

Sit-At-Home Order and Economic Growth of Southeastern Nigeria

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Abstract

Sit-at-Home order imposed by an organisation known as the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) has become a recurring word among about 22 million Southeast dwellers in Nigeria as such there is virtually none movement of persons on specified days. Every Monday since mid 2021 has been marked as a none movement day in the region pending the release of her leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kalu from detention. This study with a sample of 1000 respondents in a survey research design adopted descriptive and Chi-Square techniques to examine the effects of Sit-at-Home on economic growth of Southeastern Nigeria. The results which were supported by both descriptive statistics outcome and test of hypothesis revealed that economic growth is negatively affected by the IPOB sit-at-home order. By implication, any order restricting people going about their daily businesses is inimical to economic health of such region. This study recommends that government should come to terms of agreement with the IPOB hierarchy to restore sound business environment for expected level of investment inflow in the Southeast region.

Introduction

The Southeastern part of Nigeria has observed several sit at home orders as a way of protest for the release of their freedom fighter -Mazi Nnamdi kalu (Ayitogo, 2021). The sit-at-home orders are usually

observed on Mondays and other days of the week Nnamdi Kanu is to appear before the court of competent jurisdiction (Emeruwa, 2021). Economic activities are halted on days the orders are to be observed as no one is allowed to carry any transaction intra and inter states. Anyone found to flout the orders is either killed or attacked to submission (Ugwu, 2022).

The sit-at-home orders are binding on the five states (Ebonyi, Enugu, Anambra, Imo and Abia States) in the Southeastern part of Nigeria, some states in the South-South (Delta, Rivers) and some states in the North Central such as Benue and Kogi States (Ayitogo, 2021). The Southeastern part of the country and some states in the above geopolitical zones where these orders are binding are self-considered to belong to the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) (Ugwu, 2021). Virtually, the sit-at-home orders invariably have effect on all geopolitical zones in Nigeria. This is because on the days the orders are to be observed, movements are restricted into the Southeastern states from other geopolitical zones of the country.

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

hierarchy. In view of this, the Nigerian government deemed the series of attacks breaches to national peaceful coexistence (Ugwu, 2022).

Consequently on 19th of October 2015, Nnamdi Kanu was arrested through concerted efforts from security operatives, thereafter charged for sedition, ethnic incitement and treasonable felony (Emeruwa, 2021). The arrest birthed a number of experiences across major cities in the Eastern part of Nigeria. For example, on the 2nd of December 2015 major cities in Anambra state especially in Onitsha, parts of Aba, Umuahia, and Enugu states recorded high rate of protests, riots, and police clashes. The experiences led to the death and injury of massive numbers of youths (Ayitogo, 2021). Sequel to a number of agitations from members of the public, Nnamdi Kanu was later bailed.

Following series of events by the Nigerian security operatives such as the 'operation python dance' Nnamdi Kanu left Nigeria to the UK on the ground that his live was threatened (Ugwu, 2022). In the UK, he was using the media to attack the Nigerian government under the leadership of President Muhammad Buhari. The scenarios worsened, that in June 2021, Kanu was arrested by the Nigerian government in Kenya and brought back to the country (Emeruwa, 2021). He was re-arraigned on charges of treasonable felony over his agitation for the separatist Republic of Biafra. On July 30th, 2021, Emma Powerful, the IPOB spokesperson declared that every Monday starting from August 9, 2021 would be a sit-at-home, although the orders are annually observed prior to this time to remember those who lost their lives in the Nigeria-Biafra war (Esho, 2022). A form of protest that would continue till Nnamdi Kanu is released from the custody of the Department of State

Security. Hence, from the forgoing it can be deduced that the intent of the marker of this order is to use it as a means of peaceful protest to release Mazi Nnamdi Kanu and secure the political freedom of the people of Biafra.

The frequency of the sit at home order has become a thorn in the flesh of the people as it affects their daily living and has triggered a backlash and retrogression to the economy of the eastern region of Nigeria. The effect of the order is felt in the economic, social, educational and every sector of the economy of Southeastern Nigeria. The notion that the sit-at-home order is ruining the economy of eastern Nigerian is the drive of this study. Hence, the researcher is poised to investigate the extent the sit-at-home order has impacted the economy of Southeastern Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptual Literature

The Nexus between Sit-At-Home Order and Economic Growth

Economic activities are disrupted on days the sit-at-home orders are observed in the Eastern part of Nigeria owing to the fact that productive assets and resources are placed on hold (Okeoma, 2021). This is accompanied by lost of lives and properties 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 Southeast a massive decline in GDP relative to other geopolitical zones in the country. Also, Azeez (2022) quoted Simon Ekpa that the

sit-at-home order has made Nigeria governments lose estimated revenue worth more than \$1 billion on weekly basis.

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. The Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) (2020) highlighted that the EndSARs demonstration which lasted for twelve days resulted to the loss of N700 billion in revenue to the Nigerian government. In the same vein, the Lekki toll gate closure during the days of the EndSARs forced the government of Lagos State 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) submitted 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, pipe vandalism, displacement of people from their ancestral homes and nation-wide hunger among others. The sit-at-home

order as one of the many social unrests in Nigeria from economic point of view is not healthy for the economy of South-Eastern Nigeria and beyond.

Sit-At-Home Order and Foreign Direct Investment

The growth of the economy of Southeastern Nigeria largely depends on the accelerating and stimulating strength of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (Odili, 2020). The influx of FDI to any region has similar economic outcome such as a boost in transfer of technology, domestic production, financial capital development, job creation and economic growth among others (Bitar, Hamadeh, and Khoueiri, 2019). Despite the relevance of FDI to the economy of Southeast, the sit-at-home order has to a large extent impeded the flow 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 conducts of different magnitudes and terrorism attacks on anyone who fall prey. FDI is attracted in business environments devoid of low confidence and alarming rate of uncertainties, hence the sit-at-home order is not a promoter of FDI in the eastern region of the country (Vaskov, Pienknagura, and Ricci, 2021). By implication, the sit-at-home order stifles FDI, causes stigma to businesses and tourism.

According to Odili (2021), no investor would be proud to 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) concord to the above sentiment when he submitted that due to social unrests 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 existing long list (Esho, 2022).

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 centres, 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 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 Country Diagnostic (2011) estimated that Nigeria needs 12% of her GDP or USD14.2 billion to address infrastructural gaps over next decades. The above estimate may not be enough to address infrastructural gaps owing to the increasing social unrests prevalent in all 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 the South-eastern Nigeria have continuously attacked social infrastructure, hence cascading negative effects on economic growth and development of the region. Renn, Jovanovich and Schroter (2011) submitted in their work that social unrest of whatever magnitude cause damages to social utilities. Similar to the IPOB sit-at-home orders, activities of Boko-Haram, Herdsmen, 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).

A quick look at the impact of various social unrests in Nigeria shows that 75% of sanitation and water infrastructure has been destroyed due to incessant conflict in the Northeast (UNDP, 2017). In the same vein, UNICEF (2017) mentioned that more than 496 classrooms have been destroyed beyond repair while 1392 classrooms were damaged albeit, repairable in the Northeast. According to Olasupo (2020), about 205 major national security facilities, corporate and private facilities were damaged in the 2020 EndSARs protests. Olasupo further reported that 71 public warehouses and 248 private businesses in 13 states during the protest. 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 the Southeastern part of the country. These arguments show that all forms of social unrests disrupt social infrastructure to the

detriment of economic growth and development.

Theoretical Framework

Frustration/Aggression Theory

The theory was developed in 1939 by John Dollard and colleagues, albeit refined in 1962 by Berkowitz and Aubrey (Dajo and Akor, 2022). The theory was developed for typical explanation of violent criminal behavior in conjunction with social unrests and disturbances as a quest to achieve pressing needs from necessary authorities (Oduma and Akor, 2019). According to Dajo and Akor (2022), frustration arises when there is an unwanted interference between a goal and response which can lead to aggression. Based on the above sentiment, aggression is a resultant outcome when attempts to achieve certain goals are blocked or impeded, resulting to frustration. According to Igwe (2011), the inability to confront the source of impediment to achieving goals, subject aggrieved party directing their frustration at innocent target.

Conceptual Framework

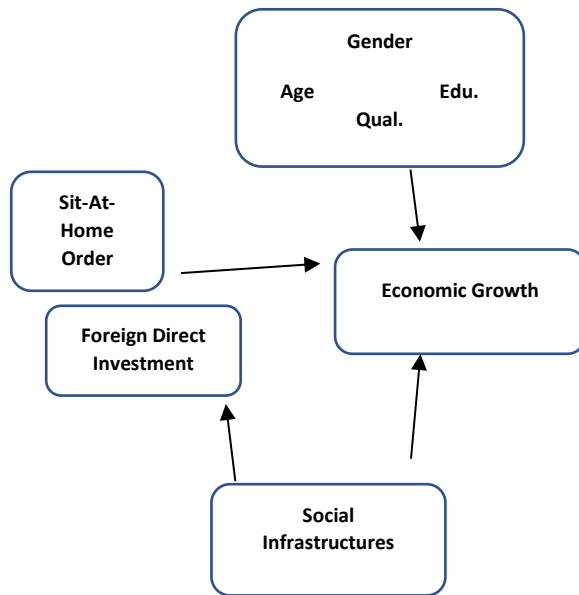


Fig 1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between sit-at-home order and economic growth (2022)

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 infrastructures

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, on annual basis, higher institutions in Nigeria release thousands of graduates into the labour market only to be frustrated with little or no paid employment jobs (Oduma and Akor, 2019). Coupled with accumulated existing challenges, these graduates are faced with bleak futures leaving them with no other option than frustration. These experiences explain the reason behind series of civil unrests such as ethnic, religious, and communal conflicts often experienced since Nigeria returned to civil administration in 1999. In the context

of the IPOB, they claimed to be frustrated of all sorts of social ill meted on them by the Nigerian government. Such social ill is majorly claimed to be marginalization of the Igbos in the social, political and economic stream of the country. On a general note, Faminu (2021) highlighted that 2020 and 2021, more than 2,000 lives have been lost in Nigeria largely because of the activities of Boko Haram, Herdsmen, Niger-Delta militants, the Oduduwa groups, the recent EndSARs protests and the on-going IPOB sit-at-home order enforced by the Eastern Security Network (ESN). These activities cannot be said to be unconnected with bottled up anger and frustrations.

The relevance of Frustration/Aggression theory to this study is not unconnected to the fact that the 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 parastatals as well as the seat of presidency. Mazi Nnamdi Kanu was arrested and detained for his activities which is not far from frustration albeit, the Nigerian government deem his activities inimical to the peaceful co-existence of the nation. The efforts to get Nnamdi Kanu released proved abortive, hence more frustrations to the IPOB members. This gave birth to the sit-at-home orders being observed in the Southeastern part of Nigeria. The series of social unrests experienced in Nigeria is as a result of bottled-up anger and frustration inherent in Nigeria. The alarming rate of poverty, police brutality, high level of insecurity, marginalization are some of the by-

products frustrating the youths in the country's social, political economic environment. Youths and the aged see Nigerian government as a failed administration, hence the loss of trust. Social unrest is a common occurrence at the slightest provocation in the country resulting to attack on social infrastructure, unhealthy business environment for domestic and FDI and ultimately consistent decline on economic growth.

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 is not unconnected to 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.’

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 analysis 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 Degree	198	24.03
	Doctorate Degree	96	11.65

Occupation	Civil/Public		
	Servants	287	34.83
	Trading	353	42.84
	Farming	62	7.52
	Student	122	14.81

Source: Online Data, 2022

Presentation of the Descriptive Statistics Results

Respondents' opinions are analysed 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	Decision
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: \bar{X} - mean, S- standard deviation, A-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 order on foreign direct investment in Southeastern Nigeria

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	\bar{X}	S	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 market 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 GDP growth rate	3.28	0.92	A
5	Sit-at-home order disrupts abilities of businesses to repatriate profits	3.49	0.99	A

6	Sit-at-home order disrupts business regulatory environment	3.25	1.08	A
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Keys: \bar{X} - mean, S- standard deviation, A-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, A-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.

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

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

X^2 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 infrastructures

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

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

The value of chi-square calculated is 18.27 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.

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 are punctured by unfavourable business environment. The above findings is 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, 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 southeastern part of 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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