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Corona virus Pandemic and the effects of the lock down and restriction of movement on Nigerians.

Coronaviruses are from a family of viruses that can cause illnesses such as the Common cold, Severe acute respiratory syndrome(**SARS**). In 2019,a new coronavirus was identified as the causes of disease outbreak that first appeared in Wuhan, China, The new Coronavirus was first identified in December 31st 2019.This virus is now known as “Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2(SARS Cov-2)”. The diseases it causes is called Coronavirus disease 2019(Covid-19). In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared covid-19 outbreak a pandemic. It is characterized as a pandemic because of the rapid increase in the number of cases outside China where it originally originated from and has affected a growing number of countries.

The World Health Organization declared the outbreak **“a public health emergency of international concern”** on Jan 30. This declaration places countries on alert, to do all they can to identify, isolate and care for people who are infected; to prevent transmission; and to help other countries with weaker health systems. The WHO later declared a pandemic, meaning it is spreading globally on March 11. According to WHO, a pandemic can occur when three conditions have met:

* A diseases emerges which is new to the population
* The Virus infects human, causing serious illness
* The Virus spread easily and sustainably among human.

The WHO is extremely careful about when to declare a pandemic. It seeks to avoid creating panic that a declaration can bring. However, a declaration can also spur countries and individuals into actions to do more to prevent the spread of the Virus.

Based on Facts and evidence, Coronavirus can be in all areas especially areas with hot and humid climate. The virus that causes Covid-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or exhales. These droplets are too heavy to hang in there air and quickly fall on the floor or surfaces as one can be infected by breathing in the virus if the person is within close proximity of someone who has covid-19, or either by touching the contaminated surface and then the eyes, nose or mouth. People with Covid-19 generally develop signs and symptoms, including mild respiratory symptoms and fever, on an average of 5-6 days after infection(incubation period lasts between 5-6 days). These signs and symptoms may appear from 2-14 days after exposure and they can include:

* Fever
* Cough
* Shortness of breath or difficulty when breathing.

Other symptoms can also include: Tiredness , Aches, Runny nose, Sore throat, Headache, Diarrhea, vomiting, while some people begin to lose their sense of taste or smell. It can be transmitted through person-to-person contact, though much remains unknown about.

The Severity of Covid-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe. While some people who are infected by this deadly virus may have no symptoms at all , older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions like asthma, heart diseases, lung diseases or diabetes or those who have comprised immune systems appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill of this deadly virus and are likely to face a higher risk of this illness. This is similar to what is seen with other respiratory illnesses such as influenza. The Covid-19 pandemic has claimed the lives of more than 165,000 people and sickened more than 2.4 million people globally with numbers still increasing according to the latest figures from **John Hopkins University**. Record has it that the United States has more than 760,000 cases, and over 40,700 people have died. In Nigeria, on the 20th of April, 2020,38 new confirmed cases of covid-19 were recorded in Nigeria. Till date, 655 cases have been confirmed, 188 cases have been discharged and 22 deaths have been recorded in Nigeria. The 38 cases are reported from eight cases which include: Kano(23), Gombe(5), Kaduna(3), Abia(2), Borno(2), Sokoto(1), Ekiti(1), FCT(1).

According to Wikipedia, a lock down is an emergency protocol that usually prevents people or information from leaving an area. This protocol can usually only be initiated by someone in a position or an authority. Three and a half billion people are confined in some way around the planet. That’s almost half of the world’s population. The covid-19 pandemic has drastically changed lives with travel halted and industries slowed or in Europe and the US. “President Muhammadu Buhari announced on April 13, 2020 that a lock down, in place since March 30th in Lagos State, neighboring states like Ogun state, and Abuja, the nation’s capital would continue for another 14 days. Several other state governments including Rivers, Kaduna, and Ekiti have also initiated full or partial lockdown. Millions of Nigeria observing the covid-19 lockdown lack the food and income that their families need to survive. The government needs to combine public health measures with efforts to prevent the pandemic from destroying the lives and livelihood of the society’s poorest and most vulnerable people. The lock down does not apply to those providing essential services, such as food distributors and retailers, including market stalls selling food and groceries, which the government has said can only operate for four hours every 48 hours.

The lock down, however prevents many Nigerians working in the Informal sector such as the food vendors, drivers, tradesmen, hairdressers etc from going to work or conducting their business. In Lagos alone, according to the research of the Non-governmental Organization, 65% of the estimated 25 million people work in the Informal sector as more than 80% of Nigerians work in the Informal sector. These people earn lower income and often do not have their savings, health insurance or pensions that provides a basic safety and 72% are poor. This lockdown does not exclude those working in the Formal sector because their businesses are hit devastatingly by the lockdown; and any disruption to their daily livelihood has a huge and significant impact in their ability to meet their most basic needs. The president however declared that measures will be put in place for the distribution of food items and money to vulnerable citizens of the country. The governments has failed to disclose key details of the cash transfer program and food distribution and this has cast doubt on how many people it includes and who benefits from it. It is difficult for Nigerians to survive under this condition because of the rapid increase in the price of goods and services. This lockdown has caused a big damage to the economy. It has affected the education of students in the country who can no longer stay in the school to learn and this causes disruption to the academic planning for the session.

The Litany of Unrest and Suffering is growing by the day. In most countries, security forces see this as an opportunity to most times exploit and extort from the citizens. They beat up people for defying the stay-at-home order. Nigerian Human Rights Activists say that at least 18 people have been killed by security forces trying to enforce the lock down. In developing countries, measures are being taken to ensure that children and family stay safe from this global threat.

The cure to this virus has not yet been discovered as it is advisable to people to follow the measures needed to flatten the spread this diseases such as: “**avoid close contacts with people (stay at least 6 inches away), clean your hand often, use soap and water or an alcoholic based rub, wearing of the face mask, do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth, cover your mouth and nose with your bet elbow when you sneeze, stay home if you’re feeling unwell, call for a doctor or visit the clinic if you feel any weird symptoms”.** These protective measures will help one curtail this deadly virus.