



# Covid-19, gendered work and socio-economic inequalities in Ghana

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## Abstract

The covid-19 pandemic has undoubtedly affected every facet of human life around the globe. The study examines Covid-19, gender and socio-economic inequalities among workers in Ghana. This study uses integrative literature review approach and document analysis for discussion. Findings show that the major pathways of driving socioeconomic inequality is through work status and to some extent gender. Most of the studies reviewed converge on the fact that informal workers are and continue to be affected by the pandemic than formal workers. This is because of the difference in the work arrangements of formal and informal workers. It is Recommended that policies should be directed to reduce the impact on the informal sector to impact positively on poverty and reduce the socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana.

## Introduction

The covid 19 pandemic has undoubtedly affected every facet of human life around the globe. How we live, communicate, and work has been altered in a significant way giving rise to the term 'the new normal'. Effects of the pandemic on mental health, jobs, work, education and even culture (the way people live) have been widely reported all over the world. In a joint statement by ILO, FAO, IFAD and WHO (published on the 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2020) the disruptive nature of the pandemic is captured as;

*“The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health, food systems and the world of work. The economic and social disruption caused by the pandemic is devastating: tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty, while the*

*number of undernourished people, currently estimated at nearly 690 million, could increase by up to 132 million by the end of the year”*

The covid 19 pandemic per the statement has challenges the food systems, public health and the world of work by disrupting the normal flow of activities that give rise to positive outcomes in these areas. The disruptive nature of the pandemic has particular implication on work and for that matter livelihoods. Besides, the pandemic measures being implemented by governments (including boarder closures, lockdowns, market closures, trade restrictions and stay at home measures) to control the spread of the virus has had unintended consequences on livelihoods. Apart from the challenges it poses by its disruptive nature to economies, studies (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020; Robinson and Kengatharan, 2020) have shown that the pandemic had varying impact on different socio-economic groups thereby further widening the existing socioeconomic gap. On the socioeconomic effect of the pandemic Nassif-Pires et al (2020) branding the pandemic of inequality argued as follows:

*“Minority and low-income populations are more likely to develop severe infections that can lead to hospitalization and death due to COVID-19; they are also more likely to experience job losses and declines in their well-being. Our policy response to the COVID-19 crisis must target these unequally shared burdens- -and that a failure to mitigate the regressive impact of the crisis will not only be unjust, it will prolong the pandemic and undermine any ensuing economic recovery efforts. We are in danger of falling victim to a vicious cycle: the pandemic and economic lockdown will worsen inequality; and these inequalities exacerbate the spread of the virus.....”*

The pandemic has exacerbated the already huge difference between the *haves* and the *have nots*. From closure of markets, to lockdowns and stay at home orders, there is no doubt that the impact of all these activities by governments has and continue to widen the socio-economic inequality gap.

The widening of the socio-economic gap has been cited by several studies as the underlying cause of underdevelopment, persistence of poverty, poor outcomes in education and health, war and instability among others (Koubi et al, 2014 and Langer et al, 2012).

Empirical evidence on the effects of Covid 19 pandemic has been found several studies (Austrian et al., 2020; Sumner et al., 2020) which are conducted outside Ghana. In the Ghanaian context researches on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic is unsurprisingly skewed towards its impact on health and health related institutions (Acheampong et al., 2020; Sarfo et al., 2020). Researches have also been done on education (Owusu & Frimpong-Manso, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020;). Even though some studies have been conducted to investigate the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic (Durizzo et al., 2020; Bukari et al 2021; Dordzro, 2021; Nakouwo & Akplehey, 2020; Dayour, et al 2020) the problem with these studies is their limitation in coverage and orientation. For example, Durizzo et al's study on the poor in urban areas focused primarily on Accra, Ghana's capital. The study only focused on the poor urban dwellers in Ghana; leaving out other workers and those in the rural areas of Ghana. Bukari et al (2021), focused on the providing evidence on how COVID-19 is affecting poverty in Ghana but at the micro-level whilst Dordzro studied how groups engaged in performing arts with special emphasis on brass band musicians in Cape coast in Ghana have been affected by Covid-19. Nassif-Pires et al (2020) conducted a more holistic analysis of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns on employment to comprehend how workers' livelihoods have been affected since the pandemic was labeled as a "pandemic recession". Therefore, this study seeks to present an overview of the effects of the pandemic on workers and socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana using integrative review approach. Section 2 will focus on a review of literature on socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana whilst section 3 presents the methodology. Section 4 is a discussion of the topic and section 5 concludes the study.

### **Literature review**

This chapter reviews literature on theories, socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana. How the covid 19 pandemic is impacting workers through their work status, gender also reviewed.

### **The Theory of Epidemics**

W. O. Kermack (chemist) and A. G. McKendrick (physician) developed a theory of epidemics between 1900 and 1930 while working at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. They pioneered and applied a slew of new mathematical concepts to population studies. One of their key findings is that an infection establishes a size threshold for the susceptible population above which an epidemic would spread. Their theoretical

epidemic threshold is measured in practice and it determines how vulnerable a real population is to the spread of an epidemic.

Epidemics that strike without warning, murdering and incapacitating people indiscriminately, are dramatic and horrific natural events that are only rivaled by floods, earthquakes and fires in terms of devastation, but often surpass them in terms of terror and anxiety. Any supernatural or natural causes for such epidemics were seized upon by ancient priests and physicians. McKendrick (1926) asserted that they blamed a furious god's wrath, demonic spirits, or a convenient scapegoat (witches, demons, and passing strangers).

People blamed epidemics on the climate and weather, with or without the conjunction of astrological signs, by the time of the Renaissance in the late 19th century. This was then supported by the miasma theory of sickness. Bacteriology's inception, the discovery of infectious pathogens, and the triumph of the germ hypothesis of the disease led to a more rational analysis of observed facts and the formulation of more logical interpretations. From the standpoint of "Public Health," it's just as important to figure out what causes epidemics to fade away and disappear as it is to figure out why and how they start and continue (Kermack and McKendrick, 1932). A contagious disease is propagated through the interaction of two populations: those who are susceptible and those who are infective. In some diseases, these two populations are from separate species. Malaria, for example, is spread between animals by anopheles mosquitos, whereas schistosomiasis is spread only by contact with water-containing snails capable of incubating disorder helminths.

In other diseases, infectious agents can convey the infection directly to susceptible. Viruses such as chickenpox, measles, and influenza, as well as bacterial diseases such as tuberculosis, can spread through a community in the same way that fire spreads over grassland in a hot harmattan (May and Anderson, 1987). This is where the Covid-19 epidemic falls hence it is an important perspective in explaining the pandemic. However, the theory did not capture the social, geographical and cultural factors that could attribute to the emergence of pandemics. Thus, the theory of social justice is deployed to complement the inconsistencies from the above theory.

The theory of justice and fairness, established by Rawls John (1971), advocates for the values of justice to rule modern social order guided this study. The idea establishes a framework for understanding the

importance of political and human freedom, fair treatment and cooperative groups that benefit both privileged and less privileged people in a society that is assumed to be made up of equal and free people. It enhances the concept of justice by assuming that all people are equal and free and that social systems should be designed to eradicate all types of peripheral impediments (social, cultural, economic, political, ecological) that prevent intelligent persons from less fortunate backgrounds from utilizing their intrinsic capacity, which would otherwise lead to social advancement.

All social core goods (money and wealth, liberty and opportunity, and the foundations of self-respect) should be shared equitably, according to the philosophy of justice and fairness, so that everyone in society can pursue their goals. Any unequal distribution of any or all of these things would be detrimental to the poor. Social and economic inequalities are to be organized in such a way that they benefit the less fortunate to the greatest extent possible, as well as to be provided to offices and locations that are accessible to all within fair equality of opportunity regulations. This notion promotes the idea that people should have an equal chance in life regardless of their socioeconomic status.

This one will guarantee that perhaps the ideal conditions for implementing the vision of equal opportunity are developed. The concept of justice and fairness was determined to be appropriate for this study because unequal legal and social protection for informal workers discriminates against poor families in their pursuit of basic needs because they will not benefit from legal and social protection as their counterparts (formal workers) of means, thus denying them equal chance.

### **Socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana**

Socioeconomic inequality is defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and Age Concern as “inequalities that relate to differences in income, social class, occupational background, educational achievement and neighborhood deprivation” (EHRC 2009).

In other words, widening the socioeconomic gap which is often referred to as “the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer”. Socioeconomic inequalities go beyond economic inequality to disparities in other indicators such as health, education, among others. Therefore, widening the socioeconomic gap also includes the further deprivations in these indicators for the poor whilst further improving same indicators for the rich.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, more than 50% of the world's poor lived in sub-Saharan Africa was home to more than half of the world's poor. The number of poor persons in the region has increased by an estimated nine million (World Bank, 2018). Despite continuous growth since 2005 and attainment of middle-income status in 2010, Ghana's socioeconomic disparity has increased, and poverty is widespread in many areas.

Edgar et al (2016) used the sixth GLSS to conclude (in The Ghana Poverty and Inequality Report) that while national poverty in Ghana has fallen by half since 2006, the annual rate of poverty reduction has decreased from 1.8 to 1.1 percentage points. Further findings on inequality is presented as follows: *“Based on consumption levels, the analysis revealed that the gap between the poorest 10% of the population and the wealthiest 10% of the population has been increasing since 2006. In 2007, the richest 10% consumed 6.8 times as much as the lowest 10%, up from 6.4 times in 2006. Between 2006 and 2013, the richest group's average consumption increased by 27%, while the lowest group's only increased by 19%, meaning that the richest group's growth was more than 1.4 times that of the poorest group. Similarly, the rich and the poor possessed considerably different fractions of overall national consumption. The wealthy 10% of the population consumed more than a third of total national consumption, while the poorest 10% consumed only 1.72 percent. As a result, Ghana's economy is experiencing growing socioeconomic inequality.*

*Per the recent projections from the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 7), the fight to abolish poverty in all of its forms in Ghana is far from ended. Poverty is becoming entrenched, making it more difficult to attain in some areas, while the number of Ghana's poor stays unacceptably high (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018a, 2018b). Poverty rates in half of the country's 16 regions are significantly higher than the national average of 24.5 percent. According to the GLSS research, the number of Ghanaians living in extreme poverty increased from 2.2 million in 2013 to 2.4 million in 2017 based on forecasts from the 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) (GSS).”*

Attempts to reduce socioeconomic inequality gap in Ghana includes the livelihood empowering against poverty (LEAP), increasing the minimum wage, among others. Also, Ghana as part of the United Nations is pursuing greater sustainable development goals which devoted to lifting people out of poverty and for that matter reducing the socioeconomic inequality gap.

However, the onslaught of the covid 19 pandemic has worsened the inequality situation in Ghana. According to a study by Mahler et al (2020b), the number of individuals living around the global poverty line is rising. Surprisingly, the breakout of COVID-19 and the lack of a cure have various consequences. Assessing the effects of the pandemic on the poor and their living standards, Bukari et al (2021) found that the pandemic has led to higher poverty status and reduced living standards. Gender and location were also found to play a role with regards to the extent of the impact of the pandemic. For instance, Bukari et al (2021) discovered that the ravaging effects of the pandemic is felt more with women and rural dwellers despite admitting that in the middle class and upper-class households were more affected than those in the poor house hold when assessed on overall consumption.

However, according to Durizzo et al. (2021), the covid 19 epidemic has aggravated poverty levels in Accra's urban areas. They found that disobedience to government restrictions was related to poverty rather than a refusal to change one's conduct. Although his study is limited in breadth in terms of the pandemic's impact on Ghana's urban poor because it only focused at Accra, it would provide an idea of the level of deprivation amongst Ghana's urban poor. In addition, Schotte et al (2021) observed that aside reducing employment in the informal sector of Ghana's major cities during the three-week lockdown, there is a continuous reduction in both incomes and employment, putting the livelihoods of small company owners in the informal sector in jeopardy. The above discussion demonstrates that despite the lack of data on the impact of covid 19 on Ghana's socioeconomic inequalities, the pandemic has sabotaged Ghana's poverty alleviation efforts and worsened the poor's living conditions.

### **Covid 19 pandemic, work and gender**

Haleem et al (2020) grouped the daily effect of the coronavirus pandemic into three main categories namely social, healthcare and economic. Some social effects on daily life include different countries issuing bans on travelling, cancellation and postponement of sports, ban on celebrations of religious, culture and festive events, closure of entertainment and educational centers among others. The health sector (perhaps the most challenged of all the sectors due to the nature of the disruption) has also been reported of being overly under stress and at breaking points in some countries. Lack of medical supplies due to the disruption of medical supply chains, stress on personnel and equipment as well as challenges with diagnosis, isolation and treatment

of affected persons are very common. Poor cashflow into markets, disrupted manufacturing process, loss of businesses and incomes were listed among the economic impacts.

Studies on the effect of the pandemic on work in Ghana which is currently available are Bukari et al 2021; Dordzro, 2021; Nakouwo & Akplehey, 2020 and Dayour, et al 2020. Dordzro studied the impact of Covid-19 on performing arts groups in Ghana. The impact of COVID-19 on local brass band performers in Ghana's Cape Coast metropolis was explored using a phenomenological approach. COVID-19 had taken a huge toll on the artists since the outbreak according to the findings. Due to the obvious experiential and in-person nature of the brass band musicians' employment, many venues have remained closed or are only operating on a limited basis due to limits on public meetings. In the face of these obstacles, it is sad that local musicians have not been able to come up with new musical ideas in order to survive until conditions that are more conducive to in-person interactions improve.

Although the scope of the study is very narrow in terms of the informal sector workers coverage in Ghana, it gives an indication of how Covid 19 pandemic has affected informal sector workers in Ghana.

Dayour, et al 2020 also found that lockdowns, cancellation of bookings, income declines, job losses, inability to pay pensions and taxes were some of the effects of the pandemic on businesses. The tourism sector and its operators were the hardest hit because of lockdown restriction and closure of national borders. One of the sectors that have been badly affected by the pandemic is the tourism industry and the number of participants (40) involved in this industry is relatively low considering the masses in the sector. This shows how the Covid 19 pandemic has impacted Ghana's informal sector employees.

In the study by Nakouwo and Akplehey on mobile money operators, the original data was collected from a sample of 1000 mobile money agents in Ghana using an online and offline survey questionnaire. The study included a comparative examination of COVID-19's impact on mobile money agents' business activities and profits. The findings reveal that during the lockdown periods, the value and volume of electronic transactions, as well as the profitability of mobile money agents, in Ghana, decreased. Even after the lockdown limitations were relaxed, these indicators began to rise, but they have not yet fully recovered to pre-lockdown levels. Travel restrictions, a ban on public meetings, the closure of some major roadways, the closure of market

places, states of emergency, and total lockdown in some areas, except for critical service providers, are some of the containment measures put in place by authorities. Due to the disruptions, mobile money agents have had little or no work hours, resulting in decreasing mobile money traffic, transaction value and profitability, putting their company and livelihood at risk. This study is bigger in coverage but limited in terms of the various workers in the informal sector (the focused on only mobile money operators). Nonetheless, it again shows that the coronavirus pandemic has impacted workers especially those in the informal sector.

Although not enough studies have been conducted to assess how the pandemic has impacted workers using gender and their exclusion in information technology; studies (elsewhere) has shown that these two other factors are important means by which the pandemic is affecting workers and deepening their socioeconomic inequalities. Bukari et al, (2021), reported that COVID-19 had different effects on females and males and rural and urban inhabitants with the former in both categories being disadvantaged. Elsewhere in the US, Alon et al ( year ?) found that the epidemic will significantly regress gender equality. Social distancing policies have hit sectors that women dominate harder than sectors dominated by men. Furthermore, school and daycare facility closures have increased the work load on working women. Due to strong returns to experience in the labor market, the consequences of the crisis on working mothers are expected to be long-lasting. They however are of the view that beyond the present crises, there are countervailing forces at work that may eventually promote gender equality in the workplace.

To begin with, firms are quickly embracing flexible work arrangements, which are expected to continue. Second, many men are increasingly responsible for main child care, which may disrupt social norms that now contribute to a lopsided allocation of labor in housework and child care. These findings suggest that the pandemic is exacerbating socioeconomic disparities by leveraging existing gender disparities.

In analyzing the socioeconomic impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, Odikro et al, (2020) argued that increased food prices, economic problems related with the lockdown command and forcible relocation and decongestion exercises to encourage social separation among vendors all demonstrated the socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in marketplaces.

In general, COVID-19 is causing alarm in the literature since the virus is wreaking havoc on economic activity. Apart from the virus infecting people and making them sick as well as the fear of becoming infected which made people naturally hesitant to go to work, government measures to contain the virus severely slowed all forms of economic activity, with the impact on workers in general being enormous, as discussed above.

## **Methodology**

This study uses integrative literature review approach. According to Torraco (2005), this approach aims at assessing, critiquing and synthesizing literature on research topics so as to enable new theoretical frameworks and perspectives to emerge. This approach has been recommended by Snyder (2019) to be used especially in studying new or emerging topics. Although pandemics are not new and their effects on socioeconomic inequalities have been studied, Covid 19 pandemic is unique in recent times and measures in dealing with it differ from other pandemics. Hence, using the integrative literature review approach is appropriate. Effects of the pandemic on workers and socioeconomic inequality has been examined using the factors by which literature has shown socioeconomic inequalities occur. The study also examines the mechanisms by which the pandemic has widened socioeconomic inequalities through these factors in Ghana.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **The effects of covid-19 pandemic on socioeconomic inequalities of workers**

Study based on literature has found that the pandemic has and continues to affect workers and widen the socioeconomic inequality gap through work status and gender. Therefore, this section discusses how covid 19 pandemic and measures to contain it has affected socioeconomic inequalities through these two media. The section discusses work status in Ghana, the effects of Covid 19 pandemic on workers and socioeconomic inequalities through work status and gender. A table on which a summary of key studies on the effects of Covid 19 pandemic on workers is presented at the end of this section.

## Work status of workers in Ghana

In order to put this discussion into perspective, workers are viewed in two broad categories: formal and informal workers. This is due to the nature of these workers and the effects that is expected. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines the formal sector work as “*work in which a company hires an employee under an established working agreement that includes, salary or wages, health benefits, and defined work hours and workdays*”. In this study Ghana formal workers in Ghana are taken as those who work in the government sector.

After a review in 2003 the ILO defines the formal sectors as follows: “*The informal economy encompasses both perspectives and is defined as all economic activities by workers and economic units that are - in law or in practice - not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements*”.

Informal employment comprises more than 60% of the world's workforce, with the ratio reaching nearly 90% in developing countries (ILO 2018). As a result, informal labor is the norm throughout much of the global south and the informal economy is the dominant source of income.

The informal sector employs about two-thirds the workforce in Ghana. Underemployment, poor working conditions, ambiguous work relationships and low wages characterise this sector. Further description of the informal sector by the study is presented as follows: “*The vast majority of people have a significant level of income instability. The industry encompasses a wide range of activities; agriculture, fishing and fish processing, and agro-based processing are the most common informal sector jobs in rural Ghana. In contrast, more city employees are employed in privately owned micro and small-scale businesses make up Ghana's informal sector. Producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers are all members of this group. Along the value chain, there are additional intermediary service providers, such as raw materials suppliers (Osei-Boateng & Ampratwum, 2011)*”.

Generally informal workers have low job security and poor work conditions which makes them vulnerable when there are economic shocks.

## **Effects of covid 19 pandemic on workers and socioeconomic inequalities through work status and gender**

In Ghana, studies (Adom et al, 2020; Durizzo et al., 2020; Bukari et al 2021; Dordzro, 2021; Nakouwo & Akplehey, 2020; Dayour, et al 2020 Schotte et al, 2021,) have found that measure put in place to curb the surge of the coronavirus has affected different groups of workers differently. Formal workers who had to break from work due to the lockdown measures continued to receive salaries and all other benefits whilst their counterparts in the informal sector had no income from their work during the same period. For instance, teachers who worked with government in Ghana continued to receive their benefits through the period of school closure whilst private school teachers were not paid by their employers. In a study to understand the effects of the lockdown on musicians in Ghana, Dordzro (2021) found that the pandemic had taken a toll on the finances of brass band musicians.

Using a phenomenology design, the present study investigated the impact of COVID-19 on local brass band musicians in the Cape Coast metropolis of Ghana. Results revealed that COVID-19 had significantly affected the finances of musicians. The closure of many venues and restrictions on public gatherings was the main cause of the loss of livelihood. Dordzro (2021). Though this study is limited to the brass band musician fraternity, anecdotal evidence has shown that other forms of artist in the entertainment industry suffered similar fate.

Turning attention from the entertainment industry to the urban informal workers, Schotte et al, (2021) found that the three weeks long lockdown in Accra and Kumasi had significant negative impact on employment, particularly among workers in informal self-employment. The study also detected a persistent nationwide decline in both earnings and employment, risking the livelihoods of small informal business owners. The employment difference between no-lockdown and lockdown districts had resolved by August-September 2020, with roughly 85% of respondents in both no-lockdown and lockdown districts able to work again. Furthermore, the average probability of being employed at the time of the poll was 12% lower than the average for February 2020 (Schotte et al 2021).

Although this study is limited in scope due to spatial coverage and time, it gives an indication of the negative effect of the pandemic on socioeconomic inequalities. These results in Ghana are consistent with findings by Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)-led 11-city study. The study of 11 cities including Accra confirms that in all these cities that informal workers were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic related lockdowns. Further findings of the study is as follows: *“The study went further to highlight the difficulties of the informal workers and their households to recover. This is because during the lockdown, informal workers either relied on their households’ scanty resources thereby depleting savings. Others sold assets to meet basic necessities and some even borrowed and went further into debt. There was significant difference in average earnings across the four sectors when compared to pre-COVID average earnings. Street vendors and market dealers reported the highest drop in April and the slowest recovery by mid-2020, followed by home-based workers. In April, domestic workers indicated the smallest drop, while rubbish pickers reported the fastest rebound by mid-2020”*.

To summarize, the ILO's April 2020 projection that pandemic-cum-lockdowns/restrictions will disproportionately damage informal workers, their livelihood activities, and their families is supported by this (and other) research. Lockdowns and other stay-at-home restrictions imposed to combat the virus almost quickly resulted in three interconnected crises for informal workers: no job, no income, and no food in low-income households reliant on daily salaries. "We will die of hunger before we die of the virus," unauthorized workers said during peak lockdowns around the world. The size of the earnings losses of informal laborers across the pandemic has increased worldwide poverty and will continue to do so for some time if nothing is done about it, according to the findings of these research.

Another mechanism through which the pandemic has increased socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana is through gender inequality. According to Gebhard et al (2020), pandemic-prevention efforts had a stronger impact on industries with a high female labor share. Furthermore, school and daycare center closures resulted in a major surge in child care needs, which disproportionately impacted working mothers.

Alon et al (2020) has observed that measures to curb covid 19 has impacted more severely on sectors with high female employment shares. In addition, the gendered nature of housekeeping and care roles within

household has been reported as a major underlying cause of inequality among women and men. Women spend on an average, twice as much time on unpaid housework as men (UNDP). Covid 19 pandemic has compounded the problem due to the greater roles it imposed during the lockdown periods. Women had to stay at home to take care of the children and the sick. Compared to men, women reported greater stress and anxiety during the initial stages of the lockdown in Spain and Hungary (González-Sanguino et al, 2020; Szabo et al., 2020),

In Ghana, Bukari et al, 2021 discovered that COVID-19 had gender and locational heterogeneities, with females and rural dwellers being disproportionately affected. Also, Asravor (2021) discovered that in Ghana, men moonlit more than women. Aside from financial hardship, which both sexes ranked as the most important motivational factor, men rank being secure in their primary job as the second most important motivational factor, while women rank lowering the risk of losing their primary job as the second most important motivational factor.

The foregoing discussion shows some consistency in the effect of covid 19 pandemic on socioeconomic inequalities between Ghana and other parts of the world.

**Table 1: Summary of Key studies on socioeconomic effects of Covid 19 Pandemic on workers in Ghana**

Author(s)	Year of publication	Topic	Location of study	Key findings	Issues
Adom et al.,	2020	“Hand-to-mouth work culture and the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions: experiences of selected informal sector workers”	Kumasi	Generally, workers were negatively affected by the lockdowns particularly hand-to-mouth cultured informal workers making them most cited to flout stay at home regulations	Small sample size but shows how covid 19 pandemic has impacted informal sector workers to the point that they put their lives at risk of infection and arrest to make ends meet.
Schotte et al.,	2021	“The labour market impact of COVID-19 lockdowns: Evidence from Ghana”	Ghana	Three-week covid related lockdown had a detrimental impact on employment in the affected neighborhoods, especially among informal self-employed individuals and nationwide decline in both incomes and employment, putting small business owners' livelihoods in jeopardy.	Works in the informal sector were more affected by measures to curb the pandemic making the informal workers worse off.
Bukari, et al.	2021	“Impact of COVID-19 on poverty and living standards in Ghana: A micro-perspective”	Ghana	COVID-19 increased household poverty while lowering living standards, The study also discovered that the impact of COVID-19 is gender and locational heterogeneous, with females and rural inhabitants being disproportionately affected.	The pandemic has and is increasing poverty and rural areas are particularly being more impacted
Alon, et al.,	2020	“ <i>The Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Equality</i> ”		Compared to "normal" recessions, which hit men's employment more severely than women's employment, the job loss caused by social distancing policies has a significant impact on industries with substantial female	Measures to curb the surge of the virus have gendered effects on female work and additional economic pressure on women thereby deepening the socioeconomic inequality men and women

				employment percentages.	
Durizzo, et al.,	2021	“Managing the COVID-19 pandemic in poor urban neighborhoods: The case of Accra and Johannesburg”	Accra and Johannesburg	Lack of compliance with government legislation appears to be linked to a lack of infrastructure or poverty rather than a refusal to change one's conduct	This corroborates the study in Kumasi where informal workers were prepared to do anything to survive economically
Chen, et al.,	2021	“COVID-19 and informal work: Evidence from 11 cities”	Accra, AhmedAbad, Bangkok,Dakar, Durban ,Lima, Bangkok, Mexico City, New York City, Pleven and Tiruppur	Impact differed among different groups of informal workers but generally informal workers were negatively affected on employment and income, food making the unable to take care of their households	Measures to curb the pandemic affected informal workers more than formal workers
Dordzro, J. D.	2021	“Impact of Covid-19 On Performing Arts Groups in Ghana: The Story of Local Brass Band Musicians In Cape Coast”	Cape Coast	The COVID19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on artists. Because of prohibitions on public meetings, many venues have stayed closed or have limited operations, making it especially difficult for brass band artists to stay in business.	Informal workers were severely affected due to their work status

### Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study has through the review of existing works attempted to examine how the covid 19 pandemic affected workers and continue to drive socioeconomic inequalities among workers. Mainly the study found that the major pathways of driving socioeconomic inequality is through work status and to some extent, gender. Most of the studies reviewed centered on the fact that informal workers are and continue to be affected by the pandemic than formal workers. This is because of the differences in the work arrangements of formal and informal workers.

Relatively greater impact on the informal sector is associated with rising poverty levels in Ghana and will continue if targeted efforts are not directed at the sector. According to Rogan and Cichello (2020), informal work earnings contribute significantly more to poverty reduction than formal job earnings. Therefore, policies directed to reduce the impact on the informal sector will impact positively on poverty and thereby reduce the socioeconomic inequalities in Ghana.

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