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ASSIGNMENT: REPORT ON THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC AND THE EFFECTS OF THE RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT AND LOCKDOWN ON NIGERIANS

We have all come to have knowledge of the pandemic bane of mankind known as the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The virus’ first outbreak was recorded in Wuhan, China; towards the end of 2019. It was declared a public health emergency of international concern by the W.H.O on 30 January 2020, and recognized as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Since April, more than two million cases have been reported in over 200 countries, and more than 130,000 deaths have been recorded worldwide. More than 500,000 people have recovered, though there is possibility of relapse or infection.

The virus is often spread between people of close proximity, through small droplets or coughs, sneezes or speech. People can also be infected by touching a contaminated surface and then their face. The virus can survive for up to 3 days on surfaces. Common symptoms include fever, coughs and shortness of breath. Aggravations or complications lead to pneumonia and acute respiratory distress syndrome. There is no known vaccine or specific treatment and primary treatment is systematic and supportive therapy.

Preventive measures are regular hand washing, covering one’s mouth or nose while coughing or sneezing, social distancing and monitoring and quarantining of supposedly infected people.

The pandemic has led to sever global socioeconomic distortion, global postponement or cancelation of events, global shortage of supplies, travel restrictions, curfews and stay-at-home orders, facility closures, global panic, xenophobia towards the Chinese etc. of recent the virus came to pitch its tent in Nigeria, and has done nothing less than wreak havoc.

Schools, offices, churches, mosques and other social gathering have been stopped. These days everyone is at home doing almost nothing, and not everyone has a job they can do online. Normally, people work to earn a living, but now that there’s no work, everyone is eating from what they’ve earned from and not expecting salary or wage. People are bored of staying at home without knowing what to engage in, and Nigerians as a people love to work. My parents recently started complaining of body pains because they cannot go out for their regular evening strolls. People are adding weight. The government had advised citizens to stock up before the lockdown commenced. However, this only favored salary earners as people who earn on a daily basis are the worst-hit by the effects of the lockdown. In earnest, the lockdown is really not favoring anyone.

Key states like Lagos, Ogun and the F.C.T have extended their lockdowns, leaving its inhabitants bitter and lamenting. The government claims to be feeding millions of citizens below the salary-earning category for free, but personally, I think the government isn’t doing enough. Every day we see figures but we do not know those who have recovered or are infected, not even their addresses. In states like Ogun, people’s homes are raided by unrecognizable figures at night, carting away their food and valuables away.

Although the U.N. has commended Nigeria for its measures to deal with the virus, people are in pain. After the recent lockdown, I’m certain that people will not want to continue staying at home. People are agitating and the law enforcement agencies are nonchalant. Rape and other forms of crime are on the rise, prices of goods and service have increased and soon, food will be unaffordable because there won’t be money to take care of oneself. Some people have come around my neighborhood claiming that they have nothing to eat, so we helped them with some food and money, just to support them in these hard and tough times.

Personally, I feel that should this lockdown extend again, there will be statewide and possibly nationwide protests, that could plunge the country into crisis. To an extent, the government is responsible for our numerous problems, including Nigeria’s present predicament due to porosity of our nation’s borders as the virus came into the country through foreigners and Nigerians in diaspora who ran back to the country they abandoned. Globally, we can only hope and wait on God to get of through this trying times.