Lessons from Covid 19 experience for African governments: towards environmental sustainability

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Abstract
Covid 19 is an unfortunate situation that nevertheless could be said to have produced environmentally beneficial results. It has forced Africans and humanity in general to change attitudes and lifestyles that were hitherto inimical to the environment to ones that could restore the environment. For the sake of survival, consumerism, which is one of the greatest hallmarks of Africans and a source of depletion of earth resources, has given way to frugality; transportation activities that is one of the greatest sources of global warming have significantly reduced and most importantly human population which has terrifically posed as a threat to the survival of the environment is being forcefully checked. These and many other life changes in human beings, though accidental, are healing the environment, and the paper argues that if they are sustained, the environment will be restored to sound health. Most of these changes will naturally be sustained even after the Covid 19 pandemic, for as Aristotle acknowledged, actions perpetrated for a long time become habituated. However, the author believes that if conscious efforts are made to sustain these changed attitudes, then the environmental crisis currently enveloping the globe will be halted. The paper using philosophical methods of criticality and argumentation, concludes that Covid 19 though tragic for humans, nevertheless has lessons that could be useful for the present drive to sustain the environment and prevent future pandemic that could be environmentally related. The paper argues vehemently that African governments must steer their developmental agenda towards environmental sustenance in line with Covid 19 seeming directives to humanity.

Keywords:
Covid 19; African government; environmental sustainability; consumerism; population control.

1 INTRODUCTION
It is often said that in 'every cloud, there is a silver lining'; in every trouble situation, there is a lesson to be learned, a benefit to be derived, and an inspiration to be derived. The Covid 19 pandemic has hit hard on human beings. According to the International Monetary Fund (2020), “the rapid spread of the virus, if left unchecked, is threatening to overwhelm weak healthcare systems. The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in sub-Saharan Africa is overgrowing. As of April 9, more than 6,200 cases have been confirmed across 43 countries in the region, with South Africa, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso being the most affected.”. As a result of Covid 19, economies are dwindling; unemployment is rising; death toll increasing; life is becoming duller and even spirituality is waning. Gopinath (2020) simply describes its impact in these simple words: “the greatest economic downturn since the great depression”. He postulated that "The cumulative loss to global GDP over 2020 and 2021 from the pandemic crisis could be around 9 trillion dollars, greater than the economies of Japan and Germany, combined". The pandemic has spread fear in the hearts of even the strong and courageous. But, at the Centre of all these, I see a silver lining, pointing to the possibility of a brighter and healthier future for humanity and the environment.

Covid 19 is compellingly adjusting humanity to harmonious coexistence with the environment. The environment over the years has been threatened by human activities (Bassey 2020). Due to these ravaging human activities, “Species are being chased into extinction, the climate is changing and getting warmer every day. The forests are being destroyed to build cities and cultivate food and cash crops. Resources are depleting at a pace unmatched in history. Habitats are lost and the environment is constantly being suffocated with numerous pollutants from industrial products and waste” (Bisong 2020: 47). As reported by Bisong and Apolgun (2018:7), “We are presently spending the potential energy of the biosphere at ten times the rate it is being accumulated by living organisms that can absorb sunlight. At least 60 percent of the forests of the planet have been lost”. It is “estimated that about half of the Earth’s mature tropical forest, that is between 7.5 million and 8 million km2 (2.9 million to 3 million sq. mi) that until 1947 covered the planet – have now been destroyed” (Nielsen, 2006:35). According to scientific predictions, if the present rate of destruction of the forest continues, by 2030 “only 10% of our forest will be remaining, and another 10% will be in a degraded condition and 80% totally lost” (Wilson, 1988: 4). Depletion of forest simply implies that the atmospheric carbon dioxide, which is the root cause of global warming is increasing. It was reported in May 2013, that “readings for CO2 taken at the world’s primary benchmark site in Mauna Loa surpassed 400ppm” (BBC. 2010). It is also estimated that if the present rate of extinction is not halted, up to “30% of all species will be extinct by 2050”. Of these, “about one-eight of known plant species will be extinct” (Gabriel, 2013). Presently, it is alleged that the equilibrium of biospheric processes is threatened, “For many of the accommodated mechanisms of the biosphere are functioning close to their full capacity” (Laptev, 1990:111).

As it appears, the earth cannot endure further stress as it is in danger of collapsing, which will signal humanity's end on earth. This is the reason why several calls have been made for a halt in activities that endanger the environment and for development to be redefined. Unfortunately, these calls for a change of lifestyle had not been taken seriously as the environment’s plummeting continues. However, fortunately, nature herself has forced humans through Covid 19 to adjust in favor of environmental health. This researcher believes that this adjusted lifestyle of humans will restore the health of the environment. The author believes that though this shifted lifestyle will become habituated in most humans, conscious efforts must be made to make it a habit in the whole of humanity. This research examines lifetime changes that have
occurred in humans due to this pandemic and their impact on the environment. It also lines out ways to make these changes habitual in all humans to benefit the environment and humanity.

2 LIFESTYLES CHANGES DUE TO COVID 19 AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The Covid 19 pandemic has made many people shed off their old ways of life and adopt new ones for easy survival. As has been alluded to already, these changes have made an impact on the environment. The focus of this research is mainly on three aspects of these changes.

2.1 Consumerism Turning to Frugality

Mahatma Gandhi once made a famous declaration; "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed". This statement is becoming clearer to the world today than when it was made. According to estimates, "if everyone on earth consumed the same amount as the average US citizen, four-planet earth would be needed to sustain us" (McDonald 2020). This is striking, but thankfully the average human is not consuming at the same level as an average American. However, this could change in the nearest future, as many developing countries are striving for development. And development currently, is measured by how much a country can exploit its resources and how much can be produced from this and consumed. With this conception of development if all the countries become developed, this earth would not be able to support humanity any longer. Humans would need three more earth according to the estimate, to sustain them.

Africa is presently not consuming as much as the developed world but could match up or even topple the developed world's statistics in the nearest future. From experience, I see an average African as more consumer-minded than an American. The limitation has just been poverty. This will be very clear if the lifestyles of the few wealthy Africans are examined. Africans are known to exalt wealth. This is perhaps why Bisong and Ekanem (2014) see money as the summum bonum of an average Nigerian. Nigerians and indeed Africans, exalt money, and he who has it in abundance is revered and worshipped (Bisong 2014). Thus, money is the basis for social existence in Africa and thus, all strive to display it, to be accorded social existence (Ikegbu & Bisong 2015). To display money is simply to engage in consumerism, which involves buying more than is needed. Therefore, it is common to see the rich owning fleet of cars, private jets and living exorbitantly. This is a common sight in Africa, necessitating the idea that Africans have a higher consumerist tendency than an average American; the limiting factor is simply poverty. When poverty is lifted in Africa, the rate of consumption will skyrocket, and the earth could crumble.

This is precise why this researcher is quick to point out the good fortune Covid 19 has brought for the environment. The effects of Covid 19 are far-reaching, but one of the greatest is hardship due to poverty. Most people have been rendered unemployed due to this pandemic, and others have seen their sources of income dwindle significantly, thereby forcing them to cut down their expenditure. This cutting down of expenditure though inconveniencing individuals is inadvertently a blessing to the natural environment. Overconsumption (which implies over-production), which has been the mainstay before the emergence of Covid 19 leads to increased land-use, thereby leading to deforestation; it also increases the level of pollutant emissions, thereby accelerating climate change. Waste disposal at present is a global problem, due to overconsumption and overproduction. Most of the plastics produced end up in the seas and oceans; also, most of the chemicals and pollutants end up in the oceans, polluting them and making them unfit for aquatic life. A new study published in the Journal of Industrial Ecology “shows that the stuff we consume — from food to knick-knacks — is responsible for up to 60 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions and between 50 and 80 percent of total land, material, and water use” (Jacobs, 2020)

Today, thanks to Covid 19, consumerism's effects on the environment have reduced, giving respite to the earth, and providing it with a chance to heal. Covid 19 has brought forth global regulatory responses, which have tended to slow down, global supply and demand, and household consumption have dwindled. This implies that consumerism's negative environmental impact has significantly reduced during this period of Covid 19 and, if sustained, may restore environmental health.

2.2 Transportation activities have reduced

Due to the rapid spread of Covid 19, most countries of the world placed lockdown orders to control the disease's spread. This lockdown has affected every aspect of the economy, and the transportation industry is one of the hardest hits. All modes of transportation in the world have suffered a drastic drop in patronage during this period of Covid 19. The International Air Transport Association estimates that “airlines could lose US$63 billion to US$113 billion in revenue for passenger traffic globally in 2020, depending on how the coronavirus spreads”. In Nigeria, with the closure of most hit states' lockdown, transportation is at its all-time low.

The reduction of transportation activities could be a curse on the economy and a blessing to the natural environment, as it suffers from fewer pollutant emissions. Transportation has been one great source of pollution. It contributes greatly to air, water, and noise pollution (Bisong, 2020). It is one of the significant consumers of world energy and guzzles most of the world’s petroleum. This releases air pollutants like carbon monoxides and nitrous oxides and thereby contributing seriously to global warming. Other effects of transportation activities on the environment include: “traffic congestion and automobile-oriented urban sprawl, which can consume natural habitat and agricultural lands.” (Environmental Canada, 2007).

Reduction of transportation activities could improve water and air quality; decrease the quantity of smog and acid rain, and work against global warming and climate change. These are the benefits Covid 19 has given to the environment,
it has forced humans to reduce transportation and stemng pollutant emissions to the atmosphere. Due to fear of the spread of Covid 19, governmental and personal restrictions have been made, that have tended to reduce transportation activities. Tourists have been forced to stay at home; directors now hold online meetings; even conferences, symposiums and workshops now hold online, thereby reducing to the barest minimum, transportation from one place to another.

2.3 Overpopulation is being checked

Though Covid 19 is not very fatal, it is significantly reducing the rate of growth of the human population. In recent decades, population growth had been a source of serious concern to environmentalists (Malthus, 2013; Erhlich, 2013; Leopold, 2001; Bisong, 2015) and other scholars, who believe that if the unchecked human population can destroy the environment. According to Bisong (2015), the human population was not a cause for concern for the most part of human history, as it was not too much compared to other species. It was the invention of agriculture that triggered population growth to about 50 million people in 5000 B.C. Thus, as at the time of Jesus Christ, it is believed that the human population stood billions of people (Cunningham & Cunningham 76). Due to the discovery of agriculture and later sailing and navigating skills, communication and commerce, better power supply, improved health et cetera, the human population has continued increasing exponentially. It took the “entire length of human history, for the population to reach one billion in 1804 A.D., but in just 150 years human population rose to 3 billion in 1960. It took another 39 years for it to double to 6 billion in 1999” (Cunningham & Cunningham 76) and today it is over 9 billion. Because of this worrying growth of the human population, experts in many quarters have been calling for population control. Some countries have even implemented population control measures. An example is China's one-child policy (though now revised), where a couple is expected to have only one child (Dewey, 2013). India policy of disqualifying candidates for the position of Gram panchayat or Local Government based on the number of children (only those with two or fewer children are qualified); Uzbekistan forced sterilizations, hysterectomies, and IUD insertions (BBC News, 2010). Iran has a policy of mandatory contraceptive courses before a marriage license is issued to couples. In Nigeria, free medical services are limited to four children per couple.

These policies aim to control overpopulation show clearly that the danger of overpopulation has long been understood. Overpopulation, aside from affecting the overall well-being of the populace, impact negatively on the environment. The negative impact of overpopulation includes deforestation, global warming, ozone layer depletion, biodiversity threat, pollution et cetera. It is common sense knowledge that the more the population, the more the environment will be pressured. Due to this pressure on the environment, scientists believe that "the Earth’s surface temperature has risen to about 0.8 degree Celsius (1.4-degree Fahrenheit) leading to what is referred to as global warming" (America’s Climate Choice, 2010:15). Also due to this pressure, "about half of the Earth’s mature tropical forest, that is between 7.5 million and 8 million km2 (2.9 million to 3 million sq. mi) that until 1947 covered the planet – have now been destroyed” (Nielsen 35). In 2012, studies suggested that in 20 years, “25% of all mammal species could be extinct”. It is also estimated that if the present rate of extinction is not halted, up to "30% of all species will be extinct by 2050”. Of these, “about one-eighth of known plant species will be extinct”. It is held that to reckless human handling of the environment, the equilibrium of biospheric processes is threatened, as most of the accommodated mechanisms of the Earth are functioning close to their full capacity (Laptev 111). According to estimates, if the present "rate of development continues unabated, the depletion of the biosphere to the point of instability would occur in the second half of the next century. We are presently spending the potential energy of the biosphere at ten times the rate it is being accumulated by living organisms that can absorb sunlight" (Bisong, 2015: 38–39). This implies that if this reckless handling of the environment continues, it will totally collapse in the nearest future. Since humans are the major reason why the environment is depleting, it means humans have much to do to save the environment and one good way to start is to control population growth.

Most scholars have recommended sterilization, infanticide, abortion, etc., to control the population. Since these appear too horrendous for most humans to accept, nature herself has taken it upon herself to control the population through the instrumentality of Covid 19. Malthus (2013) once predicted that a time like this Covid 19 will come to save humanity from itself, it seems the Covid 19 experience is a fulfillment of his prophecy. For him, there are positive and negative checks of overpopulation. The positive checks include diseases, war, disaster, and famine. The negative checks include: abstinence, birth control, restrain, etc. He placed his hope of population control on the positive checks and predicted that though it will entail human misery, positive checks would ultimately save humanity from itself.

Covid 19 is thus a positive check on the human population. It has taken many lives and many more are in critical states. Though its direct impact on the human population is infinitesimal, it has had a huge indirect effect on population growth. Many marriages have been cancelled and some are on hold due to the pandemic and the hardship that results therefrom, especially in Africa where marriages are very expensive. Even, those married already are precautious regarding having more children because of the uncertainties that cloud the world due to the pandemic. Also, due to over-concentration on fighting Covid 19, patients suffering from other ailments have little or no attention, leading to increased death from non-Covid 19 sources. There is a drop in population in this era of Covid 19 and thankfully the environment is the highest beneficiary of this.

3 CONSOLIDATING THE GAINS OF COVID 19 FOR SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

As Aristotle (2001) rightly noted in his Ethica Nicomachean, virtues do not arise in man by chance. It arises through forced training, which later becomes habitual. In this case, the forced trainer is Covid 19, which has mandatorily made almost all of humanity adjust their lives to favor environmental sustainability. As Aristotle observed, too, most of these altered lifestyles will be habitualized and become part of humans, even after the demise of Covid 19. However, for a better positive effect on the environment, more conscious attempts need to be made for greater sustainability of the Covid 19.
occasioned lifestyles. This section outlines what the African government and policymakers need to put in place, for positive lifestyles that would enhance environmental sustainability to be achieved.

3.1 Change the concept of development

The term ‘developed’ is mostly ascribed to the first world countries (the U.S.A and Europe) and ‘developing’ describes the third world countries. The current measure of development hinges on the amount of production, infrastructures, and technology of a country. A developed economy is thus, one that records high productivity has attained high infrastructural development and has achieved much in terms of science and technology. It is the dream of every country to attain development. It could be said therefore that every country strives towards development.

Incidentally, development measured on productivity (that is, the level of exploitation of the environment) and infrastructure (how much environmental resources have been consumed) pitches itself against the environment. Even technology as Bisong (2020) rightly observed is more of a curse than a blessing to the environment. Therefore, it is true as many scholars (Redcliff, 2005; Serge, 1990; Brunel, 2013; Bisong, 2016) have observed that development is a bane to the environment. Development as it is presently conceived, simply exploits the environment, denuding and ripping it of its power to sustain itself. It is my belief that, if every country in the world becomes developed, in this present sense of the word ‘developed,’ the environment would totally collapse, as all her energies would be dissipated.

As it is now, Africa seems to be the last hope of the environment, as much of the remaining forest in the world is in Africa. According to Gondo (2014), Africa’s forests cover an estimated 674 million hectares (ha) or 23% of Africa’s land area and account for 16.7% of global forest cover”. This is perhaps the reason, Fleshman (2018), describes African forest as “the Lungs of the World”, which means the world relies on it for environmental sustenance. Most developed countries are already aware of this, this explains why some African countries receive funds from the World Bank and other agencies to help them preserve their forest and wildlife. Africa is still largely undeveloped, as such many of her resources are still unexploited, implying that most of the world’s energy is in Africa (Edor, 2020). When Africa eventually gets developed as she is presently striving for, the Earth’s energy supply may no longer be enough to support human civilization’s needs. That would be the moment when the elastic limit of the Earth will be reached and natural disasters would take over the entire planet.

If African countries need development, it is not this sort of development that should be sought for. This means the definition of development needs to be adjusted. The development would not be measured on the extent and depth of exploitation of the Earth energies, but on the extent to which human progress equilibrates with environmental health. Development that exploits and weakens the environment, does not deserve the label, it could best be described as ‘pseudo-development.’ It is so because this sort of development cannot sustain itself. For if the environment that, should be the source of sustenance of development is destroyed in the process of development, then such a facet has a short life.

African governments must come to terms with the fact that development as is presently conceived and pursued in the world, is gradually dragging humanity to self-destruction. Though it is necessary to be developed, development pursued in Africa should not ape that of the West. The forest, wildlife, mountains, and water are an essential part of the ecosystem and thus should not be sacrificed for development as it was in the West. For development to be authentic, it must go side by side with the development of the forest, wildlife, and other essential elements of the ecosystem. This means that human progress or development should not negate the environment. Every act of development ought to leave the environment if not better, at least as it was before.

Thus, African governments should ensure that there should be a corresponding plan of environmental restoration in every conceived effort at development. For every tree cut, two or three should be planted bearing in mind that not all may survive. Laws should be made criminalizing the killing of wildlife. Industries should be tasked to clean up the environment after production. The government should censor technologies and only ones that are friendly to the environment should be adopted for use. And most importantly, consumerism should be discouraged by formulating pricing and taxation laws that would take into cognizance the products’ environmental cost. When proper laws and policies are made, the development that would ensue would be one that will be seen, not by the quantity of output but on the extent to which human progress equilibrates with environmental health.

3.2 Redefine the Social Ontology

The social ontology of a given place affects the attitude to life of its people. Social ontology here refers to what gives someone social recognition. It is “the value or set of values a society expects from an individual in order to grant him social recognition. It is what adds up to give social significance or respect to an individual. It is the summum bonum of a people” (Ikegbu & Bisong, 2016: 260). It refers to the value of a given society adores most. And one who acquires it is adored and honored. Most societies revere creativity, others’ talents and still others' intelligence. In Nigeria, and indeed Africa as a whole, it is money, the ‘summon bonum’. One who has it in abundance is adored accorded social existence. Such a person ‘is,’ while one who does not have it ‘is not.’ Ekwuru (1999) reflecting on this enthuses: “Nigerians equiparates ‘being’ with ‘having’. In this way, a man is not simply what he ‘seems to be’, but what he ‘seems to possess.’ Being then is measured by the degrees of having, the more one has, the more he becomes, for becoming is manifested in possessing” (100). According to Obiechina, in Nigeria, “mammon rules with unrestrained power. His flag floats from every public building; his breath blows through every public institution and fires every private passion” (1983:31).

Since everybody wants typically to have social existence, every African craves money. Moreover, thus, for Inoka (2003), this inordinate quest for wealth has become the matching order for most Nigerians. And like cancer, this quest
has infected all aspects of our social lives. From public service, the police, the judiciary, the school system to the mass media, the traders on the streets and even the family that forms the larger society's nucleus, the effect of this inordinate lust for vanity is seen to reverberate (55). Through whatever means get at wealth and as would be expected, some Africans flaunt this, in order that their greatest quest (social existence) will be given to them. Therefore, a fleet of cars and ownership of private jets is a common sight in Africa. The announcement of possession of money in Africa is made through reckless and flamboyant lifestyles. This consumer-minded attitude runs down the spine of almost every African, as each tries to outdo the other in spending, to declare to the society, who really 'is' and who 'is not.'

As has been noted already, consumerism is one of the biggest problems of the environment. Thus, Africans must find a way to stem this vice. One sure way is to redefine what constitutes social ontology for Africans. When this is successfully done, money would cease to be the object of worship of Africans and people will reduce reckless spending to be worshiped. Worshipping money makes most Africans, to seek it the wrong way since the legitimate means are not available for everyone. This is the reason, corruption, embezzlement, kidnapping for ransom, ritual killings, arm robbery and other evils hold sway in Africa. Raising money as a *summum bonum* affects Africa's growth and development and sadly it also negatively affects the health of the environment. Values like creativity, hard work, knowledge, etc. should be chosen instead as *summum bonum* and impressed on citizens through education and social reorientation campaigns.

3.3 Improve on the Transportation System

Though a typical African would buy cars to showcase his/her wealth, this is not the only reason why most major cities (roads) in Africa are congested with cars. One great motivation for ownership and use of private cars is that they ease movements. They also offer comfort and reliability. These are good reasons to own a car or fleet of cars but not enough reasons, if we consider the impact of pollution from cars on environmental health.

The above benefits of ownership and use of private cars can be achieved, while at the same time maintaining the health of the environment. Curitiba city of Brazil demonstrated this possibility perfectly. Before the emergence of Mayor Jaime Lerner, the city was like most cities in the developing parts of the world. There was traffic congestion, air pollution, deteriorated and inadequate road network, etc. Through his vigorous civic campaign, Lerner was able to turn these sorry tales around, and today Curitiba is perceived throughout the world as an example of sustainable city development. Lerner simply put forth a mass transit program that offered the comfort, ease, and reliability that a private car offers and more. He simply instituted a network of smaller feeder routes; introduced commercial buses; build bus stops and made transport fare cheap. According to William Cunningham and Mary Cunningham, this resulted in about 1.5 million of the 2 million inhabitants of the city using public transportation, which led to a massive reduction of congestion and pollution. Prior to this only 25000 people used public transportation.

This Curitiba example shows that, when a good transportation system is in place, most private cars would be left at home and the environment would be less affected. Since African cities are still developing, it would be good, if they develop along the line of Curitiba city. The government should take charge of the transportation system and plan this with the environment in mind. In addition, laws could be made to stop the importation of used cars. African countries have become the dumping ground for used and dilapidating cars; cars that are no longer road worthy in the developed countries are shipped to African countries. This causes accidents, pollutes the air, and constitutes waste management problems.

The government could also institute taxation on cars, thereby making it burdensome to own a car, not to talk of more than one. Ecology should be taught from primary school to tertiary institutions. This is the only hope of creating awareness that walking and cycling are not just for exercising purposes but also for environmental protection purposes. In Africa, the symbol of a big man is a car. Many times, I have been accosted on the way while walking with the question, “where is your car?” For these people walking is a sign of suffering or stinginess. When environmental awareness is created, walking would no longer be an eyesore but a commendable activity for Africans.

3.4 Population Control Measures Should Be Adopted

Africa's population is one of the fastest-growing. Many reasons could be given for this ugly trend. One of the most significant is African attachment of importance to male children. Most African families would keep reproducing until the desired male child is born. A son has much significance for a typical African man, making those who do not have the desired male child is born. A son has much significance for a typical African man, making those who do not have the

Almost all parts of Africa view abortion as illegal, thus criminalizing anyone who engages in it (Ogar & Edor 2020). This refusal to legalize abortion has made it almost impossible to impose population restrictions on families. Couples are forced to carry to term, even unwanted babies. The unmarried are also forced to bring to birth children, who mostly later become a nuisance to society and contribute to increasing the already bloated population of Africans. Considering that overpopulation is one of the greatest degraders of the environment, it becomes imperative for Africans (a continent most guilty of this) to make a frantic effort to fight this evil. And no effort to fight overpopulation can be productive enough if abortion remains illegal. Methods of birth control have already proven ineffective in Africa, leaving abortion as a viable option. Respected ancient philosophers/moralists like Plato and Aristotle saw the inevitability of abortion and advocate it to reduce population size (Bisong, 2016b). Most of the arguments against abortion hinges on human life's sanctity and that fetuses are human beings. This implies abortion is murder and thus a sin against God and deprivation of human rights (Bisong, Ogar & Asira, 2016).

I believe that arguments against abortion though sound when weighed against the perceived dangers of overpopulation on the environment and its long-run effects on humans, make it vivid that these concerns have little weight. Refusing to
legalize abortion because of the sanctity of human life concerns will ultimately bloat the population, which will in turn collapse the environment and humans will totally be erased from existence. Since overpopulation effects are far-reaching than the dangers of abortion, the lesser evil should be taken. This implies that even though the concerns on abortion are genuine and sound, they should give way to environmental concerns because this could spell bigger trouble for humanity than an abortion would. African governments should, therefore, give up their fears and legalize abortion. Sacrificing a few to save the whole human race, is something that a sound mind would easily accept.

4 CONCLUSION

Though the task of sustaining the environment lay more on the shoulders of the government, it is incumbent on all to perform their parts in this great struggle. This article focuses more on the African continent, because her place in the world right now, makes her the last hope for the environment. Her choices and activities could either spell doom or hope for environmental health. Thankfully, Covid 19 has taught humanity the best way to live in friendship with the environment. The pandemic has brought immeasurable gain to the environment, it is left for humans to make a conscious effort to consolidate these gains for a sustainable future. These efforts would be painful, but there is no gain without pain. This paper thus tasked Africans to lead in this environmental restoration as taught by Covid 19. The forests must be preserved to continue to serve as windbreakers. Pollution control and energy-saving measures like building a good transportation system and controlling population growth must be in place to generate a sustainable environment.

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