



# Food insecurity during COVID-19 among secondary school teachers in Kulyab, Tajikistan, 2021

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## BACKGROUND

- The COVID-19 pandemic's global disruptions resulted in negative consequences beyond direct health impact.
- Economic and education system closures to reduce virus transmission contributed to food insecurity in low-income countries, such as Tajikistan.
- Increased understanding of these consequences can protect critical infrastructure workers, including teachers, in future pandemics and COVID-19 waves.

## METHODS

Sub-analysis of a cross-sectional knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey

**Person:** Secondary school teachers

**Place:** 54 secondary schools in Kulyab

**Time:** September-October 2021

**Data source:** Face-to-face survey using a standardized questionnaire developed by the international task force of the CDC COVID-19 response

**Data analysis:** Multivariable logistic regression

**High food insecurity defined as:**

- (1) being very worried about not having food,
- (2) having run out of food a lot more than before the pandemic, and
- (3) having to skip meals often because of insufficient money.

**Missing data:** Removed from analysis

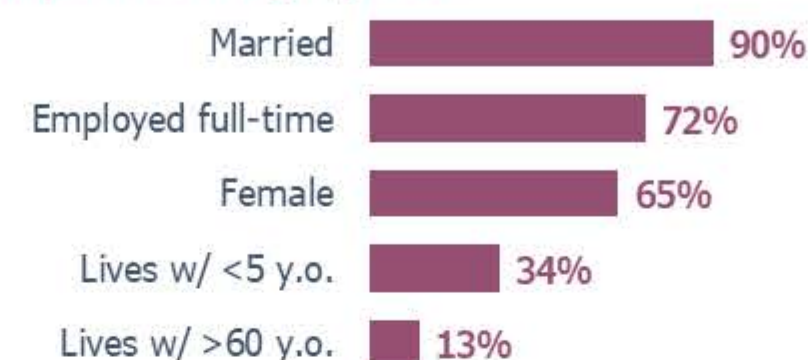
**Final sample size:** 1575

## RESULTS

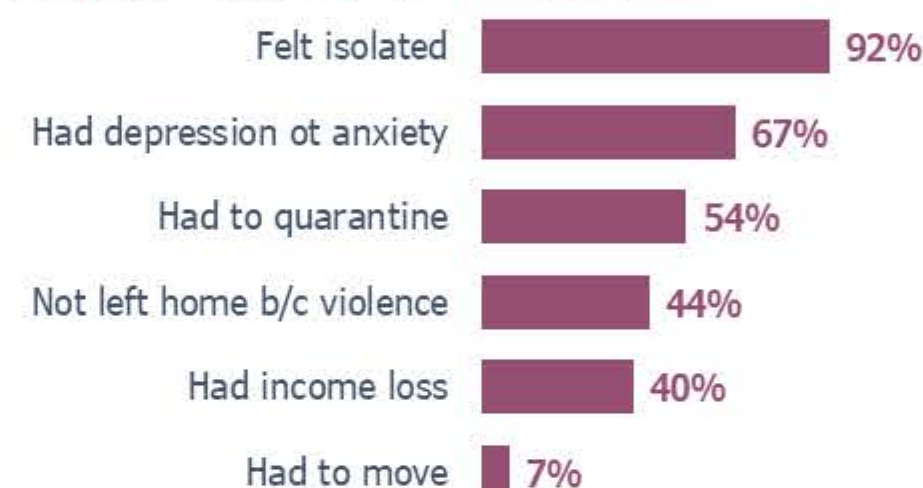
**1 in 10** teachers experienced high food insecurity

Variables	Score	%
<b>Worried about not having enough food</b>		
Not at all	0	19%
A little worried	1	15%
Somewhat worried	2	32%
Very worried	3	34%
<b>Ran out of food &amp; did not have a way to get more</b>		
Never or same as before	0	48%
A little more than before	1	29%
Somewhat more than before	2	17%
A lot more than before	3	7%
<b>Cut or skip meal b/c not enough money for food</b>		
Never	0	41%
A couple times	1	13%
Sometimes	2	33%
Often	3	13%
<b>Food insecurity</b>		
None or Low	0-3	42%
Moderate	4-6	44%
High	7-9	14%

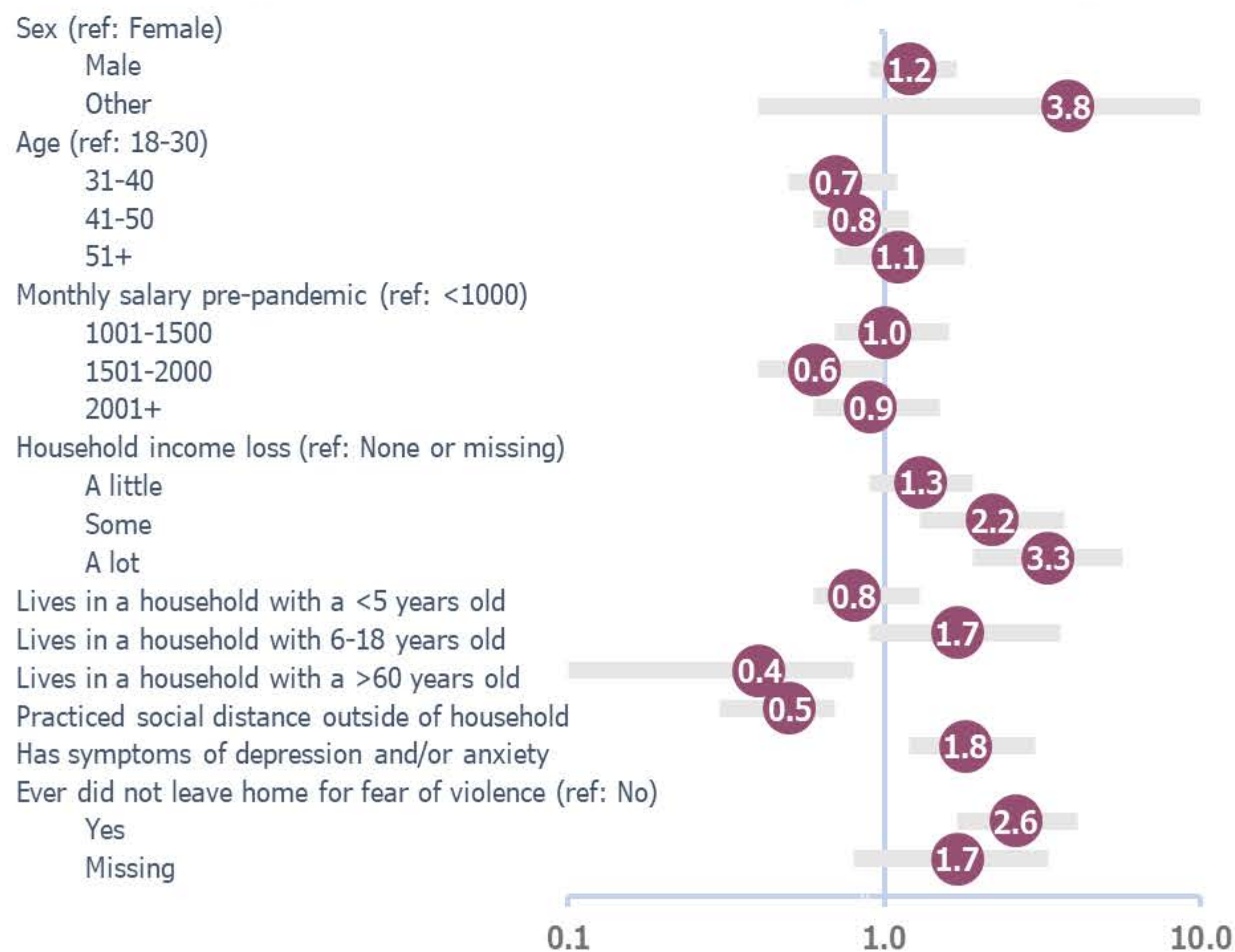
### Participant demographics



### Negative impacts from COVID-19



### Adjusted odds ratios for associations with high food insecurity



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- During the COVID-19 pandemic teachers experienced high food insecurity, income loss and anxiety or depression.
- A safety network of programs that mitigate food insecurity and other pandemic consequences among teachers is needed
- This could be accomplished by schools providing:
  - ✓ Mental health services
  - ✓ Time-off for mental health care
  - ✓ Support groups and networks
  - ✓ Meals for teachers at school
  - ✓ Delivery of meals for teacher's families

## LIMITATIONS

- Food insecurity questions were limited because this was a sub-analysis of a larger KAP study
- Teachers self-selected to participate
- Recall bias with long recall of up to one year

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- All study interviewers and participants

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