Peer Review Report

Review Report on Hunger, food sovereignty and COVID-19 pandemic: food risks during lockdown

EVALUATION

Q 1   Please summarize the main findings of the study.

This article explored food distribution and risk for hunger in the city of Cali, Colombia during the COVID-19 pandemic. This exploration was conducted via interviews with city residents and "food social space actors." It also involved identification and review of regulatory documents and possibly news articles that specifically addressed food distribution during the pandemic. Results indicate that large-scale distribution platforms were solely relied upon to reduce food insecurity and hunger, which created an unfortunate missed opportunity to work with smaller distributors/vendors like market squares and local producers. Had this been done, it is possible that not as many individuals and families would have gone hungry.

Q 2   Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

Strengths: This research is very important to the discussion of food security and food sovereignty. The topic is one that is vital to understand should future emergencies like COVID-19 arise. Exploration of the topic was well-suited to interviews and review of regulatory documents and news articles. There is no question that this topic is extremely important and could add value to future policy formation.

Limitations: Unfortunately, in its current form, the article lacks sizable pieces of information that could help guide the reader through the research approach. What is presented does not describe a rigorous methodology, and it would be difficult to replicate the study without more details. Because there is currently so little information, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not the conclusions can be fully supported.

Q 3   Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

Minor:
Line 19 – "lockdowns" should be singular
Line 26 "the institutional" should be "an institutional"
In line 36 it is stated that large supply platforms were favored because the food system emphasized food security and because local and national food laws do not address how to act during crises. Can you further explain why emphasizing food security is an issue?
Line 44 discusses food sovereignty. It might be helpful to weave this into the conversation above as a comparison to food security, so the reader can understand where the logic is headed. What is the difference between the two?
Line 52, discusses tables 1 and 2. It is unclear how the tables are different. Does "Characterization of Food Social Space actors" mean "Characterization of Food Social Space Actors who were Interviewed?" It is unclear what "Source: own elaboration" means.
Line 124. Please cite the source. Line 126. Can you please describe what it means to have a legal figure that is not designed for contracting with the state?

Line 133. What is meant by the "deterioration"? Is this referring to the deterioration of the newly implemented plan?

Line 159: What is a community cooking pot?

Line 171: Is there a way to translate this more clearly?

Line 174: Regarding, "The mayor's office not only delivered markets to the community cooking pots…" What is a "market" in this context?

Major:

Introduction

This section could be elaborated on for the reader. For example, clarify what is meant by such things as "food strategies implemented by the local government were guided by a food security approach." Taking the time for more detail in this section would set the reader up to better understand the complexity of the situation. For example, who are the people of Cali? What is the demographic nature of the city beyond its total population? What is the city like? Given that this is an ethnographic article, use of narrative to bring the city's characteristics to the reader would be helpful.

Methods

This section would be helped by further elaboration in almost all areas. There are not sufficient citations and/or references. There are many questions that need to be answered in this section:

Regarding the interviews: the number of interviews conducted is not clear. Were they semi-structured interviews? It is unclear how conducting interviews comprises an ethnographic approach.

How did you determine who to interview? What was the rationale for participation? Were the interviews conducted in Spanish and translated into English? Were they back-translated? Were the families all from the same location or different locations in the city? What was the recruitment strategy? Who were you trying to interview and why? In Table 1 – what does Commune mean? What does "Stratum" mean? How are these defined? Would a map be of help? Were the names that you used in the tables changed to protect participant identity? Occupation is spelled incorrectly. What is "conformation?"

How long were the interviews? Were they conducted in-person? How did you address safety during lockdown (e.g. were any conducted via Skype or Zoom)? Were the interviews recorded? Were the interviews approved through an institutional review board? When? How were the interviews transcribed? Who did the coding? Can you please provide a citation and reference for your coding process? Did you use qualitative data analysis software? What were some of the interview questions?

Regarding the theory: How were interviews specifically informed by the theory of Social Alimentary Space? What is the theory of Social Alimentary Space? What constructs does it include? Is there a graphic of the analytical framework? What was it based on? Can you provide a citation for what you included (e.g. the Social Alimentary Space theory)?

Regarding the document review: how were the documents obtained? I think I understand that some documents were news stories and others formal regulations. Were they obtained from the "news channels and pandemic regulations" referred to in Figures 1 and 2? How did you go about determining which news channels and which regulations to review?

For Figure 1 – in the text can you elaborate on the screening process? What was eligible and what was ineligible? Did a team of persons do this? How did you find the news? Which news sources did you look to? How many were print stories? How many were televised?

For Figure 2 – It might help to keep the same language. In the document you refer to "regulations." Here you shift to "decrees." Double check to ensure all information is translated into English. Who did the screening of so many documents? What made them eligible versus ineligible?

On line 61 – What is meant by "normative"? This paragraph could be elaborated on significantly to help the reader understand what is meant by things such as "information processing matrices" and exactly what "relevant categories" are being referred to.

Tables and Figures 1 and 2 should most likely be situated in the Results section, rather than the Methods section.

Results
The Results section of this paper seems to be largely missing. What is labeled as Results might be better labeled as Discussion. There is no description of the qualitative codes that were used, or how they related to the framework or interview questions (neither of which are included). The codes are important to understand in relation to quotes from the interviews. Along with codes, however, a much more detailed conversation is needed regarding how results came to be organized and learned about in relation to the theory, framework, line of inquiry for interviews and document review.
This section also lacks a firm description of the differences in findings between news stories and regulatory documents. What was found in the news? What was found in the documents?
I suggest an introductory paragraph that tells the reader where you are going with the subsections.
Under the section: Cali's food security strategy pre-pandemic, are the personal communications referred to actually results from interviews? This is unclear. Can you introduce this section with an explanation of how these are the results and not part of the background, if this is in fact the case? Much of this, however, could also be used as the Discussion.
Under the section: Cali's food strategy during lockdown: Line 105, What was the three-day pilot, the food strategy or the lockdown? Again, are these personal communications actually interview results? Can you elaborate on the "what" and "how" questions? Exactly what are those questions?

Discussion
I suggest turning the Discussion section into the Conclusion section.

Once all of these pieces of information are presented it can more easily be determined if the conclusions are supported.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 — Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?
Suggest more clarity in the title – referring to the COVID-19 pandemic

Q 5 — Are the keywords appropriate?
I would include keywords about policy and food distribution.

Q 6 — Is the English language of sufficient quality?
I suggest the language be reviewed for clarity.

Q 7 — Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?
No.

Q 8 — Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)
No. There were insufficient references for methods (including approach and analysis) and theory.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 — Originality

Q 10	Rigor
Q 11	Significance to the field
Q 12	Interest to a general audience
Q 13	Quality of the writing
Q 14	Overall scientific quality of the study

REVISION LEVEL

| **Q 15** | Please make a recommendation based on your comments: |

Major revisions.