory. It is an economic principle that assumes that individuals always make prudent and logical decisions that provide them with the highest and personal benefits or satisfaction. The theory is based on the assumption that individual tries to actively maximize their advantage in any situation and therefore consistently try to minimize their losses (Hope, Saidu and Success, 2020). According to this theory, most players in Food and Beverage & Pharmaceuticals have been deemed as providers of essential products and services and as such; were allowed to continue operations during the crisis and these firms exploited and took the advantage of increased consumer awareness and consumption of perceived health/medicinal benefits from roots and fruits such as ginger, garlic, lime and lemon as they develop new product concepts. These firms see COVID-19 Pandemic as an opportunity for exploitation.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Impacts of COVID-19 Protocols on Organizational Performance**

Besides coronavirus worrying effects on human life, its novel strain has the potential to significantly slowdown not only the Chinese economy but also the global economy. China has become the central manufacturing hub of many business operations globally. Any disruption of China's output is expected to have repercussions elsewhere through regional and global value chains. Indeed, most recent data from China indicate a substantial decline in output (UNCTAD, 2020). The outbreak of the Covid-19 no doubt has a great impact on small businesses, especially in developing countries. SMEs in Nigeria have had to deal with anxiety over uncertainties that might exist after the crisis, such as; challenges with cash flow, customer retention, and disruption in essential marketing operation processes. As the government and economy all over the world adapt to the impact of Covid-19, SMEs must implement strategies to help secure firm footings and prepare for post-covid-19 economic conditions, business recovery services, and long-term sustainability in the area of manufacturing, trade and supply chain logistics (Acee-Eke & Ikegwuru, 2020).

In Nigeria and probably in many other countries many watched the news about the COVID-19 outbreak like detached movie audiences until the nation recorded its first case on 27 February, 2020. Still, reality did not kick in until it began to spread in the weeks afterwards, forcing the Nigerian government at the state and national levels to impose lockdowns, isolations, border closures etc. around end of March, 2020. The impact of these measures according to Olatunbosun, (2020) was more harmful than anticipated. Many business owners are licking their wounds following the month-long lockdown, with inevitable courses of action such as cutting down their workforces, work hours, budgets and salaries.

Businesses (SMEs) that pose a high risk of COVID-19 infections remain grounded as their owners strategize new business models and modes of engagement (Olatunbosun, 2020). According to Olatunbosun, (2020), a Nigerian-based market research organization, SBM Intelligence, has made public a number of firms that will be positively and negatively impacted by the pandemic, as part of the narratives about the impact of COVID-19 on the Nigerian economy. The restrictions imposed by government no doubt affected the supply chain of raw materials and other materials used by firms. Burdened by the pandemic's negative impacts, Olatunbosun, (2020) states the Nigerian government has engaged with the private sector (SMEs) to chart a path towards solutions. Despite its gloomy side, the pandemic offers a unique opportunity for local manufacturers in Nigeria to rise to the challenge of inadequate PPE supplies. Countries, industries and companies suffer drastically from the outcomes of a universal epidemic as a result of instantaneous demand and supply upset. Demand turns down since consumers step down their purchases of dispensable goods and services. Supply is scared out of wits since scores of companies are basically not equipped to deal with the observable fact of disrupted supply chains (Simchi-Levi et al., 2014). A lot of service and manufacturing sectors as a consequence have had to shut down their operations (delRio-Chanona et al., 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic is making vulnerable the economic welfare of people and institutions (Sneader & Singhal, 2020), affecting global health order and looming the configuration of global economic order. Accordingly, several countries are in the first light of recession (OECD, 2020). Chinese manufacturing is important to many global value chains, especially those related to precision instruments, machinery, automotive and communication equipment. Any significant disruption in China's supply in these sectors according to UNCTAD (2020) is deemed to substantially affect producers in the rest of the world. Many companies around the world are not comfortable due to the measures put in place to contain COVID-19 (restrictions to economic activities and movement of people), could hinder the supply of critical parts from Chinese producers, therefore affecting their own output (UNCTAD, 2020). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on SMEs marketing activities is remarkable. Even though harsh government measures and rejoinders to curtail the infection are indispensable, a good number of businesses are faced with disheartening consequences in both short and long-term period. Major challenges are shutting down of business, laying off workers, and thinned firms' capability for potential expansion (Wahyudi, 2014; Craven et al., 2020; Smith-Bingham & Hariharan, 2020).

Thus, the COVID-19 calamity has and will continue to have massive impact on SMEs worldwide. Ozili (2020) explained that the Covid-19 pandemic has led to the closure of financial markets and corporate activities. In addition, the uncertainty over the Covid-19 cases influenced investment decisions by investors which led to higher volatility in the stock market. There are recent literatures examining the effect of Covid-19 on stock price and economy (e.g. Hadiwardoyo, 2020; Lee et al., 2020; Ozili, 2020). Yet, literatures examining the effect of Covid-19 on firm performance are still limited. Undoubtedly, the profound circumstances developed by Covid-19 have caused unexpected levels of disruption to the firms such as decline of profits and financial performance in various types of businesses (Devi et al., 2020).

Past literatures have shown that public catastrophe and global concern can affect a firm's performance. However, researches on the disastrous effects of these outbreaks are not comprehensive. A previous study conducted by Chen et al. (2017) showed that the SARS epidemic had significantly damaged the performance of hotels in Taiwan which saw a sharp decline in stock prices during the outbreak period. Chen (2010) expanded the study by looking at corporate performance (ROA and ROE) of the same industry in Taiwan. The growth rate of total foreign tourist arrivals and GDP had a positive impact on profitability, but the size was found to be negatively related to ROA and ROE. With regard to the Covid-19 outbreak, Shen et al. (2020) investigated the impact of Covid-19 on firm's performance in various provinces and industries in China. With ROA as a dependent variable and various elements of size, leverage, growth rate, and cash flow as the independent variables, the results showed that the pandemic indeed has led to the reduction of income consequently resulting in lower performance.

Meanwhile, Aifuwa et al. (2020) who studied the effect of the Covid-19 on the performance of private businesses in Nigeria revealed that the pandemic has harmed the financial performance, as measured by ROA. They recommended that the government should include private businesses in its stimulus packages in helping them to sustain their businesses and operation during this tough time. Devi et al. (2020) who examined the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on financial performance listed on the Indonesia stock exchange drew two conclusions from the study; firstly, there was an increase in leverage (debt to equity) and but a decrease in liquidity (current ratio) and profitability (ROA) during the Covid-19 pandemic. Secondly, no significant difference was found in the liquidity and leverage; however there was a significant difference in the profitability before and during the pandemic.

Nonetheless, Hafidzi and Qomariah (2020) revealed a positive relationship between corporate social responsibilities (hereafter CSR), ROA and share prices in Indonesian manufacturing firms during Covid-19. They explained that investors are confident with firms that show consistent profits, higher stock prices and better ability to allocate CSR exposure costs from operating income. Through the sensitivity analysis on the Vietnamese non-financial firms, Kroeger et al. (2020)

highlighted that smaller domestic firms are predominantly vulnerable than the regional firms to Covid-19 impact on profitability (EBIT), liquidity (cash, current ratio) and leverage (interest coverage ratio). Although larger firms were more profitable but also highly leveraged and lower liquidity in the wake of the pandemic.

### **Empirical Review**

Hope, Saidu and Success (2020) examined the relationship between coronavirus pandemic outbreak and firms performance in Nigeria. The result from the linear regression revealed that Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic harms both the financial and non-financial performance of private businesses in Nigeria. The study concluded that that Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic harms firm performance in Nigeria.

Adegboye, Adekunle and Gayawan (2020) examine the early transmission of COVID-19 in Nigeria, and show that the COVID-19 cases in Nigeria were lower than expected. Adenomon and Maijamaa (2020) examined the impact of COVID-19 on the Nigerian Stock Exchange from the 2nd January 2020 to 16th April 2020. The results revealed a loss in stock returns and high volatility in stock returns during the COVID-19 period in Nigeria. Ohia,

Bakarey and Ahmad (2020) predict that the effect on COVID-19 will be severe in Africa because African countries have fragile health systems. They argue that Nigeria's current national health systems cannot respond to the growing number of infected patients who require admission into intensive care units. They suggest that Nigeria should explore available collective measures and interventions to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jacob, Abigeal and Lydia (2020) show that the COVID-19 pandemic affected higher institutions in Nigeria through the lockdown of schools, reduction of international education, disruption of academic calendar of higher institutions, cancellation of local and international conferences, creating teaching and learning gap, loss of man power in the educational institutions, and cut in budget of higher education. Xinhua (2020) found that there is a significant impact between COVID-19 pandemic and the Chinese financial market such that the financial market in China have remained generally stable compared to overseas markets despite the spread of the corona virus.

Iwedi, Kocha and Onakpono (2020) assessed COVID-19 global pandemic trade and impact on the Nigerian economy. The study employed descriptive methodology to evaluate Covid-19 pandemic global trade wars and its impact on the Nigerian economy. The study revealed that coronavirus crippled the Nigerian economy in terms of social, religious and economic activities while the measures taken to contain the spread of COVID-19 impacted on Nigerian citizens in many ways including job losses, higher prices, and damage to healthcare and seriously on education services. Tesfaye (2020) explore the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the Ethiopia's private banking system. Ten (10) years historical data from 2010 to 2019 was used to found that the pandemic has effect on both balance sheet and income statement of banks. Wakode (2020) studied the influence of COVID-19 on the credit exposure of a bank. The study employed the statistical tool of the multivariate analysis of variance and found that there is a significant impact between COVID-19 and bank risk metrics.

Demirguc-Kunt, Pediaza and Ruiz (2020) assessed the impact of banking sector performance during the COVID-19 crisis. The study found that the crisis and the countercyclical lending role that banks are expected to play and put banking systems under significant stress with bank stocks underperforming in their domestic market than other non-banking financial firms.

Baret, Celner, O'Reilly and Shilling (2020) investigated the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the financial market and banks. The study found evidence of significant effects of COVID19 on the general financial markets as recently the world experienced fall in share prices, oil prices, equities and bonds' prices.

Mert and Omer (2020) investigate the impact of COVID-19 on emerging stocks markets over the period March 10-April 30, 2020. The study found that there is a negative impact of COVID19 on

emerging stock markets, though this negative impact has gradually fallen and has begun to taper off since mid-April.

Nuhu (2020) examined the impact of the COVID-19 on the financial market: Evidence from China and U.S.A. The study applied a regression model time series data from China COVID-19 statistics reports and trading economics from 1st of March 2020 to 25 March 2020. The study used the Shanghai Stock Exchange as a sample for China and the New York Dow Jones as a sample for the U.S.A. The study found that there is a positive significant relationship between the COVID-19 confirmed cases and all the financial markets.

Kocha, Iwedi and Barisua (2020) emphasized on COVID-19 outbreak, oil price shock and banking system liquidity. The results of the study using regression model reveal that there is a positive significant impact between COVID-19 and changes in banking system liquidity in Nigeria. On the other hand, the results of the oil price slump reveal that there is a negative significant relationship between oil price and banking system liquidity. Also the results of Johansen co-integration test reveal that the series are co-integrated that is exhibit a long run relationship. The results of the granger causality tests suggest evidence of bidirectional causality flowing from COVID-19 to banking system liquidity vice versa while there is no evidence of causality running from oil price shock to banking system liquidity vice versa. Based on this, the study concludes that COVID-19 and Oil price shocks impacted significantly on banking system liquidity in Nigeria.

Acee-Eke and Ikegwuru (2020), it examined corona virus containment measures and patronage of supermarkets in Rivers State of Nigeria, using responses from 250 respondents from supermarket in the area of Port Harcourt, Rivers State of Nigeria. The study adopted the convenient sample (non-probability sampling method) on 250 consumers. Out of the total of 250 questionnaires distributed, 200 (80%) questionnaires were retrieved and were useful. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were also used for the analysis. The major findings of the study confirmed an overall strong, positive and significant association of the independent variables with the dependent variable. The study concludes the features of corona virus containment measures have strong, positive and significant association with patronage of supermarkets in Rivers State of Nigeria.

Similarly, Ikegwuru and Harcourt (2020) investigated the effect of corona virus containment measures on rapid-fire changes in purchase behaviour in Rivers State of Nigeria using a cross-sectional survey design and a convenient sample (non-probability sampling method) of 320 consumers from Senatorial districts of Rivers State. 296 (92. %) copies of questionnaire were retrieved from respondents. The Analyses were carried out with reliability analysis, descriptive statistics and regression analysis in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 22.0). The results demonstrate that the stay at home, locking up of shops/markets and curfew/restriction of movement directives by government have a positive and significant effect on rapid-fire changes in purchase behaviour in Rivers State of Nigeria.

The study therefore, concludes that corona virus containment measures significantly and positively influence rapid-fire changes in purchase behaviour of consumers in Rivers State of Nigeria. Again Gain (2020) studied the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated control measures on food system SMEs in the processing and distribution sectors and grains, vegetables, and fruit value chains in 17 countries. 363 responses were received, with the majority emanating from micro- or small-sized firms, vegetables, and fruit value chains. It was found that, 94% confirmed being impacted by the pandemic, largely by way of decreased sales (82%), complication accessing inputs (49%), and complexity paying staff (44%). 84% of firms reported altering their production capacity due to the pandemic, generally decreasing it; 57% had distorted their product's sales price. 85% of respondents anticipated future impacts on their supply chains, as well as shortages of supplies (61%) and transportation and distribution disruptions (49%). 80% and 84% of firms confirmed taking actions to alleviate the impact of the virulent disease on their companies and to guard their employees, in that order. 81% and 64% of firms affirmed without delay requiring financial and technical support, correspondingly, to deal with with the effects of the epidemic. Also

the findings of Ratnasingam et al. (2020), reveals two major issues i.e. the financial management and the supply chain disruptions creating the main cut on business operations. More firms in the processing and distribution sectors and grains, vegetables, and fruit value chains. Moreover, they revealed that a large amount of the SMEs were operating well below capacity, which was a gigantic financial damage on their business feasibility. Regrettably, the SMEs are also aware the weaker and vulnerable members of firms would go out of business.

Drawing from the study of Beraha and Đuričin (2020) COVID-19 impacts on SMEs in Serbia by gathering data through an online survey, the study found that SMEs have to go through unmatched experiences like exchanging business, incapable of paying the fixed obligation, lay off employees, and restricted access to resources. In another similar study, Robinson and Kengatharan (2020) assessed the potential effects of COVID-19 on Sri Lankan SMEs and found that SMEs are intensely suffering due to the shortage of materials, the decline in foreign and home demand for their products and services, complicatedness in repaying loan and interest, cancellation of orders, dire cash deficit, and lack of savings. The study put forward that the COVID-19 pandemic is sensitively demanding for both employees and operators of the SMEs for that reason, government relief and the best policies and guiding principle to hold up the SMEs are undeniably decisive for travelling through the catastrophe. Other studies as Nyanga and Zirima (2020) examined reactions of SMEs in Masvingo, Zimbabwe to COVID-19 by means of qualitative techniques and revealed that SMEs were negatively affected by the lockdown and stopped their operations and had to lay off some of their employees. What's more, production in most cases was brought to a standstill and this necessitated that the future following the lockdown was unwelcoming for them. The SMEs requested for government support to enable them to revive following the lockdown.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

The literature has looked at the relationship between covid-19 protocol and organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. The problem addressed in the literature is the continuous disparity among scholars in finding a common agreement on whether covid-19 protocol influences organizational performance. While some scholars posit that covid-19 protocol influences organizational performance; others believe that if managed properly, does not influence performance in organizations. Gap however exists in the periods and the countries where the studies were carried out. Most of the studies were carried out in the banks and telecommunication firms and not in the studied or related firms. This study therefore intends to fill the gap by carrying out the research in food and beverages establishment in Rivers State.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter spells out the research methodology which the researcher used in carrying out the study. The methodology includes research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, administration of the instrument and data analysis techniques.

### **Research Design**

Research design describes how and the method used to carry out a research to attain goals (Ahiauzu & Asawo, 2016). A research design directs a researcher in the diverse phase of the research. It is a plan for pulling together appropriate and reliable data to experiment the proposition or respond to the research questions. The aim of this study was to examine covid-19 protocol and organizational performance of office manager in food and beverages firms in Rivers State. The study adopts a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey research design is considered most appropriate because the study describe questions in characteristics of the population or situation being studied. The research design employed in any research is primarily subjective to the arrangement the researcher decide to espouse.

**Population of the Study**

Ahiauzu and Asawo (2016) study observes that population of study is the complete set of members of a group whom appropriate data could be determined from. The population of this study comprised of all ten (10) food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. The study selected four (4) managers from human resource department, marketing, administrative and operations from food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. The entire 10 firms were used as the sample size. Therefore, the population size was one hundred and twenty respondents. Below is the detail of the population

**Table 1: Population**

S/N	Company	Selected Firms	Managers	Sector
1	Dufil Prima Foods	1	12	Consumer Goods
2	Cadbury Nig. Plc	1	12	Consumer Goods
3	Riv Biscuits Co Nig. Ltd	1	12	Consumer Goods
4	Unilever Nig. Plc	1	12	Consumer Goods
5	UAC Plc	1	12	Consumer Goods
6	Flour Mills Plc	1	12	Consumer Goods
7	NN/Flour Mill Plc	1	12	Consumer Goods
8	Seven Up Bottling Plc	1	12	Consumer Goods
9.	Genesis Food Nig. Ltd	1	12	Consumer Goods
10.	Guinness Nig. Plc.	1	12	Consumer Goods
<b>Sample of the Study</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>120</b>	

**Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

The systematic sampling technique was used because it provides a sample that is a true representative of the population and reduces potential of human basin selection of sample cases. The entire sample size was used for the study this was as a result of the small sample size and the sample size is one hundred and twenty respondents from the ten (10) food and beverages establishment in Rivers State.

**Data Collection Methods**

Questionnaire formed the major research instrument that was used in this study. The questionnaire was designed in structured five points Liker Scale format and it was structured on open ended questions and the section "A" solicits information on demography and the section "B" dwelt with the research questions and the questions are 40 items and was distributed to members of staff of the food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. This allowed the respondents to significantly contribute their own opinion and also strictly attune to the subject matter for this study. The secondary data was journals, textbooks, articles, printed materials from online formed the literature review.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected and collated was "analyzed using mean" for the research questions while the hypotheses formulated was tested using the "Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient". Formula for Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient is expressed as:

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where,

$d_i$  = difference in paired ranks and  
 $n$  = number of cases.

A mean value of 3.0 was used as the acceptance criteria. Mean values from 3.0 and above was accepted while mean values below 3.0 was rejected.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**  
**Analysis on Covid 19 Protocols**

For the purpose of this study, the 5point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire, with response categorized in the following order: Strongly Agree (SA) = 5, Agreed (A) = 4, Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 3, Disagreed (D) = 2 and Undecided (U) = 1. Going by this, the interpretation of the statistical mean is according to Asawo’s (2019) categorization where all responses with mean value (x) between 1-2 as being low, 2.5 - 3.5 as being moderate, 3.5 – 4.5 as high and 4.5 above as very high.

**Table 2: Response Rates and Descriptive Statistics for Lockdowns**

Lockdowns	SA (5)	A (4)	SD (3)	D (2)	U (1)	$\Sigma$	Mean	Std.
Lockdowns helps in the reduction of spreading of covid-19 among organization employee	62	32	9	4	5	478	4.26	1.21
Operating form home was the one of the option for my organization as a result of the lockdowns	63	30	6	7	6	473	4.22	1.17
Lockdowns slows down work in business operation	51	36	0	9	16	433	3.87	1.24
Most organization uses movement restriction as part of their measure to reduce covid-19	50	35	6	10	11	439	3.92	1.27

The above table 2 illustrates the response rates and frequency for lockdown measured on a 5-item instrument and scaled on a 5-point Likert scale.

**Table 3: Response Rates and descriptive statistics for downsizing**

Downsizing	SA (5)	A (4)	SD (3)	D (2)	U (1)	$\Sigma$	Mean	Std.
One of the way to reducing organization cost as a result of the covid-19 is through layoff of employee	40	24	5	14	29	365	3.29	1.35
Salary reduction could be part of the strategy to reduce cost in the era of covid-19	60	40	6	4	2	488	4.36	0.85
Employee could be given redundancy as a result of the covid-19 to reduce cost	62	21	5	11	13	444	3.96	1.16

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Downsizing of employee helps organization to grow their business	36	48	8	10	10	426	3.80	1.42
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Table 3 above illustrates the response rates and frequency for downsizing measured on a 5-item instrument and scaled on a 5-point Likert scale.

### **Test of Hypotheses**

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient is calculated using the SPSS 21.0 version to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable. Correlation coefficient can range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while the value of +1.00 represents a perfect positive correlation. A value of 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. In testing hypotheses one to nine, the following rules were upheld in accepting or rejecting our alternate hypotheses: all the coefficient values that indicate levels of significance (\* or \*\*) as calculated using SPSS were accepted and therefore our alternate hypotheses accept; when no significance is indicated in the coefficient r value, we reject our alternate hypotheses. Our confidence interval was set at the 0.05 (two tailed) level of significance to test the statistical significance of the data in this study.

### Effect of Lockdown on Measures of Organizational Performance of Office Managers in Food and Beverages Establishments in Rivers State

Table 4: Correlation for Lockdown and Measures of Organizational Performance

		Lockdowns	Patronage	Profitability	Business expansion
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.655**	.900**	.660**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	112	112	112	112
Patronage	Correlation Coefficient	.900**	1.000	.891**	.829**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	112	112	112	112
Profitability	Correlation Coefficient	.655**	.891**	1.000	.919**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	112	112	112	112
Business expansion	Correlation Coefficient	.660**	.829**	.919**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	112	112	112	112

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Research Data 2022, (SPSS output version 21.0)**

#### Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant effect of lockdown on patronage of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive effect of lockdown on patronage of food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient 0.655 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at  $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$ . The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant effect of lockdown on patronage of food and beverages establishment in Rivers State.

#### Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant effect of lockdown on profitability of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive effect of lockdown on profitability of food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient 0.900 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at  $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$ . The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant effect of lockdown on profitability of food and beverages establishment in Rivers State.

#### Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant effect of lockdown on business expansion of food and beverages establishments in Rivers State.

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive effect of lockdown on business expansion of food and beverages establishment in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient 0.660 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at  $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$ . The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is

hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant effect of lockdown on business expansion of food and beverages establishment in Rivers State.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, this study concludes that covid-19 protocol have effect on organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages establishments in Rivers State. There is a significant effect of lockdown on organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages establishments in Rivers State. There is a significant effect of downsizing on organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages establishments in Rivers State. There is a significant effect of medical protocol on organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages establishments in Rivers State. Government policy significantly moderate the effect of covid-19 protocol on organizational performance of office managers in food and beverages firms in Rivers State.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a result of the foregoing, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like washing of hands to decrease covid-19 in Rivers State
2. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like social distancing to decrease covid-19 in Rivers State
3. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like putting on facemask to decrease covid-19 in Rivers State
4. Food and beverages establishments in Rivers State should adhere to covid-19 protocol like adopting downsizing of employee to increase their profitability in this covid-19 era
5. They should adhere to covid-19 protocol like working from home to boost the growth of the organization in this covid-19 era in Rivers State

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