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**COURSE: GST 122**

**QUESTION: Write a report, of not more than two pages on the Coronavirus pandemic and the effects of the lockdown and restrictions of movement on Nigerians.**

Corona virus according to WHO (2019) can be defined as an infectious disease. They are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in humans. In humans, Coronavirus is known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

The disease appears to have originated from a Wuhan seafood markets where wild animals, including marmots, bats, rabbits, birds and snakes are traded illegally. Corona viruses are known to jump from animals to humans, so it’s thought that the first people infected with the disease – a group primarily made up of stallholders from the seafood market – contracted it from contacts with animals. A team of virologists at the Wuhan institute of virology released a detailed paper showing that the new coronaviruses’ genetic makeup is 96% identical to that of a corona virus found in bats. The Wuhan market was shut down for Inspection and cleaning on January 1, but by then the covid-19 was already spreading beyond the market itself. On January 21, the WHO said the disease was also being transmitted between humans.

One of the methods recommended by the public health professionals and WHO is social distancing and reducing contacts with people and public objects . In this view, many countries have put legal restrictions in place to improve social distancing and reduce the rate of this pandemic. In Nigeria the lock down has been implemented in most states but the level of compliance is relatively low especially in sub-urban areas of the state. However, many Nigerians are making effort to comply and are facing serious challenges. One of the major effects of this lockdown in Nigeria is that it will affect the economy. The estimated growth rate for 2020 has been shattered by the on-going meltdown in the world economy, a development accelerated by the on-going corona virus pandemic. Another economic negative of this lockdown is that more than 60% of Nigerians survive on daily pay from menial jobs and petty trading. A lockdown means their means of livelihood have been locked down. Many private employers have maintained a ‘no salary during lockdown’ stance, or at best a 50% pay cut. Some have even completely laid the workers off. Labour must agitate for full pay for workers, whether private or government employed, for as long as the lockdown lasts. Government must also distribute foodstuffs and domestic essentials to the masses to cushion the effect of the lockdown.

 The lockdown has also brought all learning institutions to an abrupt halt which affects the learning process and leaves students in facing uncertainty. Schools at all levels have been closed and no one is sure when the lockdown will be over this also results in emotional stress for everyone.

On the brighter side the lockdown has been recommended by public health officials to curb domestic spread of the virus within communities. The virus spreads through people and it is only rational that if movement is restricted, the spread of the virus will be restricted. Thus, despite the unpleasant effects of the lockdown, it is advisable that Nigerians obey and stay at home to bring this period of uncertainty to a quick end.