

Time Management and Business Activities in a Hostile Business Environment: Impact of Sit-At-Home on Micro and Small Businesses in the South East Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the impact of the current sit-at-home order on businesses in the South East with specific references to micro and small businesses. The sit-at-home in the region no doubt has negative impact on businesses generally, It impacts production and productivity; it impacts both big and small businesses and more especially time that are needed for business operations; it impacts the movement of persons, goods and services. It impact all sector of the economy including the education sector as students started recoding poor performance in exams arising from skipping schools. This work is an attempt to link time management to business growth and performance whether work or academic on the one hand, and with Sit-at-home in South East Nigeria on the other. Sit-at-home created insecurity; insecurity fears; fear affected performance, and performance is affected by time management. In staying off work/business due to insecurity, more business times and opportunities are lost, hence time management is connected to this study.

Key Words: *Sit-at-home order, Time management, Micro and Small businesses, Foreign Direct Investment, Social infrastructure*

Introduction

The South East of Nigeria has observed several sit-at-home orders recently, issued by a separatist group- the IPOB as a way of protest against the arrest and detention of their freedom fighter Maazi Nnamdi Kanu (Ayitogo, 2021). All business activities are halted on Mondays, and other days of the week that Nnamdi Kanu is to appear before the Court of competent jurisdiction (Emeruwa, 2021), and anyone who flouted this order are dealt with in the most severe way (Ugwu, 2022). The sit-at-home orders are binding on the five States of the South East region, and some boundary States, such as Delta and Rivers in the South South, Benue and Kogi States in the North Central where there are large number Igbo speaking communities or people (Ayitogo, 2021), Virtually,

the sit-at-home orders invariably have effect on all the geopolitical zones of the country as movement of people, goods and services are restricted into the South East from other regions.

According to Esho (2022), IPOB was formed in 2012 by Maazi Nnamdi Kanu because of perceived excessive wield and abuse of power by the Nigerian State which they deemed tyrannical and indirectly coercive against the Igbo nation. IPOB was formed as a movement against corruption and marginalization of the Igbo nation by the Nigerian State (Okafor, 2017). Consequently, the quest for independence of the Biafrans (Igbos) from the Nigerian State evident and orchestrated by various activities they deem fit irrespective of their inimical effect on the entire economy becomes imperative. One of the strategies adopted to gain their quest for freedom was several media attacks on the Nigerian government by the IPOB hierarchy.

As Nigerian government could not stomach the sustained media attack from IPOB, they engaged on series of events through the security operatives by launching what they termed “operation python dance”, a military action targeted at Nnamdi Kanu and his group. Consequently many youths were killed even in Kanu’s house. Eventually, he fled Nigeria for UK from where he continued his media attack on Nigerian government. He was subsequently arrested in Kenya on 19th October, 2015 through the concerted efforts of security operatives, and thereafter charged to Court for sedition, ethnic incitement and treasonable felony over his agitation for the separatist Republic of Biafra (Emeruwa, 2021). The arrest created crisis in the major cities and towns in South East region as there were high rate of protests, riots, and Police clashes. These crises led to some deaths and injuries to the youths (Aytogo, 2021).

The current sit-at-home was declared on July 30th, 2021 being a memorial day for those who lost their lives during the Nigeria-Biafran Civil War, when the spokesperson of the group, Emma Powerful announced that any day Nnamdi is charged to Court will be observed as sit-at-home day in the entire South East starting from August 9, 2021 in solidarity with Nnamdi Kanu and the Biafran cause. But, the order was extended to every Monday and any other days Kanu will be arraigned in Court, meaning that it was no longer predictable. It was then the people of the South East knew that they are in for serious problem. The problem got to a frightening height when hoodlum hijacked the order to unleash mayhem on the people and all economic structure. These hoodlums continued their wanton destruction and endless assault on businesses across the region as if the South East is at war against itself, and that was how it seemed.

The South East economy was on its knees, as blood flows unabated in every nook and corner of the region, as more deadly attacks on individuals and properties continued unabated. The fear generated by the enforcement of this order made many businesses to collapse or relocated outside the region. Mostly affected, are the micro and small businesses scattered in the region, a region that pride itself as the trading hub in the country. The loss of Monday which is the busiest of all working days, loss of business opportunities, loss of appointments, loss of customers, eroding of customer confidence and most importantly, the loss of time factored together is one problem too many for the people of South East. Consequently for traders, micro and small business owners, they have to relocate to other regions or States of Nigeria considered safer.

It is on this account that the study looks at the impact of the sit-at-home order on those precious times wasted on forced holidays (sitting-at-home), and all businesses (economic activities) that sustain the lives and standard of living of the people. Our placement of emphasis on micro and small business is due their enormous contributions to the development of the South. It does not take away the impact of the sit-at-home order on the big businesses that engaged in manufacturing. Business is business. That the Igbos catch up economically with the rest of geopolitical zones of the country after the Civil War immensely made possible by the engagement in micro and small businesses.

The contribution of micro and small scale businesses to the development of any economy have been globally acknowledged due to their capacity in enhancing industrial output, employment generation/job creation. It is the driving force of industrial growth of any nation and a model for industrialization. Micro and small businesses are the engine of economic development of the South East region, and had in fact contributed to the development of entrepreneurial competencies of the people of the region- a region that are blessed with technical and managerial competence; and that development come about through self- reliance.

This is the reason the greater numbers of the people are involves in micro and small business thereby creating entrepreneurs that sustained the regional economy through development of indigenous technology and innovations. Unfortunately, the current Sit- at- home order in the South East is seen as a self- inflicted economic injury as it has impacted businesses in the region particularly these micro and small business outfits for which the region is known. The order also affected the diaspora population who could not come home to invest again due to the insecurity back home. This has also added to loss of business opportunities, including foreign direct investment (FDR). Worrisome is the fact that Monday of all days (the busiest of the workings for some people) has come to be part of permanent holiday calendar in the South East region, unfortunately.

The Order is destroying the economy in no small measure; it stops the movement of people in and out of the region as well as the inflow and outflow of goods and services on Mondays. It prevents new investments including foreign direct investment (FDR); it shortens the working day of the week as productive time is wasted staying at home and consuming savings. Recently, it took a new dimension when hoodlums hijacked it to cause havoc against the region, thereby making life unbearable, as people no longer go about their daily business for fear of attack. Sit-at-home was no longer on Mondays only, but has extended to any other day that the hoodlums deem fit, thus making the region one of the most insecure and hostile business environment in Nigeria. Initially, the people of South East did not see the red flag of this protest coming the wanton killings and abductions started taking place.

South East Nigeria is a rapidly emerging industrial hub of Nigeria in recent years, added to the fast growing micro and small scales businesses scattered across the nooks and corners of the region. It was the foundation of the indigenous entrepreneurs we have across the region. The sit-at-home order has impacted all that. The industrial towns of Newi, Onitsha, Aba, and Owerri are deeply

affected in large measure as markets were closed, while productive activities and business time have reduced, meaning loss of revenue to individuals, organizations and government. The region which in the 1960s was considered one the fastest growing economy in the world has become insecure and hostile environment for business operations.

The South East pride itself as a trading hub. Unfortunately, traders are forced to relocate to other safer environment. This is loss of revenue as taxes that are supposed to the South East governments are diverted to the neighbouring States that are safer.

1.1 Statement of problem:

The Indigenous People of Biafra are protesting, and are protesting violently, against their own people and economy by ordering and enforcing sit-at-home on their people, destroying businesses and creating insecurity in the South East region. This had shut down businesses and drove away traders and potential investors to neighbouring safer States. This has stalled the movement of the people, inflow and outflow of goods and services on critical working days the region.

1.2 Objectives of study: The primary objective of this research is to find out the impact of the current IPOB's sit-at-home on the economy of South East Region. The specific objective is to:

- (a) find out what the IPOB is really protesting and why they are protesting violently;
- (b) identify the relationship between time management and business growth;
- (c) Find out the impact of the IPOB's sit-at-home on businesses in South East region in general and micro and small businesses in particular.

1.3 Research questions

To achieve the objectives of this study, we have to ask certain fundamental questions:

- (a) What is IPOB protesting and why are they protesting violently?
- (b) Why did IPOB chose sit-at-home that directly affects the South East economy?
- (c) What is the impact of the sit-at-home order protest on micro and small businesses in the South East region?

2.1 Review of relevant literature

Sit-at-home Order: This is an order issued by the secessionist group – the indigenous People of Biafra in August, 2021. It was to be observed every Monday across the South East States of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo, to pressure the Nigerian government to release the detained leader of the group, Nnamdi Kanu who is standing trial for alleged terrorism at the Federal High Court Abuja (Aytogo, 2021). Analysts see the sit-at-home as retrogressive to the economy of the South East as it is like one shooting himself on the leg expecting the enemy to feel the pain. How IPOB's sit-at-home order is destroying business in Nigeria's South East (*Premium Times* 17 May, 2022). Traders, Transporters and Hotels lament the impacts of the sit at home order of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) on their businesses in Nigeria's South East. Kanu declared Mondays

economic empowerment days in South East (*Premium Times* 5 August, 2023). According to this report, “Economic empowerment day connotes a day set aside for mass mobilization of Biafrans to devote their resources and means towards reversing the sharp and unprecedented decline in the economic needs of the people occasioned by the prolonged sit-at-home”. IPOB’s sit-at-home, the self-induced devastation of the South says (*The Guardian*, 21 December, 2022), on the back of Nnamdi Kanu’s extradition from Kenya, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) ordered a sit-home order on Mondays until Nnamdi Kanu is released.

The same report by the Guardian said that the protest, which has since become a pain in the South East, has divided residents in the region and Igbos in the diaspora, with the rest of Nigeria curiously watching what the exercise would ultimately achieve. When IPOB declared sit-at-home on Mondays, however, it did not come to the mind of people the disastrous consequences that would follow the order as lives and property of residents of South East had been in jeopardy due to the activities of overzealous hoodlums. (Offor and Offia, 2023). Also, apart from threatening and maiming residents, the education sector is presently affected as they students are forced to skip schools on Mondays and other days IPOB leader would arraigned in Court. This tends to affect the performance of students in the South East. (Amana and Okpoko (2023), remarked that the restriction of movement has proven to have effects on the economy, especially the one orchestrated by individuals and groups in the society that may have little or no significance in solving the immediate problem in the society.

The IPOB’ sit-at-home order which began in August 9, 2021 and continue till this day, has serious negative economic consequences on the people of South East: like children not going to school, the transport agencies not operating on Mondays, businesses crumbling, investors or revelers not being able to come into the South East for any kind of businesses etc.). The study by (Amana and Okpoko (2023), shows that the Monday sit-at-home order has cost the South East economy billions of naira. It has also affected people’s daily income earnings, especially those who rely and survive on what they earn daily, businesses (market places, transport agencies, corporate institutions), among others.

This order has created a sense of insecurity in the entire region, driving potential investors and prospective customers out of the region, causing businesses to be relocated to other States from the region. Unfortunately, a faction of the separatist group claiming to be the enforcer of the sit-at-home order have used it to kill many innocent citizens of the region, set many government property ablaze, including the killing of security personnel, engaging in high profile kidnapping and other activities that made the region fearsome and unsafe business.

If one calculates the number of IPOB’s sit -at -home observation in a month, and in a calendar year, added to the National Public Holidays in Nigeria, then it is understandable why social critics and analysts oppose such agitation. Economic activities are disrupted on the days the sit-at-home orders are observed in the region owing to the fact that, all businesses, productive assets and resources are placed on hold (Okeoma, 2021). This is accompanied by loss of lives and property especially those who share contrary opinions with the IPOB hierarchy. Vaskov, Pienknagura, and

Ricci (2021) revealed in their study that restrictions of people's movement cripple economic activities especially countries with low economic growth. Okafor (2022) submitted that social unrest in Nigeria has resulted to cumulative decline in GDP from 2011 to 2015. Odili (2021) remarked that the sit-at-home order has caused the economy of the South East a massive decline in GDP relative to other geopolitical zone in the country, Also, Azeez (2022) quoted Simon Ekpa as saying that the sit-at-home order has made Nigeria government lose estimated revenue worth more than \$1 billion on weekly basis. Everyday there is sit-at-home these poor masses lose estimated N19.6 billion in Anambra alone, Soludo (2023). Nigerian Observer (2023), stated that the annual revenue that could have been made by micro businesses on 52 lost Mondays in the South East is estimated at N4.61 trillion (\$10.495 billion). Generally, social unrest is inimical to business growth in any economy. Premium Times (May 17, 2022) reports that Traders, Transporters and Hotels laments the impact of the sit-at-home order of IPOB on businesses in Nigeria. Since the declaration, the region has become a ghost town on Mondays. **Business Day** (December 13, 2022), report that insecurity and sit-at-home in the South have led to massive economic losses estimated at almost N4 trillion in two years. South East is home to micro, small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs), and indigenous manufacturing, fabrication and agro-allied industries. The protest affect not only a whole day but tends to have a spillover effect on the other days of the week with residents of the region losing side jobs and secondary businesses as they reduce working hours and time make it hard to keep a business or job. In addition, customers outside the region are forced to find alternatives as South East has trade relation with neighbouring towns in other States.

The Punch Newspaper (2022), reports that the protest has heavily impacted the South East economy. To understand the full import of the economic impact in the short, medium and long terms, the DevEast Foundation and SBM Intelligence attempted to quantify the losses using facts and figures of critical parameters. Their report highlights the losses in different sectors of the region's economy. Transportation is an important sector in the region as it hosts Onitsha main market, the Aba main market and Nnewi market, some of the major markets in the country. This necessitates huge inflow and outflow of people in the region. However, the report states that transporters lose huge sum of N10 billion for each sit-at-home day. This is a double tragedy for a country whose economy is on its knees already, as reduced income means less purchasing power for the transporters in the South region, with the attendant reduction in tax remission to the State governments.

In addition, the violence and protests are affecting savings and investments. Most of the businesses in the South East subscribe to daily savings system. They are committed to saving a fixed amount of money every day. They are unable to save on Mondays and struggle to keep to their commitment. When saving reduces, the potential for future investment also reduces.

“Business in South East generates between N5.46 billion to N31.9 billion daily in the period under review, according to the report. Losing approximately five days in a month from October 2020 (24 months) means about 120 days have been lost, which takes the number of los earnings on only sit-at-home days to between N655.38 billion to N3.77 trillion”.

Consumers or dealers who order products or goods are also affected as their goods are not delivered. This makes them lose confidence in dealing with products whose major suppliers are from the South East.

In the Hospitality and Tourism sector, a chain is as strong as its weakest link, as, beyond any other sector, insecurity on a Monday affects other days of the week. This means that even though the sit-at-home is on a Monday, tourists revelers avoid the South East region altogether.

Cities like Owerri and Enugu, which used to bubble with night life, have become shadows of themselves as their usual patronage has dwindled. In 2021, National Conference scheduled to hold in Enugu by the National Society Engineers was moved to Abuja, the organizers citing insecurity as the reason.

For several years, the South East region has pride itself in its educational excellence with all five States located among the best performing States in West African Examinations Council exams, and two States in the top five. The current situation disrupts academic calendar across all levels of education, as the various curricula will not be completed during the allocated time. Also, the disruption of crucial exams has been reported. This threatens the region's rating of academic excellence. It has already started to show in the numbers. Based on NBS multiple Cluster Indicator Survey for 2022, Anambra and Enugu States are beginning to show the kind of school enrolment numbers we had gotten used to seeing just in Northern Nigeria.

Generally, social unrest is inimical to economic growth in any economy of the world. In Nigeria for example, the recent EndSARS demonstration caused series of economic downturn in major States of Nigeria. Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) (2020) highlighted that the EndSARS demonstration which lasted for twelve days resulted in the loss of about N700 billion in revenue to Nigerian government. In the same vein, the Lekki Toll Gate closure during the days of EndSARS forced the government of Lagos State to lose N234 million in revenue (Emenike, 2020). SB Morgan surveyed 180 business owners after the EndSARS demonstration, 91% of business owners accepted that their businesses were grossly affected, 98% agreed that they lost both customers and revenue, 43% of respondents agreed to be looted to the tune of more than N1 million worth of resources and 26% agreed to lose between N500, 000 to N1,000, 000 during the protest (Odutola, 2021). The conclusion from the report revealed that business owners were subjected to inability of settling debts destruction and looting of resources, and the fear of business activities picking due to business slowdown.

Onime (2018) submits that social unrest in Nigeria such as the activities of Boko-Haram, IPOB, Niger-Delta Militants, Herdsmen and Kidnapping have at various times crumbled the economy of Nigeria. He further noted that violent agitation of these groups for both human and non-human resource control have resulted to loss of lives, oil theft and bunkering, pipeline vandalization, displacement of people from their ancestral homes and nationwide hunger among others.. The sit at home order as one of the many social unrests in Nigeria from the economic point of view is not healthy for the economy of South region and beyond.

2.2 Sit-at-home order and Foreign Direct investment (FDI)

The growth of the economy of South East region largely depends on the accelerating and stimulating strength of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (Odili, 2020); The influx of FDI into any region has similar economic outcome such as boost in transfer of technology, industrialization, domestic production, financial capital development, job creation and economic growth among others (Bitar, Hanadeh, Khoueiri, 2019). Despite the relevance of FDI to the economy of South East, Si-at-home order has to a large extent impeded the flow of FDI to the region. As emphasized by the US Department of State (2020), the problem of insecurity threatens investors' resolve to make investment decisions in Nigeria.

The restriction of movement on Mondays has added to the list of security challenges bedeviling Nigeria; anyone who flouts the order may eventually lose his/her life and properties. Unscrupulous elements utilize sit-at-home days to perpetrate evils such as kidnapping for ransom, violent conduct of different magnitudes and terrorism attacks on anyone who fall prey. FDI is attracted business environments devoid of low confidence and alarming rate of uncertainties, hence the sit-at-home order is not a promoter of FDI in South East region of Nigeria (Vaskov et al, 2021). By implication, the sit-at-home stifle FDI, causes stigma to businesses and tourism.

According to Odili (2021), no investor would consciously invest in business environments where confidence of investment protection is grossly low. A careful examination of myriads of outcomes and tensions associated with the sit-at-home orders, foreign investors would undoubtedly be afraid to invest in such volatile business environment. Onyebuchi (2018) concurred to the above sentiment when he submitted that due to social unrest in Nigeria, greater number of foreign investors have left Nigeria for other nations with stable business environment.

UNCTAD report cited in Onyebuchi (2018) established that from 2007-2009, Nigeria is among the 40 most viable and attractive economies for FDI, albeit series of social unrests in the country has changed the trajectory. The 2018 UNCTAD report revealed that Nigeria's FDI inflow declined by 21% while capital flight trended up by 8% (Dajo and Akor, 2022). The decline in FDI is attributable to series of social unrests in Nigeria where sit-at-home order has added to the existing long list (Esho, 2022).

2.3 Sit-At-Home Order and Social Infrastructure

A major catalyst of economic growth and development in developing countries is adequate availability of social infrastructure. Such infrastructural facilities as roads, railways, health centers, good roads, energy, among others can stimulate the transformation of the society. Nigeria's per capita growth performance has 1% growth as a result of the net contribution from infrastructural roles to the economy (African Infrastructure Country Diagnostic, 2011). Hence, infrastructure is an agent of socio-economic development. The African infrastructure Diagnostic (2011) estimated that Nigeria needs 12% of her GDP or USD14.2 billion to address infrastructural gaps over the next decades. The above estimate may not be enough to address infrastructural gaps owing to the increasing social unrests prevalent in all the regions of the country.

According to Ugwu (2022), social infrastructure requires huge financial investment in terms of both maintenance and construction, however nefarious activities of unscrupulous elements under the guise of IPOB and several other criminal elements across South East region have continuously attacked social infrastructure, hence cascading negative effects on economic growth and development of the region. Renn, Janovich and Schroter (2011) submitted in their work that social unrest of whatever magnitude cause damages to social utilities. Similar to IPOB's sit-at-home orders, Niger Delta Militants, Kidnappers, religious and ethnic conflicts among others have caused destabilization to critical social infrastructures that took many years to build (Dajo and Akor, 2022).

As reported by Okeoma (2021), the government of Nigeria claimed that the paramilitary wing of IPOB known as Eastern Security Network (ESN) destroyed eighteen INEC offices and a hundred and sixty-four security facilities in South East region. This argument shows that all form of social unrests disrupt social infrastructure to the detriment of economic growth and development.

The South East has the largest number of Diaspora population in Nigeria by proportion. Over the years, this population always pay home visit in large numbers all year round, but concentrated around festive seasons. Events like traditional weddings, New Yam festivals, funerals, Christmas and Easter celebrations are the periods that the Diaspora citizens from the South East go home, consequently boosting the economy. Since the Sit-at-home enforcement began, these numbers have dwindled, with people prioritizing their security, preferring instead to holding traditional weddings in their areas of residence (previously unheard of) and staying in their areas of abode during festival seasons. Business Day (2022) confirmed this story, so was the Daily Trust (Dec, 2022) when it stated.

2.4 Sit-at-home and Micro/small scale businesses

The terms micro businesses or micro enterprises, refers to small businesses that employ few people (Investmedia 18 August, 2023). A micro enterprise usually operates with fewer than 10 people, and is stated with a small amount of capital advanced from a bank or other organizations. Research shows that small scale businesses constitute 50% of the GDP of developing economies (Balogun and Ogunsanwo, 2019). When statistical definitions are used based on selected qualitative criteria to define the small scale enterprises, such definitions are inadequate to unearth the various qualitative indicators suffer from various shortcomings and fall short of being adequately satisfactory measures of enterprise size. As such, they are incapable of describing the important economic, social, psychological, behavioural and organizational characteristics of the SMEs which play important roles in explaining why and how small businesses emerge, develop and continue to sustain (Ahmed, 2016).

USAID in its definition of SMEs classified it thus: micro enterprise as informal businesses employing five or fewer workers including unpaid family labour; small enterprises as those operating in the formal sector with five to twenty employees; and medium enterprises as those employing 21 to 50 employees (Kayanula & Quartey, 1999). The 1975 Companies Act of the United Kingdom stated that an enterprise with a turnover of less than \$1.4 million was small, those

with turnover between \$1.4 and \$5.7 million were medium, while those enterprises having turnover above \$5.7 million were large. It also went further to classify the enterprises based on number of employees – those with fewer than 50 workers being small, between 50 and 250 workers being medium, and those employing above 250 worker were described as being large. Similarly, the European Union (EU) in 1995, defined SME as any enterprise employing less than 250 employees, and went further to break down the SME into micro (less than 10 employees, small (from 10 to 49 employees) and medium (between 50 to 249 employees) (Etuk, Etuk & Baghebo, 2014).

The central bank of Nigeria (CBN) in its monetary policy circular No. 22 of 1988 defined small scale enterprises as enterprises having an annual turnover not exceeding five hundred thousand naira (Ali, 2003; while the Federal Ministry of Industries (1973) define small scale enterprises as businesses that have a total capital (land, building machinery equipment and working capital) of up to N60, 000 and employ up to 50 persons. Also, the Central bank of Nigeria in its 1990 Credit Guidelines for financial institutions characterized small scale enterprises as those whose yearly turnover does not exceed N200, 000,000 or capital use does not exceed N200, 000,000. Nonetheless, the CBN Act 2001 placed the level of employment by small scale enterprises of less than 50 and medium scale enterprises of less than 100 labour forces.

In terms of the asset base, small scale has capital of less than N1 million while medium scale has less than N150 million (IFC 2002 referred to in Ogboru, 2007). Small business by the third National development Plan (1975-80) as a firm that is capable of providing employment to not more than ten employees (Taiwo, Ayodeji and Yusuf, 2012). However MSMEs also refer to SMEs as business with a fixed asset and working capital of an amount not exceeding N60,000 and capable o employing 50 – 199 workers. Companies and Allied Matter Act 1990, Federal Ministry of Industry cited in (Taiwo, Ayodeji, and Yusuf, 2012), defined SMEs as a firm with an annual turnover worth N2 million and a net asset of an amount not exceeding N1 million.

The introduction of National Policy on MSMEs has addressed the issue of definition in respect of what constitute micro, small and medium scale enterprises. The definition receives grouping focused around double criteria, assets and employment (with exception of land and buildings.). Thus, micro enterprises are those businesses capable of providing employment for less than ten (10) employees and have asset of less than N5 million with the exception of land and building. Small businesses are those capable of employing 10-49 employees and have an asset of an amount equal to N5 million to 49.9 million with the exception of land and building. Medium enterprises are those businesses capable of employing 50-199 employees and have an asset of an amount equal to N50 million to N499.9 million with the exception of land and building (Yahaya, Geidam, and Usman, 2016).

There are important qualitative and operational qualities which distinguish the SMEs from large enterprises, and which also exhibits their intrinsic strengths and weaknesses. The features according Ahmed, (2016) include: one, they are owned and managed by a single individual or a group of persons. Two, there is the link between the enterprise and the entrepreneur which is

inseparable in most cases from each other, and that exposes them to greater risks at times. The deep personal attention of the entrepreneur makes him strongly committed to the success of the business. This characterizes small firm with positive (a cordial work atmosphere) as well problematic (generation succession issue) consequences. The dominant presence of the owner manager in all spheres of business facilities quick and flexible decision making, but involves a lack of delegation of authority.

The contribution of micro and small businesses to the development of South East economy is not in doubt. Aided by the apprenticeship system of the Igbos, micro and small businesses have made great contribution to the people of the region. It was what aided the Igbos to catch up with the rest of Nigeria, after the Civil rendered them empty handed, and their properties the region confiscated. Thus, any crisis that affects the flow and smooth operations of this line of businesses is a direct threat to the existence of South East. The current sit-at-home was a threat of great magnitude to the people of the South East region. Since the beginning of the order, diaspora investment have stopped completely, as no investor will put his hard earns fund in a hostile business environment.

2.5 Sit-at-home and time management.

Time is critical resource in business management. Time is money, and money is business they say. Peter Drucker, the influential management consultant, educator and author, had remarked that “Time is the scarcest resource, and unless it is managed, nothing else can be managed. There can be no truer statement.

There is no agreement on the definition of time management in past studies. Although many authors referred to Lakein (1973), who suggested that time management involves the process of determining needs, setting goals to achieve these needs, prioritizing and planning tasks required to achieve these goals, several other definitions were suggested. Thus, time management has been referred to as: techniques for managing time (Jex and Elacqua, 1999; Davis, 2000; Mcan, 1994, 1996; Mican et al, 1990; Mudrack, 1997); a technique for effective time use, especially having enough time to accomplish the many tasks required (Orpen, 1994; Slaven and Totterdell, 1993; Woolfolk and Woolfolk, 1986); planning and allocating time (Burt and Kemp, 1994; Francis-Smythe and Robertson, 1990a); the degree to which individuals perceive their use of time to be structured and purposive (Bond and Feather, 1998; Strongman and Burt, 2000; Sabelis, 2001; Vodanovich and Seib, 1997); a way of getting insight into time use (Koolhaas et al, 1992); a technique to increase the time available to pursue activities (King et al, 1986); practices intended to maximize intellectual productivity (Britton and Tesser, 1991); an application of self-regulation processes in the temporal domain (Griffiths, 2003); coping behaviour in at-risk populations (King et al, 1986); self-regulation strategies aimed at discussing plans, and their efficiency (Eilam and Aharon, 2003); the use of procedures that are designed to help the individuals to achieve his or her desired goals (Hall and Hursch, 1982); ways to assess the relative importance of activities through the development of a prioritization plan (Kaufman-Scarborough and Lindquist, 1999); clusters of behaviour that are deemed to facilitate productivity and alleviate stress (Lay and Schouwenburg, 1993).

Some authors gave no definition at all (Barling et al, 1996; Simons and Galotti, 1992; Trueman and Hartley, 1996. Besides time management, other terms such as time structure (Bond and Feather, 1988), were used interchangeably with essentially the same meaning. Because of commonly accepted definition of the concept was lacking, we found it difficult to determine the exact content of time management in past research, to describe the current state of the affairs, and to identify which parts are responsible for what results.

Based on the literature, a definition of time management was suggested as, “behaviours that aim at achieving an effective use of time while performing certain goal-directed activities”. This definition highlights that the use of time is not an aim in itself and cannot be pursued in isolation. The focus is on some goal-directed activity, such as performing a work task or an academic duty, which is carried out in a way that implies an effective use of time.

These behaviours comprise:

* Time assessment behaviours, which aim at awareness of here and now or past, present, and future (Kaufman et al, 1991) and self-awareness of one’s time use (attitudes, cognition, e.g. Wratcher and Jones, 1988), which help to accept tasks and responsibilities that fit within the limit of one’s capabilities.

* Planning behaviours, such as setting goals, planning tasks, prioritizing, making to-do lists, grouping tasks (e.g. Britton and Tesser, 1991; Macan, 1994, 1996) which aim at an effective of time.

How does this relate to sit-at-home? On all the factors affected by the Sit-at-home order in the South East region, the most affected. When time is lost for whatever reason, it is lost. Time cannot be recovered when lost. Business managers and operators usually have this in mind. Sit-at-home is a distraction and a waste of time. Time is money, and money is business. Any activities that disrupts time, disrupts business. The IPOB’s sit-at-home disrupts precious times that were supposed to be invested into business. A lost time cannot ever be recovered again; hence time management is critical to business survival. Effective and efficient business management requires good and skillful time management. To keep business afloat due to sit-at-home orchestrated time loss, planning behaviour, such as setting goals, planning tasks and setting priorities right is most effective way to get businesses back on track.

4.1 Theoretical Framework

Frustration/Aggression theory

Much of the language in the literature on hostility is value-laden. Many writers consider overt hostility to be an unwanted source of social instability, and concern themselves largely with its prevention and control. We do not venture judgment as to the desirability of overt hostility like this of IPOB. Sometimes violence is necessary to smash a brittle social order. Sometimes it adds to social chaos. Our aim is not consider these matters, but to explain, as objectively as possible,

the content and timing of hostile outbursts like that of IPOB, and thereafter relate it to our main topic.

Why men rebel? Why is IPOB protesting and why are they protesting violently. We situate the IPOB's protest in the context of Frustration/Aggression hypothesis, also known as frustration/aggression displacement theory. It is a theory of aggression proposed and developed by John Dollard et al (1939), and further developed by Neal Miller (1941), and Leonard Berkowitz (1969). The theory says that aggression is the result of blocking, or frustrating, a person's efforts to attain a goal (Friedman et al, 2014).

IPOB sit-at-home order is certainly a protest. Protest is a protest, no matter the target. It is on this basis that we adopt the Frustration/Aggression theory to explain their protest. When this hypothesis was first formulated, it stated that frustration is always precedes aggression, and aggression is the sure consequences of frustration. Two years later, however Miller and Sears (1941) reformulated the hypothesis to suggest that while frustration creates a need to respond, some form of aggression is one possible outcome. Therefore, the re-formulated hypothesis stated that while frustration prompts a behaviour that may or may not be aggressive, any aggressive behaviour is the result of frustration, making frustration not sufficient, but necessary condition for aggression.

The hypothesis attempts to explain why people scapegoat (Zillmann, 1979). It attempts to give an explanation as to the cause of violence (Whitley, et al, 2009). According to Dollard and colleagues, frustration is the "condition which exists when a goal-response suffers interference", while aggression is defined as "an act whole goal-response is injury to an organism (or an organism surrogate)". The theory says that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. For example, if a man is disrespected and humiliated at work, but cannot respond to this for fear of losing his job, he may go home and take his anger and frustration out of his family. Does this theory explains why IPOB instead of attacking the Government of Nigeria, turned against their own region? This certainly did explain why IPOB restricted their aggression on the South East, not minding the impact of the activities on the economy of the region, and their very own existence.

This theory is also used to explain riots and revolutions, which both are believed to be caused by poorer and more deprived sections of the society through violence. Every government is responsible for the provision of conducive social, economic and political environment upon which her citizens can successfully thrive. In practice, such environment is not easily found. For instance, since the end of the end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1967, the Igbos have not been really integrated into the mainstream Nigerian politics in terms of the distribution of national political offices. They suffer multiple marginality in the scheme of things in Nigeria, in spite of the declaration of so-called "No victor no vanquished" of the Military Government of Nigeria. 53years later, the Igbo are still hated in Nigeria. They are not allowed to exit Nigeria, neither are they allowed to be part of Nigeria in indeed and in speech. The height of the discrimination was the subsequent arrest, detention and trial of Nnamdi Kanu since 2021 and even when Court has ordered for his release he is still in detention meaning that the sit-at-home forced lockdown will continue every Monday,

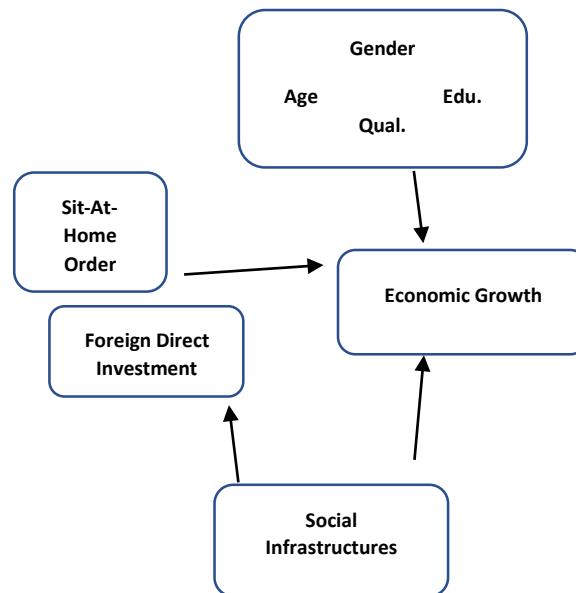
there is no assurance that the Federal government will take a decisive action to release Nnamdi Kanu soonest. If it is so, the amount of damage that will be done to the South East regional economy is enormous. There is no hope that the protest will end soon, as the governments feel that the Igbos can wipe themselves up if they like.

In his book, “Violence as a protest”. Fogelson (1971) notes, that the riots of the 1960s in some American cities were articulate protests against genuine grievances in the black Ghettos. And it is only by examining what the riots did and said is it possible to discover what they were protesting, and why they were protesting violently. Implicit in the analysis is the conviction that Nigerian society has failed so far to address the Igbo question 53 years after the end of the Civil War for just political reasons. This work has also criticized some conservative statements from parts of Nigerians concerning IPOB’s protest.

The relevance of Frustration/Aggression theory to this study is not unconnected to the fact that IPOB conceive the Nigerian government as the main clogging body to the actualization of the independence of Biafra. The IPOB claim to be frustrated with government administration in Nigeria, where they are deprived equal representation in various agencies and parastatal as well as the seat of presidency. Mazi Nnamdi Kanu was arrested and detained for his activities which are not far from frustration albeit; the Nigerian government perceives it as inimical to the peaceful co-existence of the country.

The frustration of the IPOB was more compounded when competent court of jurisdiction had tried him and acquitted him of all charges, and yet he is still in detention at DSS facility as the government calls it.

Conceptual Framework



4.2 Conceptual Framework

Fig 1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between sit-at-home order and economic growth (2022)

4. Hypotheses

Based on the conceptual model above, the following hypotheses are tested in this study.

H1: Sit-at-home order does not have significant relationship with economic growth

H2: Sit-at-home order does not have significant relationship with foreign direct investment

H3: Sit-at-home order does not have significant relationship with social infrastructure.

5. Methodology

This study was explored in the context of the five states (Ebonyi, Enugu, Anambra, Imo and Abia) in the Southeastern region of Nigeria. The reason for exploring the Southeast has to do with the fact that the sit-at-home orders are observed within the region; hence it is the major scope of the study. The study adopted online survey design which allowed the collection of primary data through the use of online questionnaires. The major respondents targeted for this study were administrative staff of SMEs and MSMEs within the Southeast region and the general public within the region. According to SMEDAN Report (2013), the Southeast geopolitical zone has a combined business establishments of 7061 units while World Population Review (2022) estimates the population of the Southeast at 22 million.

These people constituted the population of the study. However, despite the large number of the study population, 1000 persons were sampled for this study cutting across both individuals and business executives. The choice of the sample size is backed by Conroy (2018) who submitted that irrespective of how large a study population is, a sample size above 1000 does not add much to data accuracy but extra time and more cost.

The data generated for the study were subjected to statistical analysis using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Statistical tools of percentages, mean and standard deviation were employed for the description section while the hypotheses were tested with the help of Chi-Square statistical tool. The opinions of respondents in relation to the subject matter were rated with the 5-point likert scale where the range of opinions were: 'strongly disagree' scoring 1, 'disagree' scoring 2, 'neither disagree nor agree' scoring 3, 'agree' scoring 4 and 'strongly agree' scoring 5.'

6. Data Analysis and Result

Of the 1000 expected responses, 824 persons responded to the questionnaire and it gives a response rate of 82.4%. The demographic analyses of respondents are tabulated below:

Table 2: Sample characteristics

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	523	63.47
	Female	301	36.53
Age	Below 20 years	105	12.74
	20 - 29 years	203	24.64
	30 - 39 years	301	36.53
	40 - 49 years	108	13.10
	50 year and above	107	12.99
Educational Qualification	Secondary	132	16.02
	Diploma	151	18.32
	Bachelor's		
	Degree	247	29.98
	Master's	198	24.03
	Degree		
	Doctorate		
Occupation	Civil/Public		
	Servants	287	34.83
	Trading	353	42.84
	Farming	62	7.52
	Student	122	14.81

Source: Online Data, 2022

7. Presentation of the Descriptive Statistics Results

Respondents' opinions are analyzed in this section with the view of making inferences using the mean and standard deviation (std.) of responses. The mean and std. benchmarks are 3.0 and 1.5

respectively on rated opinion likert scale of 1-5 as employed in Pornel (2009). This implies that mean values equal or above the benchmark is considered to be positive and significant in explaining the variables and vice-versa. Also, any std. value equal or above the benchmark was regarded to have wide deviation from the mean and be misleading.

Table 2: Mean rating of respondents on the effect of sit-at-home order on economic growth of Southeastern Nigeria

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}	S	Deci sion
1	Sit-at-home order disrupts productive assets in Eastern Nigeria	3.95	0.95	A
2	Sit-at-home order reduces income level of households	3.44	0.97	A
3	Sit-at-home order exposes human resources to injury and death	3.81	0.98	A
4	Sit-at-home order reduces educational quality and standard of living.	3.22	0.80	A
5	Sit-at-home order reduces productive work hours in the region	3.19	0.95	A
6	Sit-at-home order reduces total economic output in the region	3.55	1.18	A

Keys:- mean, S- standard deviation, Accepted/ Agreed

As revealed in table 2, the items have mean range between 3.19 and 3.95; hence they were all more than the cut-off mean of 3.0. This implies that all the items are significant in explaining the effect of sit-at-home order on economic growth of Southeastern Nigeria. Similarly, it was revealed that none of the mean responses have wide deviation from each other since their standard are at close range to each other.

Table 3: Mean rating of respondents on the effect of sit-at-home protest on Foreign Direct Investment in the South East region

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	X	v	DECISION
1	Sit-at-home order disrupts technological transfer through FDI inflow	3.13	1.01	A
2	Sit-at-home order disrupts FDI through reduced markets size	3.21	0,91	A
3	Sit-at-home order reduces FDI through macroeconomic instabilities	3.96	0.87	A
4	Sit-at-home order affects FDI through distortion in GD growth rate	3.28	0.92	A
5	Sit-at-home order disrupts abilities of businesses to repatriate profits	3.19	0.95	A
6	Sit-at-home order disrupts business regulatory environment	3.55	1.18	A

Keys:- \bar{x} - mean, S- standard deviation, Accepted/ Agreed

In table 3, the items have mean range between 3.13 and 3.96, hence they were all more than the cut-off mean of 3.0. This implies that all the items are significant in explaining the effect of sit-at-home order on FDI in Southeastern Nigeria. Similarly, it was revealed that none of the mean responses have wide deviation from each other since their standard are at close range to each other.

Table 4: Mean rating of respondents on the effect of sit-at-home order on social infrastructure in Southeastern Nigeria

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}	S	Decision
1	The order reduces quality services of educational facilities	3.07	0.91	A
2	The order affects quality services of medical facilities	3.28	0.96	A
3	The order reduces sanitation on the social environment	3.16	0.77	A
4	Sit-at-home order increases pressure on housing facilities	3.28	0.94	A
5	Sit-at-home order increases pressure on water facilities	3.49	0.96	A
6	Sit-at-home order increases pressure on power infrastructure	3.25	0.93	A

Keys: \bar{X} - mean, S- standard deviation, Accepted/ Agreed

In table 4 above, the items have mean range between 3.07 and 3.49, hence they were all more than the cut-off mean of 3.0. This implies that all the items are significant in explaining the effect of sit-at-home order on social infrastructure in Southeastern Nigeria. Similarly, it was revealed that none of the mean responses have wide deviation from each other since their standard are at close range to each other.

8. Test of Hypotheses

The statement of hypothesis is rejected if calculated X^2 is higher than tabulated X^2 , otherwise it should be accepted.

H₀1: Sit-at-home order does not have significant relationship with economic growth

$$D.F = (C-1)(R-1) = (3-1) (6-1) = 2 \times 5 = 10$$

X^2 tab for 10 D.F. at 0.05 level of significance = 18.31

The value of chi-square calculated is 18.06 while the table value is 18.31 at 5% significance level. The calculated chi-square is less than the tabulated; hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concludes that sit-at-home has negative significant relationship and impact on economic growth in Southeastern Nigeria.

H₀2: Sit-at-home order does not have significant relationship with foreign direct investment

$$D.F = (C-1)(R-1) = (3-1) (6-1) = 2 \times 5 = 10$$

X² tab for 10 D.F. at 0.05 level of significance = 18.31

The value of chi-square calculated is 17.96 while the table value is 18.31 at 5% significance level. The calculated chi-square is less than the tabulated; hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concludes that sit-at-home has negative significant relationship and impact on FDI in Southeastern Nigeria.

H₀3: Sit-at-home order does not have significant relationship with social infrastructure

$$D.F = (C-1)(R-1) = (3-1) (6-1) = 2 \times 5 = 10$$

X² tab for 10 D.F. at 0.05 level of significance = 18.31

The value of chi-square calculated is 18.27 while the table value is 18.31 at 5% significance level. The calculated chi-square is less than the tabulated; hence the null hypothesis is accepted and concludes that sit-at-home has negative significant relationship and impact on social infrastructure in Southeastern Nigeria.

9. Discussion of Results

From the first objective of the study with emphasis on the impact of sit-at-home order on economic growth, it was revealed that economic growth is negatively affected by the IPOB sit-at-home order. The result was supported by both descriptive statistics outcome and test of hypothesis.

Specifically, variables such as productive assets, household's income level, educational quality, productive work hours, human resources output and total economic output were affected by the sit-at-home order in Southeastern Nigeria. By implication, any order restricting people going about their daily businesses is inimical to economic health of such region. The study findings is in line with the findings of Vaskov, Pienknagura, and Ricci (2021) who established that social unrests have negative effect on economic activities of mostly developing countries. Similarly, Onime (2018) and Dajo and Akor (2022) established such result in their studies.

The result for the second objective revealed that sit-at-home order negatively impacted foreign direct investment (FDI) as evident in both the descriptive statistics and test of hypothesis. In the result presentation, it was revealed that technology transfer through FDI inflow, size of the market,

economic stability, GDP growth rate, repatriation of business profits and business regulatory environment were all affected by the sit-at-home order. The effect of the order on the above variables directly and indirectly affects FDI as the confidence to invest is punctured by unfavourable business environment. The above findings are in conformity with Onyebuchi (2018) who established that FDI does not thrive in uncertain business environment. Dajo and Akor (2022) who cited UNCTAD World investment Report (2018) and Adenyuma and Onyeche (2019) revealed that series of social unrests in Nigeria decreased FDI by 21% and capital flight increased by 8%.

In justifying the third objective of the study, it was revealed that sit-at-home order has negative impact on social infrastructure in Southeastern Nigeria. The descriptive statistics and test of hypothesis confirmed the above result. The study revealed that social infrastructures such as educational facilities, medical facilities, sanitation on the social environment, housing facilities and water facilities were all negatively affected by the sit-at-home order. The above result is synonymous with reports from UNICEF (2017) that social unrests in Northern part of Nigeria have caused great destruction to social infrastructure in the region. Similarly, Olasupo (2020) revealed that EndSARs protests and activities of the IPOB have caused massive negative pressure on social infrastructure in the country.

Conclusion

The study has been able to establish negative impacts and relationships amongst sit-at-home order, economic growth, micro and small businesses, foreign direct investment and social infrastructure. The study revealed that the sit-at-home order impact FDI and social infrastructure to have negative moderating effect on economic growth in the South East region Nigeria. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are made:

- The government should take more proactive measure to instill order in the Southeast region to avoid unlawful restrictions inimical to economic activities.
- The government should come to terms of agreement with the IPOB hierarchy to restore sound business environment for expected level of FDI inflow in the Southeast region.
- The government should subject security operatives to more advanced trainings to curtail ill acts of unscrupulous elements bent on damaging social infrastructures in the region.

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