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

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of February this year<sup>1</sup>, Nigeria confirmed its first case of coronavirus, an Italian citizen in Lagos who fell ill on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February after returning from Milan the day before. Today Nigeria records over 600 cases and counting. The arrival and subsequent spread of the coronavirus pandemic in Nigeria has led to the federal government announcing a lockdown in several states with a high number of cases of the virus, also prompting several state governors to do the same in their states.

Although this measure is supposed to help curb and curtail the spread of the coronavirus, it also has a lot of adverse effects on the citizens. Here are some of the effects.

Firstly, the lack of a source of income. One group of people that this coronavirus pandemic has affected are those that receive daily wages or those whose profit or wages are determined by the number of hours of work they get in daily<sup>2,3</sup>. This includes artisans and shop owners, in general the informal economy<sup>4</sup>. Due to the lockdown, they are no longer able to work and are therefore stripped of their source of income.

Another major effect of the pandemic is the crash of the national economy. The loss in productivity caused by the lockdown has dealt a huge blow to the national economy. Nigeria operates a very oil dependent economy but since oil prices have plummeted, inflation rates have risen, and the country is said to have entered an economic recession since the beginning of the lockdown. This crash of the economy is only going to make everyday life harder for its citizens when the pandemic is over.

The lockdown also comes with psychological trauma. The psychological effects of being under a compulsory lockdown are real and evident. Having to stay in a house full of screaming children, potential conflict between spouses, even for those locked down in clement conditions suffer too. Just the reality of being stuck in one location 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for an indefinite period is more than enough to do damage to your psyche.

Also, the rise in levels of domestic abuse is another important effect of the lockdown. Reports have shown that since the beginning of the lockdown there has been an alarming rise in cases of domestic abuse. This is not surprising as the abuser is stuck at home with their spouse or children with nothing but free time and ample opportunity to inflict pain.

In conclusion, although the short-term effects and challenges caused by the lockdown are numerous, the long-term benefits relating to curbing this pandemic outweigh them by far. The most important thing is to keep a positive mindset and try and make the best of this stay at home period.

## REFERENCES

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