

Ganiyu Omotolani Zainab

19/Law01/102

GST 122 (Communication in English)

## THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC AND THE EFFECT OF LOCKDOWN ON NIGERIANS

The corona virus disease 2019 (covid19) is defined as illness caused by a novel corona virus now called severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan city, Hubei province, China. It was initially reported to the WHO on December 31, 2019. On January 30, 2020 the WHO declared COVID-19 outbreak a global health emergency. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, its first such designation since declaring H1N1 influenza a pandemic in 2009. The WHO named the illness caused by the corona virus, 'co' and 'vi' for corona virus, and '19' for the year when the disease emerged.

The common symptoms of the virus include fever, tiredness, dry cough, shortness of breath, aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, nausea or a runny nose. However, most people infected with the COVID 19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

The COVID 19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, which is why WHO has emphasized the practice of respiratory etiquette which includes coughing and sneezing into a flexed elbow. The best way to prevent and slow down the transmission of corona virus is to be well informed about the virus, the disease it causes and how it spreads and also to protect one's self and others by frequent washing of hands or using alcohol based hand rubs, avoid touching the face and surfaces, maintaining at least 1 meter distance between you and people coughing or sneezing, refraining from smoking and other activities that weaken the lungs, practice physical distancing by avoiding unnecessary travel and staying away from large groups of people as there is no vaccine for the virus yet.

The first confirmed case of the COVID 19 in Nigeria was announced on 27 February 2020, when an Italian citizen in Lagos tested positive for the virus. On 9 March 2020, a second case of the virus was reported in Ewekoro, Ogun state, a Nigerian citizen who had contact with the Italian citizen.

As at 18 March 2020, Nigeria has had 541 confirmed cases, 166 recoveries and 19 deaths including Abba Kyari, the former chief of staff to president Muhammadu Buhari. 71 percent of the total confirmed cases are registered in Lagos and the capital territory of Abuja.

Since the beginning of corona virus in Nigeria, the government have put in place different measures in order to curb the spread of corona virus in the country which includes placing a restriction of movement on the citizens. The president ordered the lockdown of states in which the corona virus pandemic had begun to spread which were initially Lagos, Ogun and Abuja, Nigeria's commercial and political capitals. Initial 14-day lockdown in the three areas began on march 30, but with the increase in the spread and confirmed cases of the virus, the president announced a 14-day extension to a lockdown in Lagos, Abuja and Ogun states to combat the corona virus pandemic.

In as much as the lockdown is the best way to curb the spread of COVID 19, there are also negative effects of the lockdown. Given, unreliable electricity, having citizens staying home amid a lockdown to curb the spread of corona virus means millions of electricity generators will be working overtime to power homes, worsening pollution in residential areas. The increase use of generators will lead to an uptick in air and noise pollution.

Also, the economic impact on the millions of Nigerians who rely on daily wages, living hand-to-mouth and living on less than one dollar per day, particularly in lagos, has hit residents hard. The shutdown exempts only critical workers, including those selling food, water and medicine, but has left many without money to buy food and other essentials. The vast majority of Nigerians depend on daily wages which means they have to go out in order to get money to put food on the table. However, the restriction of movement has made them stationery as they can't go out to get money to put food on their table.

As a result of being jobless, some of the youths have ventured breaking into people's homes to cart away their monies and properties for their own survival which has contributed to the state of insecurity and unrest in some areas of Lagos and Ogun state because of the emergence of a group of jobless boys referred to as '1 million boys' who have been terrorizing areas in both states.

