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Corona Virus and Its Effects on Nigerians

Coronavirus also known as covid-19 is a highly contagious and pathogenic viral infection which is caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (sars-cov-2). The first ever case of coronavirus in the world was recorded in Wuhan, China and has spread across countries in the world. Genomic analysis has shown that sars-cov-2 is phylogenetically related to severe acute respiratory syndrome-like (sars - like) bat viruses, meaning bats could be the possible primary reservoir. Corona virus is a disease that can be asymptomatic for a while but the incubation period is within 2-14 days.

The major symptoms of coronavirus includes fever, cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties. However with the insistent rise of the virus other symptoms discovered may include lack of smell and taste. In more severe cases the infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome and even death. The corona virus can be gotten primarily through droplets, when an infected person coughs or sneezes or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose, it can also be contacted from surfaces as the virus lasts 3hours depending on the material/surface. According to existing and practical studies older people, persons with pre-existing medical condition (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear more likely to becoming severely ill with the virus, however people of all ages can be infected by the virus.

Further, the first certain case of the pandemic in Nigeria was identified on 27th February 2020, when an Italian citizen in Lagos tested positive for the virus. The second case of the virus was re-counted in Ewekoro, Ogun state, a Nigerian citizen who had made contact with the Italian citizen. The 2019-2020 coronavirus pandemic has had far-reaching costs beyond the spread of the disease and efforts to contain it. In an attempt to appropriately contain the spread of the virus all academic institutions were mandated to closed for the mean time.

There are various effects of the lockdown and the restriction of movements of Nigerians. The effects of the lockdown are: First is the issue of the extensive rise of social issues occurring presently in the country. Although Nigeria has always agonized from social issues and nonstop rebellions, the emergence of the virus has led to the multiplying of social vices. This can be exemplified in the recent activities of the so called “one million boys” who go around prowling several communities particularly in Lagos and has endangered the security of the country. Another effect of the restrictions placed on Nigerians as a result of coronavirus is the rise of prices on goods and services, which has stressed the financial capacity of people especially the poor people, this definitely has led to other societal issues such as starvation and malnutrition. Thirdly is the problem of the economy. The pandemic has continuously spread around the globe, concerns have shifted from supply-side manufacturing issues to decreased business in the service sector of Nigeria. Supply shortages are expected to affect a number of sectors due to panic buying, increased usage of goods to fight the pandemic, and disruption to factories and logistics in our country Nigeria.

The corona virus has also affected our economy severely by the oil price crash, the covid-19 pandemic came with its resultant oil price crash, oil price soared around $27 per barrel, way below Nigeria’s 2020 budget benchmark of $57 per barrel. All of Nigeria’s 2020 budget indicators: oil production volume of 2.18 million barrel per day, oil benchmark of $57, n305 exchange rate to the us dollar, gdp growth rate of 2.93%, and an inflation rate of 10.81% now are out of reach.

The salaries of the laborers of Nigeria are threatened because since Nigeria operates a largely mono-product economy solely dependent on crude oil. Past and even the present government had on many occasions mouthed the need to take the economy out of dependence of oil. Now the chicken has come home to roost. With the present economic reality, workers’ salaries may be in jeopardy.

Hunger is also on the increase; before the coronavirus pandemic, Nigeria had been designated as the poverty headquarters of the world, with some 87 million Nigerians, or around half of the country’s population, thought to be living on less than $1.90 daily. With the current measures put in place by the federal government to curb the pandemic the figure is set to spike and poor conditions to exacerbate.

Also small scale businesses, which rely heavily on foreign imports to augment their value chain, will suffer from supply changes while looming job cuts will intensify. The aviation sector is already suffering, as businesses will cut down on travel plans. The struggling service sector will feel, most of the heat, as the manufacturers will cut back budget to survive. Nigerian manufacturers are also feeling the heat as access to critical raw material needed to sustain their operations has been impacted. Director General of the Lagos chamber of commerce and industry, Dr. Muda Yusuf, said the performance of key sectors that have the capacity to facilitate economic diversification is largely constrained.

There has been lockdown in some Nigerian states like Lagos and the FCT since March 30 and since then all schools in the nation has been shut down by implication halting all academical activities to further notice, also all social gatherings have been suspended for the main time and every citizen is said to indulge in social distancing.

As of Saturday, 17th April 2020) by 10:00pm there where 541 confirmed cases of corona virus with a 166 recoveries and 19 deaths with Lagos being the epicenter with 306 confirmed cases.

there is yet a cure or a vaccine for the corona virus but there are some ways in which we can help prevent the spread and stay safe which includes us staying at home, keeping a social distance, washing our hands often, covering our mouths and nose when coughing and sneezing respectively and if there are any suspected cases we are expected to call the Nigerian center for disease control using the number (0800 9700 0010) or we can message them on whatsapp (+234 708 711 0839).

In conclusion, managing the virus involves a collective responsibility. All preventative measures should be adequately observed and adhered.