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 ASSIGNMENT

Write a report of not more than two pages on the corona virus pandemic and the effects of the lockdown and restriction of movement on Nigerians.

 SOLUTION

Coronavirus, also known as the COVID-19 is one of the respiratory diseases found in our world today alongside other respiratory tract diseases such as; SARS which stands for Severe Acute Respiratory syndrome, MERS which stands for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, etc.

The virus is said to have originated in a place in the capital of China’s Hubei province, the now world-famous Huanan seafood market in Wuhan. It was spread to other countries by people travelling and coming in contact with non-infected people. And though the virus is said to have a low mortality rate of 2%, the lack of symptoms possessed by the virus (referred to as asymptomatic that is lack of symptoms) is what has rendered it dangerous. This is because the signs of infection don’t often show themselves until the disease becomes serious and half the respiratory tract is infected.

Due to the lack of information on the corona virus, combating the disease has proved to be a strenuous activity which has caused a lot of deaths worldwide. This lack of additional information and the rate at which it spreads is what brought about the idea of the lockdown. Countries like Italy who were seen to not take the virus seriously had a high fatality/mortality rate when the virus eventually reached them.

Earlier on, the virus had affected the US, UK, parts of Europe, Africa and formerly China. Currently, the coronavirus is affecting 212 countries and territories around the world and 2 international conveyances. In trying to combat the effects of the virus, countries of the world imposed a restriction on movement and a shutdown of the country at the initial stages. The airports were also shutdown restricting interaction with other countries so as to reduce the spread of the virus.

This is all largely due to the ever increasing number of deaths been recorded worldwide. As of the 30th of April, the worldometer recorded 3,303,306 cases worldwide with 233,791 deaths and 1,038,440 recovered cases. 97% of recorded cases are in mild condition while 3% are in serious or critical condition. According to Africa news, as of the 22nd of April, the whole of Africa had recorded over 24,696 cases with 1,193 deaths and 6,415 recovery. In Nigeria alone, we have recorded 1,932 cases with 58 deaths and 319 recovered persons.

With such discouraging numbers, it is no wonder that the lockdown is seriously imposed. In addition to that, is the term social distancing which has also been encouraged by several countries of the world. However, the positive effect of the lockdown is seemingly being outweighed by the negative effects of the lockdown both on the economy and nation at large. Social distancing, a term which means giving you and the person nearest to you at least five feet so as to reduce the spread of the virus can only however, be effective when there is even space to begin with. However, social distancing and self-isolation presuppose that people have enough space. In Lagos where we have over 100 slum areas, about 80 people can be sharing a 10-room building with only two toilets and a bathroom being shared by all with no pipe-borne or treated water available.

With all this in mind, the lockdown was instated. The effects however, have been appalling. In 2018, Nigeria climbed out of the recession which has been triggered by the sharp drop in crude oil earnings in 2015-2017, but low economic growth rates were recorded subsequently, 1.9% in 2018 and 2.3% in 2019, and was projected to rise to 2.9% in 2020 and 3.3% in 2021. The estimated growth rate for 2020 has, however, now been shattered by the ongoing meltdown in the world economy which is presently in recession, a development accelerated by the ongoing pandemic.

In addition, it has rendered some people without some form of livelihood. People like petty traders who sell every day and depend on the sales of the day to make ends meet are at a loss as the restriction keeps them indoors and without a means of earning money. This makes them unsure of their next meal and without a source of income to be able to purchase the necessary items they need to continue to exist as humans.

 Furthermore, has increased the rate of hunger among Nigerians. With the lockdown and restriction of movement, the ability to purchase food is reduced to particular days during the week. The problem however being that the availability of goods in different parts of the country has reduced due to restriction on movement between states due to fear of spread of the virus. This has raised the price on the available goods rendering those without purchasing power unable to access food supplies in preparation for the time when they would be observing the lockdown at home.

Lastly, the lockdown gives only a particular or particular days for movement. This makes everyone move out at the same time. This means that both the infected (those aware and those unaware) and non-infected will be at the same place at the same time with little or no space since everyone has the same destination or idea or reason for movement in mind. This leads me to question whether or not the lockdown is as effective as we think it is.

In conclusion, I think we as Nigerians should do our utmost best to cooperate with the medical officials and those in charge of our health. We should also do what we can to help ourselves. The religious should be prayerful and the logical ones, should help us reason out solutions to this crises.