

Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security and agriculture in Iran: a survey

ABSTRACT

The consequences of COVID-19 on the economy and agriculture have raised many concerns about global food security, especially in developing countries. Given that food security is a critical component that is affected by global crises, beside the limited studies carried out on the macroimpacts of COVID-19 on food security in Iran, this paper is an attempt to address the dynamic impacts of COVID-19 on food security along with economic and environmental challenges in Iran. For this purpose, a survey was conducted with the hypothesis that COVID-19 has not affected food security in Iran. To address this fundamental hypothesis, we applied the systematic review method to obtain the evidence. Various evidences, including indices and statistics, were collected from national databases, scientific reports, field observations, and interviews. Preliminary results revealed that COVID-19 exerts its effects on the economy, agriculture, and food security of Iran through six major mechanisms, corresponding to a 30% decrease in the purchasing power parity in 2020 beside a significant increase in food prices compared to 2019. On the other hand, the expanding environmental constraints in Iran reduce the capacity of the agricultural sector to play a crucial role in the economy and ensure food security, and in this regard, COVID-19 forces the national programs and budget to combat rising ecological limitations. Accordingly, our study rejects the hypothesis that COVID-19 has not affected food security in Iran.

Keyword: COVID-19; Iran; Food security; Economic crisis; Agriculture; Food supply chain