

**NAME: AKERELE ADEBOLA FUNMILOLA**

**DEPARTMENT: NURSING**

**COLLEGE: MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

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**ASSIGNMENT.**

Practically the whole world is affected by this deadly virus. About 17 regions of all the continents except the continent of Antarctica has contracted this deadly virus. This virus is no other known as the corona virus.

**What is corona virus?**

Corona virus has always been in existence for a very long time. They are a large group of viruses that cause illness ranging from common cold, influenza and more but this covid-19 is the newest of them all. The first case of corona virus was recorded last year November in Wuhan, china. Around that time, people haven't even heard much about it until it started spreading. This deadly virus spreads through respiratory droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. It can also be contracted by touching an already contaminated surface then dipping the contaminated object in any of their mucus membrane which are the eyes, nose and mouth. It was initially rumored that the virus cannot withstand heat but to the surprise of many, countries with hot weather condition also began to report cases of corona virus. This shows that the virus can withstand any temperature. The incubation period of COVID-19 is between one to fourteen days and by then a lot of people would have contracted the virus already. It is contagious before symptoms appear. The infected patients can also be asymptomatic.

Most people infected with corona virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness. The common symptoms are fever, tiredness, dry cough, breathing difficulties but some people may experience aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, diarrhea and some may recover without requiring special treatment. This shows that it is your immune system that fights and determines recovery from this virus. Older people and those with underlying medical problems are more likely to develop serious illness. The best way to prevent the transmission is through regular hygienic and sanitary practices; Protecting oneself and others from infection by washing our hands regularly with clean water and soap or using alcohol sanitizer, avoid touching the face, disinfecting frequently used surfaces and areas, avoid unnecessary contact with animals and be sure to thoroughly wash hands (with soap) after contact. Also by maintaining social distancing and essentially adhering strictly to infection prevention control measures as directed by medical professionals because as of today, there is no vaccine available yet.

The first case of the COVID-19 virus was recorded in Nigeria on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020, an Italian citizen who came into Lagos on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 from Milan, Italy on a business trip. Due to the rapid spread of the virus, various countries including Nigeria implemented the lockdown policy. Lagos and Abuja currently have the majority of the confirmed cases in Nigeria, hence this prompted a stay-at-home directive at the federal level to help prevent the spread of the virus. As at 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2020 there were about 542 COVID-19 cases confirmed, 166 patients discharged and 19 deaths recorded in Nigeria.

## **EFFECT OF LOCKDOWN AND RESTRICTION OF MOVEMENT ON NIGERIANS.**

The government ordering Nigerians to stay indoors is a right step to curtail the spread of the virus. However, they should also bear in mind that Nigeria is a country characterized by ever more widening inequalities between the rich and the poor. The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown has caused a reduction in key economic activities in Nigeria. The effects it has caused will be discussed further.

**Increase in crime rate:** Not everyone has a white collar job that plans for them or pays them even through this unprecedented times. A number of the citizens rely on blue collar jobs that feed them which involves going out to conduct their business. Based on the hardship experienced, some citizens resorted to crime with reported cases of store break-ins and accosting vehicles to loot food items. Communities are afraid as some even received threat letters of intended robberies.

**High cost of living:** Since the pandemic began, a lot of stores and markets inflated the prices of goods taking advantage of the limited supply compared to demand at the expense of paying customers who most likely have been burdened by the effect of the pandemic on their finances. A lot of people had to stock up food and other household essentials to sustain them for the period and unfortunately, sellers are using this to exploit consumers knowing that people have no choice but to buy whatever they see on the rack. Some even go as far as hoarding available goods so as to make it scarce then inflate the prices. Some retailers blame the increase in cost on the high cost of transportation to get the goods. Food items have become a luxury to majority.

**Delay on the educational system:** Due to the pandemic, all schools were shut down till further notice causing a setback in the curriculum of schools. Though many schools adopted virtual learning and are already having their classes online but it is definitely not as effective nor of the same pace and quality as being on campus based on how the educational system of most schools are designed. Not everybody can even afford the data to access the internet. Many rely on resources in school to facilitate learning. There are students with special needs that require one on one interaction with teachers or professor. Practical sessions have been on hold as these cannot be maximized virtually. What of those schools that cannot afford the availability of online classes for their students/pupils? Many schools were meant to admit new students this period but that cannot happen anymore. Students that were meant to graduate during this period will have to postpone their programmes.

**Overwhelmed health workers:** Since the beginning of the pandemic, our health workers also known as the 'super heroes' have been in the frontline, working daily and nurturing the sick regardless of the risk of contracting this virus. Unfortunately, some hospitals had to shut down to avoid the risk of transmitting the virus to patients. This temporary shut-down of hospitals also limits the access of patients with other medical needs/health challenges. As the cases increase day by day, we risk having short staffed hospitals and limited medical equipment to manage the pandemic as well as other medical problems.

Whilst we understand the lockdown is indeed necessary to curtail the spread of the virus, it is imperative that the government improves on palliatives measures to mitigate the effect on citizens. Relief materials should be provided across the nation to the most vulnerable. Security needs be beefed up to reduce crime rates and health sector improved to manage the crisis effectively. With the effective leadership of the government as well as compliance of the citizens, we will be able to eradicate this virus in our country.

