

## Review Article

# The Pandemicity of Coronavirus (COVID 19): A Huge Scourge to Nigerians

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## Abstract

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronavirus are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus diseases are also referred to as COVID-19. Coronaviruses are a big family of different viruses. Some of them cause the common cold in people. Others infect animals, including bats, camels, and cattle. But recently the new coronavirus that causes COVID-19 came into being. This COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is now a pandemic affecting numerous countries globally. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The most common symptoms are fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, and even death. The period within which the symptoms would appear is 2 to 14 days. The first confirmed case of the pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 in Nigeria was announced on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020, when an Italian citizen in Lagos tested positive for the virus, caused by SARS-CoV-2. On 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020, a second case of the virus was reported in Ewukoro, Ogun State, and a Nigerian citizen who had contact with the Italian citizen; from here it gradually spreaded to many states, this led to huge lockdown in Nigeria. Sadly enough, while the government promulgated the preventive measures through Lock down, it affected virtually every sectors of life- the Industries, Judicial systems, Renowned Markets, Churches, Financial Institutions and banking malls, Businesses, Entertainment Industries, Schools (of all Levels), Transport system etc. These hugely affected the populace as many Strive to feed twice a day, many who depend for their daily bread on their daily business sales where hugely affected.

**Keywords:** Scourge; Pandemicity; Coronavirus disease; Nigeria; Lockdown

## Introduction

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus which belong to the *Coronaviridae* family in the *Nidovirales* order. Corona represents crown-like spikes on the outer surface of the virus; thus, it was named as a coronavirus. Coronaviruses are minute in size (65 nm to 125 nm in diameter) and contain a single-stranded RNA as a nucleic material, size ranging from 26 kbs to 32 kbs in length.

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which emerged in Wuhan, China and spread around the world. Genomic analysis revealed that SARS-CoV-2 is phylogenetically related to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-like (SARS-like) bat viruses; therefore bats could be the possible primary reservoir. The intermediate source of origin and transfer to humans is not known, however, the rapid human to human transfer has been confirmed widely. There is no clinically approved antiviral drug or vaccine available to be used against COVID-19.

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## Recent Origin of Coronavirus Disease

The disease was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, and has since spread globally, resulting in the ongoing 2019-20 coronavirus pandemic [1,2]. As of 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020, more than 3.13 million cases have been reported across 185 countries and territories, resulting in more than 217,000 deaths. More than 937,000 people have recovered [3,4].

Its Common symptoms include fever, cough, and fatigue, shortness of breath and loss of smell. While the majority of cases result in mild symptoms, some progress to viral pneumonia, multi-organ failure, or cytokine storm. More concerning symptoms include difficulty breathing, persistent chest pain, confusion, difficulty walking, and bluish skin [5]. The time from exposure to onset of symptoms is typically around five days but may range from two to fourteen days [6,7].

The virus is primarily spread between people during close contact, often *via* small droplets produced by coughing, sneezing, or talking. The droplets usually fall to the ground or onto surfaces rather than remaining in the air over long distances [8]. People may also become infected by touching a contaminated surface and then touching their face [9]. In experimental settings, the virus may survive on surfaces for up to 72 hours [10,11]. It is most contagious during the first three days after the onset of symptoms, although spread may be possible before symptoms appear and in later stages of the disease [12]. The standard method of diagnosis is by real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) from a nasopharyngeal swab.

Significantly, the virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person

coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air, and quickly fall on floors or surfaces. One can be infected by breathing in the virus if he/she is within close proximity of someone who has COVID-19, or by touching a contaminated surface and then unconsciously or consciously touches one's eyes, nose or mouth.

High Fever is the most common symptom, although some older people and those with other health problems experience fever later in the disease. Other common symptoms include cough, loss of appetite, fatigue, shortness of breath, sputum production, and muscle and joint pains. Symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea have been observed in varying percentages. Less common symptoms include sneezing, runny nose, or sore throat.

The Deadly Viral Disease entered Nigeria on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020, whereby Nigeria confirmed its first case in Lagos State, where an Italian citizen who works in Nigeria had returned on 25<sup>th</sup> February from Milan, Italy through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, fell ill on 26<sup>th</sup> February and was transferred to Lagos State biosecurity facilities for isolation and testing [1,13].

On 9<sup>th</sup> March, the second case was confirmed, a Nigerian citizen in Ewekoro, Ogun State who had contact with the Italian citizen. On 13<sup>th</sup> March, Nigeria confirmed that the second case no longer had the virus in his system and thus tested negative.

On 17<sup>th</sup> March, Nigeria confirmed the third case in Lagos State, A 30-year-old Nigerian female citizen that returned on 13<sup>th</sup> March from the United Kingdom. The Case became a threat as it increases by the day; some top government officials tested positive and were quarantined and over 98% responded to treatment within 14 days. Thence, the prevalence rate of this Viral disease became worrisome as government in the month of March 2020 Shut and locked down all States; no interstate transit, no transit within the metropolis or Capital City of all States became so hard; it became more serious when the Disease increased highly in the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) and major commercial States like Lagos, Ogun, Kano States. This however, became a clarion call to other states with no confirmed cases; who in turn enforced proper lock down to contain the spread of the deadly viral disease. Returning travellers from high risk areas and those living in communities or States where there is local transmission of COVID-19 are at higher risk and are quarantined for over 14 days on their arrival to Nigeria or any other state [14].

### Some of the Effects of the Lockdown

Sadly enough, while the government promulgated the preventive measures through Lock down, it affected virtually every sectors of life- the Industries, Judicial systems, Renowned Markets, Churches, Financial Institutions and banking malls, Businesses, Entertainment Industries, Schools (of all Levels), Transport system etc. These hugely affected the populace as many Strive to feed twice a day, many who depend for their daily bread on their daily business sales where hugely affected. Pilfering and Stealing heightened up in some places as poverty and Lacks engulfed so many families especially those who weren't prepared, odd job men, artisans and daily petty business men and women.

Marriage Ceremonies were pended for over three months; this was really tough and kind of Mischievous on Partners whose wedding was supposed to be taking place the next week before the Lockdown was announced and implemented; having shared their marital cards in Joy ended up in agony sending text messages to invited guests, Burial ceremonies were put on hold, same with Child dedication all due to

the need to maintain social distancing and the law that no gathering of people more than twenty people running away from their loved ones even none had the Virus as sign of preventive act; anyone who sneezes outside is suspected etc. To crown the sorry state, the government placed curfew on nation [15].

The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) took the centre stage in liason with the Presidential Task Force (PTF) on COVID-19 [3]. This Nigeria's National Public Health Institute with the mandate to protect Nigerians from the impact of communicable diseases of public health significance, amongst other responsibilities, enacted some essential rules, which basically includes:

- Regular Hand Washing with soap under running water.
- The Use of Sanitizer regularly.
- Maintaining of social distancing i.e., maintaining at least 2 meters (5 feet) physical distance between yourself and individuals.
- Not sneezing in the open air.
- Stay at home unless Necessary.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth when you have not washed it.
- Avoid Close Contact with one with fever and sneezing.
- Avoid eating unwashed or undercooked food.
- Non-contact greetings (avoiding shaking of hands and hugs).
- Avoid crowded place like the Open markets, Churches, Mosques, Schools.
- Sneeze and cough into the crook of your arm or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue immediately after use and wash your hands.
- Wear a mask in public spaces (as recommended or required by your local health authority).
- Stay at home if you feel ill. Even if you have mild symptoms such as a headache or runny nose it's important to stay home to avoid transmitting illness to others. Call your healthcare practitioner if you experience a fever, cough, and have difficulty breathing.
- Practice physical distancing by staying at home and avoiding close contact with others. Examples of physical distancing include working from home if possible, avoiding public spaces (restaurants, movie theatres), and taking necessary trips outside during off-peak hours, etc.

### Conclusion

They made many national strategies to scale up preventive measures. The NCDC also launched a campaign themed "Take Responsibility". Beckoning on all Nigerians and residents in the country to join forces and to be proactive in taking greater individual and collective responsibility in preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria especially *via* the basic measures listed above.

Despite the hardships, some good humanitarians and Philanthropists donated some cash and materials to friends, kinsmen, constituencies, State. Some even donated Ventilators and Sanitizers to the government and some Health care facilities. Thence, the virus that

causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air, and quickly fall on floors or surfaces. One can be infected by breathing in the virus if he/she is within close proximity of someone who has COVID-19, or by touching a contaminated surface and then your eyes, nose or mouth. The Scourge and detrimental effects are much untold; the viral disease is quite a global one that has threatened and taken the lives of many Nigerian.

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