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**ASSIGNMENT: WRITE A REPORT, OF NOT MORE THAN TWO PAGES, ON THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC AND EFFECTS OF THE LOCK DOWN AND RESTRICTIONS OF MOVEMENT ON NIGERIANS.**

In December last year, reports started to emerge that a virus specialists had never seen in humans had begun to spread among the population in Wuhan, a large city in Chinese province of Hubei. Since then, the virus had spread to other countries, both inside and outside Asia, leading the world health Organization (WHO) to declare this as a pandemic. The current outbreak of COVID-19 has sparked global anxiety and concern that it might spread too far and fast and cause dramatic harm to human race. Till date, the corona virus has been responsible for over 2.5 million infections globally and causing over 177,000 deaths.

On the 27th of February 2020, Nigerian confirmed her very first corona virus case. The case was of an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria and returned from Milan, Italy to Lagos. Nigeria on the 25th of February. Ever since, the Federal ministry of Health, through the Nigerian Centre for Disease control, has effectively initiated all measures required to prevent the spread of the disease and provided updates about the confirmed cases in the country; but evidence-based public health is not enough, innovative COVID-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines are needed in record time to save millions of people. Unfortunately, the general deficient state of the Nigerian health sector disqualifies it from the development of innovative COVID-19 related products and interventions.

Due to the severity of this virus, the Nigerian government ordered Lockdown of on the 30th of March, 2020 in the affected states in a bid to curb the spread. However, the effort proved to be futile as more states continues to be infected because of the ignorance displayed by many citizens. The government then decided to intensify and extend the lockdown to every part of the country with no exceptions. All citizens were advised to stay in their homes travels to and fro were restricted to further notice. All businesses and offices within affected areas were fully closed down except establishments like the hospitals and pharmacies. This lockdown threatens any form of present and future national development.

Across the world, the outbreak strained healthcare systems and hit the economy hard, with few countries expected to emerge unscathed by the pandemic financial effect- Nigeria is definitely not one of these countries. This country is the world’s eight-largest oil exporter and almost 90 percent of its expert earnings are tied to oil. Due to the pandemic, oil prices is diminishing drastically and Nigeria’s GDP is suffering. In addition to this, the lockdown has also suffocated other sectors of the country by not allowing anyone work or travel.

The most heartbreaking effect of this lockdown is the toll it is taking on the less-privileged in Nigeria. Before the whole drama started, Nigeria was tagged as the country with the most extremely poor citizens having surpassed India in 2018, People are homeless and the lucky ones got their daily bread from moving around and doing little jobs like bricklaying or hawking. How can you tell a homeless man to stay home? How can you tell a young lady that takes care of her old parents with her daily hawking to stay home and safe from the virus die of hunger instead? The saddest thing is that the government could only provide cash relief to 3.6 million households during this trying time. A tiny figure in a country of 95.9 million people most of which are living in abject poverty! The government’s inability to cater for its poor reflects on long-running lack of functioning, nationwide social welfare system.

The most horrendeous effect of this lockdown is the shut down of schools all over the country. This will greatly disrupt the learning process and slow down the production of valuable human resources for the nation. The effect does not only stop kids from learning but also threatens the possibility of a better future for the country. It is imperative that this plague is purged out of the world as soon as possible. The best way we can do that now is to stay at home to be safe, wash our hands and pray. By God’ grace we shall overcome!