

## Covid-19 City Locked Down: Implications on Human Welfare in Developing Countries

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### ABSTRACT

*Economy is not the only parameter that should be used to measure the development of any country rather there several other factors that cannot be denied, human welfare being the most*

*important one. In order to avoid the uncontrolled spread of COVID 19, countries round the world announced lockdowns unanimously some earlier and some later. No doubt the shutdown has slowed the spread of coronavirus, however it has other repercussion, ranging from economic slowdown, diminishing the production to note a few. In this study we will attempt to study the effects of the unprepared lockdowns on the human welfare in the developing countries.*

**Keywords: Coronavirus; Covid-19; Locked-Down; Human; Welfare; Development;**

## Introduction

The outbreak of the world endemic of corona virus Covid- 19 has unarguably taken the world unaware, unprepared thus, leaving the affected countries to suffer the devastating dead crises as well as economic breakdown etc. In Nigeria, the presence of this deadly virus known as corona virus, Covid- 19, was confirmed officially on the 27th February 2020 after a virology laboratory result came out at the Lagos university teaching Hospital on the suspected Italian man who arrived Nigeria from Milan on February 24, 2020 on the Turkish Airline. Corona virus is a large group of viruses that resemble a crown. The word corona is Latin meaning crown <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/types.html>. There are different types of corona viruses and people around the world commonly get infected with human corona viruses 229E, NL63, OC43, and HKU1. The Middle East Respiratory Syndrome or MERS-CoV; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS; and novel Corona virus or SARS-CoV-2 are all caused by corona viruses and result in severe respiratory illnesses. The 2019 novel corona virus (SARS-CoV-2, which causes the COVID-19), was first identified in Wuhan, China, among people having pneumonia. These ones were associated with seafood and live animal market <https://openwho.org/courses/introduction-to-ncov>. Currently at the time of writing this paper, there are a total of 107510 confirmed cases; 3658 mortalities; and 42932 active cases around the world [worldometers.info/coronavirus/](http://worldometers.info/coronavirus/).

According to New York Times (2020), medical experts are concerned about coronavirus which infected/killed thousands of people. This disease belongs to the family of pathogen that does cause severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) which can be contacted easily by another person. This virus originated from a Chinese city, Wuhan, in December 2019. It can spread or be contacted from animal to person or from person to person or by contact with a contaminated material. As a result of this, the Chief Scientist at W.H.O in Switzerland, Soumya Swaminathan, has officially tagged the disease caused by this coronavirus as COVID-19 (that is, coronavirus disease 2019). This is to distinguish this disease from other coronavirus outbreak in the past or future. On February 7, 2020, the researchers at the South China Agricultural University, Guangzhou, suggested in a press conference that an animal species (pangolin) is the source of the disease outbreak. This was as a result of genetic comparison of the animal and the infected person. Pangolins are animals often used in local Chinese medicine.

According to W.H.O (2020b) in Abere, (2020), the virus can infect any persons irrespective of their age but the older people and those with existing health issues/challenges (such as diabetes, heart disease, cardiovascular disease, immuno suppressed conditions e.t.c) are more vulnerable to contact the virus than any other group of individuals. Although the virus hits

irrespective of gender, but more males have got more confirmed cases than females. Methods of transmission can be through droplet, contaminated materials, sneezing or cough. It was observed that those who have high chances of contacting the virus are those who are regularly in contact with infected animals, either as live animal market workers or those involved in treating infected people or animals. The symptoms includes but not limited to nausea, fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, pneumonia, fatigue, kidney failure and other breathing difficulties.

As part of Nigerian government measures to contend the spread of Covid-19, Nigerian Government at all levels began city lock down, shut down, restriction of movements, prohibition of public gathering above 20 persons in religious and circular organizations. City lockdown is a preemptive action plan implemented to address an unusual scenario or a weakness in system to preempt any danger to ensure the safety and security of people, organization and system. The efforts of Nigerian government at present are focusing on preventive actions to contend spread of the infectious virus.

There is no empirical data on government efforts to cater for the welfare of her citizens' during the city locked down. This study is undertaken to analyze the correlation between the city lockdown and shut down as a result of COVID - 19 spread in Nigeria and human welfare. Human welfare is a range of government programs that provide financial or other aid to individuals or groups who cannot support themselves. Welfare programs are typically funded by taxpayers and allow people to cope with financial stress during rough periods of their lives. In most cases, people who use welfare will receive a biweekly or monthly payment. The goals of welfare vary, as it looks to promote the pursuance of work, education or, in some instances, a better standard of living Hayes, (2019).

### **Overview of Corona Virus Covid-19: Spread, Symptoms and Vaccines**

The origin and source of the COVID - 19 is from the animal and recently the virus is spreading from human to human transmission. The fundamental symptoms of the COVID - 19 is where the virus can cause mild, flu - like symptoms such as fever, cough, difficulty breathing, pain in the muscles and the tiredness Nuhu, (2020).

More serious cases develop severe pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome, sepsis and septic shock that can lead to the death of the patient. People with existing chronic conditions seem to be more vulnerable to severe illness.

(ECDC, 2020) in Nuhu, (2020) the development of vaccines takes time. Several pharmaceutical companies are working on vaccine candidates. These will however, take months before vaccines can be widely used as it needs to undergo extensive testing to determine its safety and efficacy.

### **Preventive Measures of COVID – 19**

From the present fact that the virus is spread among human beings, medical experts recommend wearing a mask for every day movements particularly the moment you move outside from your home place where your heading you will necessarily meet other people.

Due to the fact that the virus is spread human to human particularly from the infected person to another, it is advisable to avoid the physical contact with the persons with cough symptoms.

Since the evidence shows that the origin of the virus is from the animals it is advisable to escape visiting places where animals are kept avoiding physical contact with any kind of

animal, their excretions or droppings.

In addition to that it is recommended to follow and obey the general rules regarding hand hygiene and food hygiene. That means wash your hands with soap and water OR use an alcohol- based disinfectant solution before eating, after using the toilet and after any contact with animals.

### **Situational Reports on Covid-19 in Nigeria**

The first case of corona virus reported in Nigeria was confirmed on February 27<sup>th</sup> by an Italian man who arrived Nigeria from Milan, stayed in the country for almost two days before being isolated. Before now, he had travelled through Lagos and visiting other places in the country.

The outbreak of the virus CONVID- 19, in Nigeria is slowly hitting the country worst with an incremental figure of 42 confirmed cases (one death cases) according to <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>, (2020).

### **Implications of City Locked-down and Human Welfare in Developing Countries**

Lockdown is a security measure resulting in person or group of persons being prevented from leaving or entering a building, city, location, country either by air, land, water etc. in the event of an emergency e.g covid-19. This method of confinement is used to minimize the possibility of spread of the virus around town to individuals located around the incident. In Nigeria and world over, measures of lockdown is going to contend the spread of the pandemic virus. Wole, (2020) in Niger State, the government announced an 8 am to 8pm curfew effect from 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2020, directing civil servants between level 1 and 12 to stay at home until further notice as part of measure to prevent and contain CONVID 19 in the state. Governor Abubakar Bello who gave the directives in an address to the people of the state, among others said “the scourge of Corona virus, Covid-19, is real and within the confirmed cases in Abuja just a stone throw away from us (Niger State), the situation calls for more proactive measures and preparedness for any eventualities.

Similarly, Yusuf, (2020) Kano State government announced the suspension of all non–essential government gatherings, and temporary closure of all events centers, among others as a measures curtailing the spread of COVID 19. Governor Abdullahi Ganduje at a special briefing on COVID 19 announced that:

*“A taskforce has been constituted, as earlier mentioned, and is headed by the Deputy Governor, Dr Nasir Yusuf Gawuna and co – chair by Prof. Abdulrazak Garba Habib. The taskforce is fully loaded by health experts and professionals. This is the committee that is heading this proactive intervention.*

In the same vein, Murtala, (2020) reports that Adamawa Government has shut down public offices from Friday, March 27, 2020, except those on essential services as part of measures to contain the Corona virus, CONVID 19. Also, the government directed both public and private schools in the state to proceed on one month break from March 27, 2020.

In Tunisia and South Africa, Tunisia’s president Kais Saied has ordered the army to deploy in the streets to force people to respect a lockdown imposed to halt the spread of coronavirus, the

office of the presidency said in a statement sent to Reuters news agency. Tunisia has 89 confirmed cases of the virus. It imposed a curfew last week and a general lockdown from Sunday that keeps people in their homes except to buy necessities.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has said that the government would impose a nationwide 21-day lockdown from midnight on Thursday to contain the coronavirus outbreak. In an address to the nation, Ramaphosa said:

the army would be deployed to assist the police during the lockdown. South Africans will still be able to leave their homes to buy food, seek medical care and collect social grants, Ramaphosa added

Regrettably, there have been no measures to enhance the welfare of the populace during the period of locked-down to curb the menace and spread of the virus in many countries according to the researchers' knowledge at the time of the study under review. For proper compliance with the stay at home to curb and control the spread of the pandemic virus covid-19, some human welfare, relief materials and essential materials needed for daily routine must be put in place and as such accessible by persons regardless of their status and class in the society. It is however, worthy of note that there are some families in Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Bukina Faso to mention etc. developing countries which cannot afford three square meals and they must, they have to go out and fend for themselves. Others are living below poverty line in some developing countries – Nigeria. Human welfare is highly complex and has many facets including economic progress and quality of life. Quality of life relates directly to human welfare and is influenced by economic, social, political and environmental factors. Human welfare according to *The New Fontana Dictionary*, (1999) is a type of government support for her citizens. Welfare may be provided to people of any income level regardless of their employment status, but it is usually intended to ensure that people can meet their basic human needs such as food and shelter. Welfare attempts to provide a minimal level of well-being, usually either a free- or a subsidized-supply of certain goods and social services, such as healthcare, education, and vocational training.

There is need for urgent and proper arrangement to cater for human welfare by the government of the countries affected by the pandemic virus if “stay at home” will be achieved. As part of curbing the menace of covid-19 and enforcing stay at home directives, government should come up with programme that provide assistance to individuals and families through programs such as health care, food stamps.

### **Conclusion**

The global locked down, due to the covid 19 pandemic has impacted the global economy by shutting down the economy activities in the world. Evidently, there are disruptions in education, employment, religion, politics and other areas of life. There is also a loss of real GDP, relative to what would have been the model predictions in 2020. With this the developing countries will be pushed to the worst economy recession ever been.

## **Recommendations**

Given the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- ✚ People should be properly educated on this disease condition and encouraged to maintain social distance.
- ✚ Prompt attention to medical conditions that reduces immunity and makes them susceptible to infection
- ✚ Suspected persons to be promptly isolated and treated
- ✚ Provision of basic amenities such as water and light to reduce boredom as well as protective materials such as face mask in case there's a need to go out during the shut down period.
- ✚ Prompt testing of possible contacts in order to curb person to person transmission.
- ✚ Use of face mask should be encouraged to reduce spread and shorten the shut down
- ✚ Government should put in place measures to reach out and cater for the basic needs of the less privileged who form a greater population in the rural communities.

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