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### Effects of Fear and Management of the Pandemic-Covid-19 on the Nigerian Economy: A Case Study of Obudu, Cross River, Nigeria

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#### **Abstract**

Public health experts worldwide are full with the zeal to understand, track and contain a new virus that occurred in Wuhan china at the beginning of December 2019. This disease was baptized with the name COVID-19 referencing to the type of virus and the year it commence.it was also declared as a pandemic. A greater manifestation of the illness was initially in china where the virus first began and later continues to spread outside china in multitude of the continents across the globe. As this pandemic enlarges, it generated stress and fear to victims' and associated around the world. even though specialist is working to understand the virus and contain with its spread, the expansive spread creates over bearing pain and anxiety which gives room for management and palliative socour for better human interaction and healthy living. The outbreak of covid virus in 2019 (COVID-19) is stressful, fearful, cause anxiety, pain on the implication of the disease and is likely to overwhelm the victims and associates causing strong emotional discomfort. Coping with the stress and management of the trauma would make the affected and the country stronger. Every individual reacts variedly to a stressful situation. However, an individual's respond to the outbreak depend on the person's background consumption of trauma, what makes a difference from person to person and the society the person resides. In all reactions, an attempt of support and hygienic care provides a holistic wellness and recovery for a healthy reintegration into society for harmonious fellowship with community pals. Fifteen oral interview questionnaires were constructed on three hundred respondents; three research questions were formulated to guide the study. From the findings, it was observed that; fear, lock-down, lack of managerial and politicalwill influences the economy as the result of the outbreak. Conclusion and recommendations were also drawn from the analysis that government should carry out house to house test to flatten the infection curve rate.

Key words: Nigeria, COVID-19, Coronavirus, pandemic, economy, Cross River State

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### Effects of Fear and Management of the Pandemic-Covid-19 on the Nigerian Economy: A Case Study of Obudu, Cross River, Nigeria

By

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#### Introduction

On March 11 2020, WHO upgraded the status of the COVID-19 outbreak from epidemic to pandemic, here are the five important pieces of information on what this means for you and your community. Before WHO March 11 announcements, the COVID-19 outbreak was being described by the UN health agency as an epidemic. This means that it has spread too many people and many communities at the same time.

By labeling the spread of a pandemic, World Health Organization was indicating that, the virus was a worldwide Phenomenon. The decision also reflects the WHO's concern at what it calls the "alarming levels of the corona virus spread, severity and inaction and the expectation that the number of cases, death and affected countries will continue to climb. Calling COVID-19 a pandemic does not mean that it has become more deadly, it is an acknowledgement of its global spread

Tedros Adhananon Ghebre, the head of WHO said as much at a media briefing held on March 11 2020, when he insisted that the pandemic label does not change WHO's assessment of the threat posed by the virus: "it doesn't change what WHO is doing and it doesn't change what countries should do. Tedros also called on the world not to fixate on the word "pandemic" is a frightening period where the world is in the midst of a global pandemic with cities and entire countries in the world shutting down as a result of exponential spread of a plaque named by the world health organization as corona virus or covid-19. It is important to stay informed especially about what is happening in your community so that one can follow advice on safety precautions and stay by this rule to slow or stop the spread of the virus. There is a lot of misinformation making the rounds as well as sensational coverage by the press and social media that only feeds into fears and anxiety. On this note therefore is imperative to be discerning about the public read and watch as information.

For instance, one cannot control how severe the corona virus outbreak is in a city or town but steps to reduce people's personal risk and the risk of unknowingly spreading to others can be controlled. Relinquishing people's desire for certainty and control is easier said than done but requires the following new habits to arrive at an avoidance rate of infection NCDC (2020)

- 1. Frequent hand washing for at least 20-30 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitizer that contain at least 60% alcohol
- 2. Avoid face touching particularly eyes, nose and mouth
- 3. Stay home as much as possible even if one is not feeling sick
- 4. Avoid crowds and gathering of 10 or more people
- 5. Avoid all non-essential shopping and travel
- 6. Keep 2-3-meter distance
- 7. Get plenty of sleep for this help in support of immune system

These proactive measures can create a relief on anxiety and fears when these measures are implemented.

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#### **Statement of the Problem**

Nigeria as a whole and the world at large were not prepaid for this sudden outbreak that has resulted to the death of millions across the globe. Lockdown was one of the instruments proposed by World Health Organization (WHO) in other to stop the spread of the virus from person to person. But this proposal has cause greater effect on the people and their economy. The advert effect of the lock down include poverty, hardship, social distancing, close down of place of worship, business, schools etc. it is in light of this that the researchers intend to investigate into the effect of fear and management of the pandemic-Covid-19 on Nigeria Economy.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effect of fears and management of the pandemic – COVID-19 and the Nigerian economy.

### **Research Questions**

- 1. At what extent does fear influence the nation's Citizen as the result of the outbreak COVID-19?
- 2. Do lack of managerial and political-will affect the outbreak of COVID-19.
- 3. At what extent do lock-down during the outbreak of Covid-19 affect the Nigerian economy

### Corona Virus Roles and Responsibilities for Safety and Health

Corona virus belongs to the family specie of coronavirus which infect both humans and animals. This virus causes disease similar to common cold, severe acute respiratory syndrome, fear, cough and short of breath, pneumonia and sometimes death (Guan, Huy and Oue 2020). The standard recommendation to prevent the spread of covid-19 include frequent washing of hands with soap under running water for up to 20-30 seconds, cleaning of hands with alcohol-based sanitizer, covering the nose and mouth with a flexed elbow or disposable tissue when coughing and sneezing and avoid close contact with anyone that has a fever or cough. W.H.O and CDC in the world are working closely with global experts, governments and partners to expand science knowledge on the new virus to tackle and provide measures to protect people's health and prevent spread of novel outbreak (Bogoch, Thomas, Kreer and Khan, 2020).

Health personnel are at the frontline of any disease outbreak response and as such are exposed to health hazards that could put them at risks of infection HED, Day, Ogundede, O (2020) is of the view that, health workers are to strictly follow the rules of safety in the discharge of duty;

- 1. Use provided protocols to assess triage and treat patients
- 2. Follow established occupational safety and health procedures, avoid exposing others to health and safety risks.
- 3. Treat patients with respect, compassion and dignity
- 4. Maintain patient confidentiality
- 5. Self-monitor for signs of illness and self-isolation if signs of the disease is suspected.
- 6. Trace contacts with the index case and provide appropriate test procedures for confirmation of either positive or negative state of the suspected person/persons after isolation.

#### Face mask

The use of mask is a regulation by WHO. The face mask supposed to be used for a limited time if you wear it for a long time, Oxygen in the blood reduces, oxygen to the brain reduces, you may start feeling weak, may lead to death.

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**Medical advice:** Medically you are advice to pull it off when you are alone, do not use it at home, only use it in a crowded place when a close contact with one or more person, reduce the use of it by isolating yourself most time. Face mark is not for fashion

#### **Medication in Isolation Centre**

Below are some medication prescribe for index case to be taken when he/she is under isolation; Vitamin C -1000, vitamin E, from (10-11hrs), sitting in the sunshine for 15-20minutes, egg meal once, take rest/ sleep a minimum of 7-8 hrs, Drink 1.5 litres of water daily, all meals should be warm. All is to strengthen the immune system note that the PH of coronavirus

Coming out of quarantine for test validity, the person can be stressful particularly if the victim is without symptom and feel different with these;

- 1. Fear and worry of love one's health
- 2. Stress from the experience of being monitored for signs of covid-19
- 3. Sadness, anger or frustration, hence friends' present unfound fears of contracting the disease from contact with you.
- 4. Not being able to perform work or parenting during quarantine
- 5. Other mental or emotional health changes.

Above all, the underlying threat among all the experts is everyone needs to stay informed by trusted sources. The most cogent variable is every person during the pandemic must return to oneself, be aware of him or herself and distinguish his or her emotions to be that of patience and empathy.

### Impact of the pandemic on the Nigeria economic/market

The over 1.39 million coronavirus cases and over 79,382 deaths world side, the battle with covid-19 is not palatable. For Nigeria, even before the scourge, the economic outlook for Nigeria was becoming frail as the estimated GDP was 2.5 percent in 2020. The country has been grappling with weak recovery from 2014 oil price dropping shock. In February the IMF revised the 2020 GDP growth rate form 2.5 percent to 2 percent as a result of relatively low oil prices and limited fiscal space. In this regards the country's debt profile has been a source of concern for policymakers and development practitioners as recently put. The dept service-to-revenue ratio at 60 percent which is likely to worsen with steep decline in revenue couple with falling in oil prices. These deterring indices will aggravate economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and creating a difficult scenario for government to meet demand of the crisis. Aggregate demand would fall but government expenditure will rise. in Nigeria efforts were already being doubled to bolster aggregate demand through increased government spending and tax for businesses (Ogundede, 2020).

Nigeria's budget increase from 8.83 trillion naira (\$24.55 billion) in 2019 to 10.59 trillion naira (29.42 billion) in 2020 representing 11 percent of the National GDP. The small businesses are exempted from company income tax and the tax rate for medium size business has been revised downwards from 30-20 percent. Coincidentally, the COVID-19 Mishap is causing all the aggregate demand components to fall. The fall in household consumption stems from restrictions on movement of goods thereby causing consumers to spend more due to erosion of wealth and expected wealth due to the declines in assets like stocks and home equity. Movement restrictions have not only reduced the consumption of nonessential commodities in general but have affected the income-generating capacity of these groups, thus reducing their consumption expenditure (Asindi and Osim 2020).

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Firm investment imped by uncertainties that come with pandemic limited knowledge on the duration of the outbreak, the effectiveness of policy measures and the reaction of economic agents as well as investors sentiments causing turbulence in the capital markets around the globe. The crisis has resulted in massive decline in stock prices leading to the most performance in Nigerian stock exchange in the current.

Although the central banks of Nigeria have arrange fiscal stimulus packages for all the sectors to cushion the effect of the Pandemic, with the oil price decline and the exchange rate increase from 360 to 380 naira the economy situation has reduce in an uncomfortable pedestrian with the size and scope of the economic impact of the pandemic, there is need to implement other recovery strategies to stimulate demand (Undiyaundeye & Ndifon 2019).

### Policy Decisions on Lockdowns and Curfews.

It would be alarming if the COVID-19 breakout in Nigeria on the scale presently being witness in Europe, US and other western countries. Apart from the bizarre state of the healthcare system, over 69 million Nigerians have no access to clean water this invariably leads to water-borne diseases regularly in the country. When COVID-19 arrival Nigeria through the major gateways of the country and the adjourning cities, the government quickly announce lockdown in Lagos, Abuja and Ogun to enable index and community tracing to flatten the curves of infections. In line with the federal government pronouncement on the lockdown, other 34 states governors also agreed to impose curfews and lockdown on their citizen particularly that 25 states discovering their index cases and subsequent rising speed of the disease. To achieve their mission statements COVID-19 committees were set in each state and local government at various level across the country.

The regional committees have continued to interface with the state task force committee already established in each state. With increase evidence in community transmission the various state governors called for decentralization of COVID-19 response as the best choice nipping the spread of the virus in the communities (WHO 2020). The Nigeria state is not structured in the way they reside and these curfews has caused more trauma in people who look for daily living through petty trading. Most people have died as a result of no food and other health maintenance attributes. For now, there is no interstate travels for livelihood but only interstate collaboration which has eaten deep into financial deep into financial malady and frustration.

Top on the list of negative effect of the common man is that those who depend on daily paid jobs their source of income and livelihood is taken out completely. In the family system, family members are given the opportunity to interact more closely and understand themselves well during this period. Family relationship among couples are more appreciated now because they are spending more time together or family problems could aggravate and leading to falling apart. It has afforded people the opportunity to reexamine themselves and come out with greater skills and plan ahead.

#### Strategies for managing fears during pandemic outbreak

During pandemic, the danger with headlines blaring around new outlets and social media feeds ten to take people in disease outbreak in echo chambers, there is a great risk of an infodemic in which misinformation spreads. The panic disorder is managed through knowing credible facts, speaking to people with trust and seeking god's audience. There are some things people in pandemic situation can do to support or remove trauma;

- 1. Connect with people you trust about your concern and how you feel
- 2. Eat well balanced meals and exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep
- 3. Try to unwind by doing activities of interest

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- 4. Take a break from watching, reading or listening to updates in news stories and social media because hearing about the pandemic consistently can be excruciating.
- 5. Discuss with your family about covid-19, answer questions and share facts about the disease and in a better understanding.
- 6. Reassure family of safety.
- 7. Administer emotional counseling after isolation or quarantine in an affected or infected person.
- 8. Improve citizens life by providing assisting programmes to improve their finances and well-being
- 9. Prevent epidemic of false news/rumors at risk to health disaster
- 10. Risk communication-provide a lifesaving action in public health emergencies
- 11. Provide a treatment platform for patients and protecting the health work force.

### Methodology

This research work was designed to survey the effect of fear and management of pandemic Covid-19 on Nigeria Economy. The instrument used was closed ended questionnaire comprising fifteen questions used to interview respondents. Simple random sampling technique approach was adopted for the study; Out of 400 respondents, 300 sample adult who were interviewed and data collected which was used to analyze the result. Simple Percentages were the statistics used to the data collected A 15 items oral interview questionnaires were constructed to interview three hundred (300) respondents in Obudu LGA. A three-research question were also formulated to guide the study,

#### **Data Analysis**

The study was analyzed based on the following research questions.

1. At what extent does fear influence the nation's Citizen as the result of the outbreak COVID-19?

Table 1

Items	Total	Yes	No	%	%	Total
				responses		
				Yes	No	
4,6,7,10,9	300	154	146	51.3%	48.7%	100%

Source: Oral Interview (2020)

The result of the analysis from the above table 1, shows that 154 represent 51.3% agreed that fear was the most dangerous factors that affect the people of Nigerian due to the outbreak of the COVID-19. According to Undiyaundeye & Agbama (2020) contended that the fear of losing love ones, properties and eventually leading to death will greatly affect the people of Nigerian as the result of the outbreak of the pandemic (COVID-19). In line with Agbama's assertion, Asindi, (2020) also collaborator that fear was one of the major stigma in the outbreak of the pandemic (COVID-19).

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### 2. Do lack of managerial and political-will affect the outbreak of COVID-19. Table 2

Items	Total	Yes	No	%	%	Total
				responses		
				Yes	No	
3,5,12,15,14	300	239	61	79.7%	20.3%	100%

Source: Oral Interview (2020)

In the analysis above, table 2, it shows that negative responses is 79.7% while positive responses is 20.3%. This implies that the government of Nigeria, lack managerial consciousness and political-will in tackling the pandemic due to their corrupt tendencies. According to the TV debate of 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 on the flexible policies of the government Dr. Tandu, the guest speaker disagrees with the presenter by saying "Govt. of Nigeria are never stable in any policies they propose due to their political interest.

Another programme on TV news (Journalist-hangout) also condemn in totality the manner in which the government of Nigeria handling the crisis (pandemic). In that programme the presenter accuses Nigeria Government for not giving proper account of money donated by well-wisher as palliative to the citizen. This has posed a threat to the people of Nigeria within the outbreak of the pandemic-Covid-19.

In line with the vanguard newspaper of 27<sup>th</sup> March,2020. The editorial column expresses worries over the non-implementation or partial implementation of cash transfer programme as part of the palliative on the pandemic-Covid-19. This show that the policies of the government is inconsistent toward the outbreak. Government must show total commitment in eradicating this pandemic-Covid-19.

A Volcanizes in the street, Joe Idagwu (interview N0 1) said; "We were told by the government to send in our BVN and Account Numbers through our representative, up till date there is no commitment from the Government". The above statement implies, the govt. is insensitive instead of reducing poverty they rather increased poverty and fear on the citizenry.

A trade from Kano, Theresa Igbokwe (interview No 2) said. "I left Kano yesterday without interruption by the security agencies and arrival safety in Cross River State". From the above statement it implies that the effort of the government is bear thwarted by the security agencies who collect money and allowed committers to move freely across the states.

According to Johnson Odey (interview No 3) said "Buhari government is a bad government because all monies donated by well-wishers are been diverted to their personal pocket of-Covid-19 presidential tax force. If that statement was truth, how will COVID-19 be eradicated from the country when leaders are not willing to do the correct thing.

According to Egwu, (interview No 4) listed "selfishness, wickedness, covetousness, are characteristic of Nigeria Leaders" These has denial Nigeria leaders the privilege of putting things right. Akuma (2020) opines that lack of political will and managerial capability has separated resident of Nigeria from attending schools, churches, social gathering etc.

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### 3. At what extent do lock-down during the outbreak of Covid- 19 affect the Nigerian economy

Table 3

Items	Total	Yes	No	%	%	Total
				Yes	No	
1,2,11,8,13	300	184	104	61.3%	34.7%	100%

Source: Oral Interview (2020)

In the analysis above, 184 respondents representing 61.3% agreed that the lock-down due to the pandemic (COVID-19) will have great impact on the Nigerian economy negatively. While 104 respondents representing 34.7% disagreed that it does not affect the economy but for the good of the nation.

Mrs. Juliana Odey (interview No 5) said "I know what I have lost in this lock-down, as a trader, I depend on buying and selling and the lock-down have deprived me of my business". This statement mean that even though lock down was a measure to cut tail the spread of the Virus but is was not a healthy strategy for business Men and Women as shown in the above table.

Sunday Elam (Interview No 6) said "my life depend solely on daily leaving, and only paid when I render services (moulding of Block). This implies that his livelihood depend on his daily services to humanities, meaning that the day he don't mould block his family will not survive. Hence the danger of lock down.

Pastor Mrs. Oyetunde,(interview No 7) said "The income of my church has fallen, lock down is not the answer at all" this statement indicate that, total lock down including churches will stop the flow of income such as offering, tithe, first fruit, harvest, launching etc. Hence the danger of Corona Virus with respect to lock down.

Johnson Diego (Interview No 8) said" extended lock down without corresponding palliative threatens livelihoods of millions in Nigeria. The above statement mean that : the federal Government should ensure the right to food, shelter and other basic necessities for people losing jobs or income during the pandemic-Covid-19

#### **Findings**

The study revealed that fear is one of the major factors bedeviling the outbreak of COVID-19. People have lost hope because of fear, frustration, lack of focus and concentration on their daily activities. Fear has equally pushed many citizens of the nation to sell their properties believing that they will die so soon. The fear of the pandemic has also crumbled Nigerian economy within this period of its outbreak.

Secondly, the study revealed that the government of Nigeria lack focus and political-will to tackle the pandemic. The citizens of Nigeria have lost hope on their government.

Lastly, the study revealed that the total lock-down due to the outbreak has crumbled the entire system.

#### Conclusion

There has been an expressed surge in the spread rate of the outbreak of covid-19 from late 2019 to date. Effort has been on top gear towards containing with the spread, prevention and control. Although the cure is not found yet, researchers in epidemiology/virology are exploring ways of getting at the vaccines for clinical management and diagnosis to prevent further public emergency in both short-term and long-term dependable strategies. The tip-sheet of managing fear in covid-19

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covers understanding common reactions in the individuals affected and other associates during the pandemic. What the infected person can do is do to look after him or herself during isolation in managing feeling of stress, anxiety or distress associated with covid-19 and helpful resources and support. Fear is one of the biggest factors of Covid-19, people are afraid of the Covid-19 due to the following reason: The government lack Enlightenment —Citizen are not given enough Enlightenment on how to behave during the Covid-19 days, the only message is "stay at home and "social Distancing" a new lexicon is just being added, wear mask: why wouldn't we be afraid. Citizens also have duty to help themselves by researching on ways to stay safe.

We have to change our way of life. After our culture and be more vigilant. We have to practices personal hygiene. Since we are dealing with a lot of people like: Danfo/Bus Drivers, Hawkers, food vendors, and bike men etc. we won't know who has the Virus that will pose a big threat (fear) hence we need personal hygiene. Due to the threat or fear that Covid-19 has created for us, we can no longer;

- Use our teeth to tear, pure water seller hand had touch it.
- Allowed seller to peel and blow your groundnuts or Buy already peeled ones remember that virus thrive on droplets
- Hug due to physical social distancing
- Touch naira notes given as change by conductors, seller etc.
- Put same hand in our mouth or nose.
- The fear buying already made food in a nylon. Such a nylon may be contaminated
- Touch people when you talk unlike before.

#### Recommendations

The following recommendations were made base on the results from the findings: Federal government should establish Centre for Diseases Control (C.D.C) across the 774 LGAs in the federation to contain person to person transmission. Engage the services of guidance counseling who will educate the citizens on the precautionary measures or method to remove social trauma. Federal government should partner with private hospitals to carry out the testing, care of affected patients due to the nation's population. Federal government should involve religious organization to counselled their Parishioners/ congregation concerning fear of the COVID-19Government should encourage her citizens to increase their family bonding system to contain the effect of the COVID-19NARDC should include virus spread in the curriculum, on care, prevention and control from nursery to higher education to stop further spread. Government should carry out house to house test to flatten the infection rate. Finally, public advocacy and sensitization should be implemented by the national orientation agency in collaboration with traditional rulers.

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