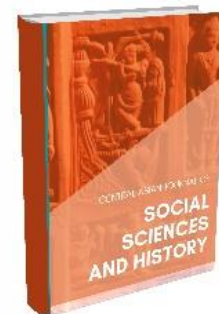




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Implication of Sit At Home Order (Insecurity) on Basic Education in South-East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract:

The problems of insecurity in southeast geo-political zone especially the sit at home order is affecting the educational institutions especially the Basic school education. Based on this, this paper discussed the implications of sit at home order on Basic school education in south east geo-political zone of Nigeria. Among other things discussed included the concept of sit at home order, reasons for sit at home order, concept of basic education and implication of sit at home order on Basic school education in south east geo-political zone of Nigeria. The paper concluded by recommending that the government should address all issues responsible for insecurity in the south east zone political zone of Nigeria.

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Introduction

THE Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) introduced a sit-at-home order in August 2021 as a means of putting pressure on the Nigerian government to release its leader, Mr. Nnamdi Kanu, who is standing trial for alleged treasonable felony and terrorism. Since then, Mondays have become public holidays in the south-eastern states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Imo and Enugu. Apart from Mondays, IPOB also declared any day Mr. Kanu appears in court a sit-at-home day. It could also declare any day a sit-at-home day anytime it deems fit (Tribune online 2022)

Tribune online (2022) observed that initially, citizens obeyed the sit-at-home order in solidarity with the cause. However, the pains and deprivation that came with it and the sheer economic cost on businesses and the livelihoods of individuals and households over a long period of time have rendered it insufferable. Besides, citizens, residents and businesses in the states have endured the resulting pain

and hardships without any assurance that their sacrifices have had or will have any impact on the Federal Government. As citizens began to resist IPOB's order, enforcers, often referred to as unknown gunmen, started killing people, maiming others, and destroying properties in the bid to enforce compliance. These have rendered the South-East one of the most unsafe and insecure regions in Nigeria. Though, after much consideration, the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB) issued a directive to stop the enforcement of the sit-at-home order. According to Jude (2021) and Emeje, (2021) the continuous enforcement of the sit-at-home order, which IPOB claimed it had suspended, has led to loss of lives, destruction of properties worth millions of naira, brought untold hardships upon the region and affected the psyche of the people negatively.

Allafrica. (2021); Alozie (2021) and Mark (2022) submitted that educational institutions in the south east geo-political zone of Nigeria have been affected by the sit at home order directed by Indigenous Peoples of Biafra (IPOB). He observed that the early child education centers, Basic school education, junior secondary schools, senior secondary schools and higher institutions and other form of educational institutions in the zone are affected by the sit at home order. Basic schools are found in every nook and crannies of south east region. Basic education was established to provide the region with basic education. It is important to examine the impact of the sit at home order on the Basic school education in the region. Based on this, this paper discusses the implication of sit at home order on the Basic education in the entire region.

Concept of Sit at Home order

Sit at home order is a strategy adopted by non-state actors to press for the releasing of their president arrested by the Nigerian government. Sit at home order is a threat actions to force the government to release their leader that was arrested by the Nigerian government. Sit at home order is an order of restriction given within a region and enforcing illegally by non-state actors to violently demand the release of their leader from the Nigerian government. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) first introduced the sit-at-home order in the Southeast to add pressure to their quest for the actualization of an independent nation of Biafra and to show that most people in the Southeast support their quest for freedom. It soon transformed into a tool for achieving other goals, including raising of awareness for other Biafran-related issues and, of recent, it has become a tool to draw attention to the plight of the leader of IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu.

Ugwe, (2022) reported that in August, 2021, IPOB introduced the order to put pressure on the Nigerian government to release its leader, Nnamdi Kanu, who is standing trial before the Federal High Court, Abuja, for treason and terrorism. He went further to observed that IPOB initially declared the holiday for Mondays but later extended it to every day Mr Kanu appears in court. Since then, the South-east has become a ghost region with all businesses shut down on such days and every Monday as residents stay at home, mainly out of fear of attack. Gunmen have been attacking traders and commuters across the region who flouts the order. They have killed many people and set ablaze goods worth millions of naira for being sold or transported on such days.

Reasons for Sit at Home Order

There are many reasons for the introduction of sit at home order in the south –east geo-political zone of Nigeria by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Some of the reasons include;

To Protest Against the trial of their Presidents

Okah (2021) submitted that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) declared that residents of the South-east would observe what it called “sit-at-home” order, to protest against the trial of its re-arrested leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, by the federal government over various offences bordering on treason, incitement and others. According to the group, shutting down of shops, schools, public and private sectors every Monday will force the federal government to drop all charges against the IPOB leader and even consider granting the separatist group’s wish to secede from Nigeria.

According to IPOB as reported by Sunday (2021): “We the global family of the Indigenous People of Biafra IPOB (IPOB) ably led by our great leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, wish to announce to all Biafra citizens, friends of Biafra and lovers of Biafra freedom and independence that IPOB leadership has declared every Monday ‘a ghost Monday’. This declaration takes effect from Monday, August 9, 2021. “We wish to state full details of this coming ghost Mondays every week, our people must understand that it was designed to show the world how serious we are towards this fight for Biafra freedom and independence everybody must adhere to this clarion call put in place by the leadership of IPOB and it would be good for everyone to know that IPOB will not relent until Biafra is fully achieved. “We declare every Monday sit- at- home throughout Biafra land until our leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, regains his freedom. The federal government must allow him access to his personal physicians, and allow him to sign documents given to him by the British Government to provide him consular assistance. This peaceful protest will continue ones every week until our demands are met.

Actualization of an independent nation of Biafra

Another reason is to achieve the goal of the group. Mike (2022) reported that the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) first introduced the sit-at-home order in the Southeast to add pressure to their quest for the actualization of an independent nation of Biafra and to show that most people in the Southeast support their quest for freedom. It soon transformed into a tool for achieving other goals, including raising of awareness for other Biafran-related issues and, of recent, it has become a tool to draw attention to the plight of the leader of IPOB, Nnamdi Kanu. Other reason according to Jude (2022) include to specifically draw the attention of the government to southeast region and create awareness of the group objectives nationally and internationally.

Concept of Basic Education

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is a ten year basic educational programme, which was launched and executed by the government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance, poverty as well as stimulate and accelerate national development, political consciousness and national integration (FRN,2013; Ogunode, Jegede, Ajape 2021; Ogunode, & Abashi, 2020; Ogunode, & Stephen, 2021). Basic education is the elementary education given to children aged 0-15. FRN (2014) Education is the education given to children aged 0-15 years. It encompasses the Early Child Care and Development Education (0-4) and 10 years of formal schooling. Early Child Care and Development Education however is segmented into ages 0-4 years, situated in daycare or creches, fully in the hands of the private sector and social development services, whilst ages 5-6 are within the formal education sector.

The UBE programme has laudable and specific objectives. These according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 1999) are to: to develop in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion; to provide free, compulsory Universal Basic

Education for every Nigerian child of school-going age; to reduce drastically, dropout rate from the formal school system through improved relevance and efficiency; to reduce dropouts and out-of-school children/adolescents the provision and promotion of basic education; to ensure the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and life skills (as well as the ethical, moral and civic values) needed for laying the foundation for life-long learning; to ensure unfettered access to nine years of formal basic education; the provision of free, universal Basic Education (FUBE) for every Nigerian child of school going age; to reduce drastically the incidence of drop-out from the formal school system through improved, relevant, quality and efficient educational system and to ensure the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning (Ogunode & Nasir 2021;Ogunode, Richard, & Musa, 2021; Ogunode & Stephen, 2021;Christine & Joseph, 2014).

Since the enactment of the act in 2004, all states in Nigeria including the federal capital territory, Abuja have adopted the Basic school model and policies in their respective states. South east geo-political of the country has adopted the act and policies in respect of establishment, administration and management of basic schools in the Nigeria. Basic schools are found in all the federation including the south east geo-political zone.

Implication of Sit at Home Order (Insecurity) on Basic Education in South-East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

The insecurity in Nigeria and in south east region especially the sit at home order specifically has affected the educational system in the zone. The implications of the sit home order on basic education in south east geo-political zone include disruption of school administration, teaching programme implementation, students learning programme, school' examinations, academic calendar, brain-drain and may affect the funding of Basic education.

School Administration

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) sit-at-home order in the Southeast of Nigeria is affecting basic school administration in the zone. Many public and private basic schools in the region do not go to school on Monday due to the sit at home order given by Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Administrators of basic schools in the region have been forced to stay at home and abandon the place of their primary assignment due to the insecurity in the region. Emeje, (2021) submitted that the continuous enforcement of the sit-at-home order, which IPOB claimed it had suspended, has led to loss of lives, destruction of properties worth millions of naira, brought untold hardships upon the region and affected the psyche of the people negatively. Ogunode & Kolo (2021) submitted that the insecurity in the Northern Nigeria have disrupted the school administration of Basic schools across the region. School administration deals with the internal supervision of teaching and learning programme. It implies the coordination of all human and materials resources within the schools for the implementation of the schools programme for the realization of the objectives of the schools. The insecurity in the Northern region have led to suspension of school programme such as school supervision and inspection, teaching and learning, execution programme, examination and sport activities. School administrators were unable to go to school inspection and teachers' activities were disrupted. Students were asked to stay at home because of insecurity.

Teaching Programme implementation

Teaching programme implementation in some states in the zone has been reduced to four days per week instead of five working days because of the enforcement of the order in the zone. Many teachers cannot carry out their teaching jobs in their respective schools due to the problem of sit at home order given in the south east geo-political zone of Nigeria. It was submitted that many teachers have been kidnapped and killed by criminal element in the zone. The sit at home order and other criminal activities in the region is affecting the job performance of teachers in the region. Ogunode & Paul (2021) and Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) viewed teacher is an important figure in the realization of the objective of educational institution. The teacher is responsible for the training and production of manpower for the social, economic and technological advancement. Atiga & Ogunode (2021) opined that teachers are the implementers of school curriculum. Their functions include teaching, prepare lesson note and lesson plan, to evaluate the students, sets exam questions and mark answer sheets. Their functions also include providing leadership in classes, perform academic services, relate with parents on feedback on students' progress and sometime carry students for excursion with school permission. The teachers are very important factors in the management of educational institutions especially the secondary schools. The teachers' roles cannot be replaced in delivering of teaching programme. Because of the sit at home order in the region many teachers as important as their roles and functions are in their schools has been prevented to carry out their work effectively. Chukindi,(2021) reported that schools, Banks, markets, motor parks and other public places were shut down, in observance of the court appearance of the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). DAILY POST reporter observed that streets, highways and communities were totally devoid of passers-by, or any vehicular movement, just as street shops and other business centers were also under lock and keys in Awka, the state capital. It was also gathered that the commercial nerve centre of the state, Onitsha, the state's industrial hub, Nnewi and all communities in the state were totally shut down.

Students Learning Programme

Students schooling in the south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria are facing a lot of insecurity challenges especially the sit at home order by Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). This sit at home order have affected the learning programme of students in the region. Many students due to the fear of been killed and kidnapped stay off of school environment for days and months. Student' learning programme have been disrupted by the insecurity in the states across the zone. The insecurity problem and sit at home order made some public and private schools in the zone to officially stay off of school for some times. For example, Okeoma, Ede, & Nnachi, (2021) reported that private and missionary schools have shut down in Imo State as a result of the sit-at-home ordered by the Indigenous People of Biafra on Monday, May 31, 2021, throughout the South-East region. The schools asked the students to stay at home for the period to avoid any casualty. For instance, Okeoma, Ede, & Nnachi, (2021) reported that a message from schools run by the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri asked parents to keep their children at home from Thursday, May 27, to Tuesday, June 1, 2021. The message from the Directorate of Education, Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri, read, "Leveraging on the already scheduled public holiday for tomorrow, we have considered it expedient to allow the students/pupils enjoy a longer weekend to resume on Tuesday, June 1, 2021." "Boarding students should not be forced to go home. Those who wish to stay back in school should be taken care of."

Disruption of School Examination

Internal examinations and external examination in the region has also been affected by the sit at home order by Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Basic schools in the region are known for writing three internal examinations. First term examination, second term examination and promotion examination. Most of this examinations have been affected by the sit at home order given by Indigenous Peoples of Biafra IPOB in the region. For example, Blueprint (2021) observed that Students of Comprehensive Secondary School Nkume Njaba in Njaba local government area of Imo state suffered humiliation on Monday when they were chased of the examination hall by suspected Indigenous Peoples of Nigeria (IPOB) operatives. *Blueprint* gathered that immediately the gunmen entered the school, they started shooting sporadically and both students and teachers who were at the time concentrating on the examination, fled the premises, leaving their belongings. It was also gathered that the bags, books, examination papers and bicycles which some of the students and teachers came with, were set ablaze by the gunmen. It was also reported that pupils sitting for the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) had a tough day in many parts of the Southeast on Monday. The exercise was disrupted in many centers by hoodlums who claimed to be enforcing a sit-at-home that had been called off by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Tribune online (2022) observed that the enforcement of the order in the region have rendered the South-East as one of the most unsafe and insecure regions in Nigeria. Besides, law enforcement agents are being killed regularly and government properties burnt. Public examinations have been disrupted, with adverse effects on the education sector.

Academic Calendar

The basic school academic calendar in the zone has been disrupted because of insecurity challenges and the Indigenous Peoples of Biafra IPOB sit at home order in the region. School calendar is designed to give the school a working action and direction of what to do at a particular time and resources to deploy for the actions. School calendar gives details of school activities for term and session. The school calendar discloses when to write continuous assessments, examinations and when to close for the term. The sit at home order in the region have affected school academic of many basic schools. Many basic schools both public and private are not going to school on Mondays due to enforcement of the sit-at-home order, which IPOB had directed in all the five states in the zone. Obi (2012) submitted that some members of Indigenous Peoples Of Biafra IPOB members on Mondays would invades schools and disrupt their academic activities in most state in the south east region. (Starlitewsng 2021) in one of the invasion in one of the south east state reported that both teachers and students scampered for safety as the gunmen shot sporadically into the air. Motorcycles belonging to some of the staff and students were set ablaze by the enforcers of the order. Also, Chukindi,(2021) reported that schools, Banks, markets, motor parks and other public places were Thursday totally shut down, in observance of the court appearance of the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). DAILY POST reporter observed that streets, highways and communities were totally devoid of passers-by, or any vehicular movement, just as street shops and other business centers were also under lock and keys in Awka, the state capital. It was also gathered that the commercial nerve center of the state, Onitsha, the state's industrial hub, Nnewi and all communities in the state were totally shut down. Ogunode & Ahaotu (2021) posits that continuous closure of schools by the state government in the Northern Nigeria whenever there is any attack on educational institutions within or close to the state is also responsible for unstable academic calendar of various educational institutions in the states especially, the secondary schools which are the most affected in the region. Educational institutions operates on

planned academic calendar which specifies the academic session, terms and weeks that school will open for teaching and learning. Scheme of work and syllables are there to be covered within the school calendar. These academic calendar and programmes of educational institutions are poorly implemented due to closure of school which is unhealthy for the development of education because, teaching and learning and other academic activities are intermittently disrupted.

Brain-drain

The sit at home order and enforcement by Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the south east Nigeria is causing massive movement of professional teachers and lecturers from the region. One of the press released by the group read in part, “We, the global family of the Indigenous People of Biafra, ably led by the prophet of our time, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, wish to announce once again that this year’s annual Biafra Remembrance Day and candle light procession will take place on Sunday night, 30th of May, while a sit-at-home and total lockdown takes place on Monday, 31st of May, 2021, and not May 30 as earlier announced. “Every person in Biafra land is therefore, advised to observe a sit-at-home order on Monday, May 31, 2021. That day is a sacred day in Biafra land in honor of the over five million Biafrans massacred by the wicked Nigeria forces during the civil war. “There will be a total lockdown all through Biafra land on that day as we remember all our fallen heroes and heroines, including agitators, who have paid the supreme price in the course of our struggle for independence since 1967 till date. “All markets, filling stations, motor parks, airports, seaports, banks, schools, etc. as well as social activities in Biafra land are to be shut down on that day. Everyone is to remain indoors in Biafra land from 6am to 6pm on that day. The implication of this directives and other criminal activities by kidnappers and unknown gunmen is responsible for movement of people from the region and has posted security threat to their and proprieties in the region. Many teachers and lecturers in private basic schools and higher institutions are relocating from the zone due to the high rate of insecurity challenges especially the sit at home order. Tribune online (2022) confirmed that gunmen have attacked traders and commuters who flout the order across the region. They have killed scores of people and set goods being sold or transported ablaze. Many Igbos visiting home have been murdered in cold blood. Hotels, restaurants and related businesses have been invaded, looted and shut down. The group has held the entire region to ransom, with the governors apparently helpless.

Funding of Basic Education

The sit at home order by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the states in the south east may also affect the funding of education especially the basic education in the region. The funding of education is link to the revenue generated in each state in the region. When the revenue increases it will affects all sector positively because allocation to sectors in the economy will also increase too and when the revenue generated falls, it will affects the entire sector of the economy too. Every sector of the economy is tied to the total revenue of the states. PreinuneOline (2022) submitted that Professor Chukwuma Soludo, Anambra State governor, said an estimated N19.6 billion is lost in Anambra alone during sit-at-home days. It seems that IPOB is committed to ruining the economy of the south-eastern region. Also, Primebusiness (2021) submitted that on September 15, 2021, Ebonyi State governor and chairman, Southeast Governors’ Forum, Engr. Dave Umahi, stated that the Southeast cumulatively loses N10 billion for every sit-at-home Monday enforced by the Pro Biafran Movement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Basic education is the foundation education. Basic education is the education before post-basic education. Basic education is the education that provides primary and elementary education for the

students. Basic education is very important to the development of the entire educational system because it provides the foundation. Basic education is not an educational system to be toyed with because of its relevance to the socio-economic and technological advancement of a country. The recent insecurity challenges in the south east geo-political zone is affecting the entire educational system in the zone especially the basic education. This paper looked at the implications of sit at home order on the Basic education in the region and the paper concluded that the sit at home order has impacted the basic education seriously. Some of the effects include disruption of school administration, teaching programme implementation, students learning programme, school' examinations, academic calendar, brain-drain and finally the sit at home order may affect the funding of Basic education.

Based on this implications, the paper recommended that

1. The federal government should adopt political solution to resolve the crises in the south east geo-political zone. This will help to restore peace and security in the zone.
2. Government should engage in dialogue which should involve the federal and state governments, IPOB representatives, traditional rulers, women's organizations, youth groups, security forces and civil society organizations. These stakeholders should discuss possible solutions to the causes of insecurity in the state and the relationship it has with other region.
3. Government should restructure the federation to create state police to regionalize power to states to take care of their unique problems and needs. This is the best way to tackle insecurity problem in southeast.
4. State governments should work on a zonal framework to articulate and pursue a robust development blueprint for the region. This should include targeted empowerment programmes designed for unemployed youths to minimize their vulnerability to recruitment by separatist and engaging them positively will be for the good of society.
5. Measures for addressing the socio-economic drivers of insecurity should be prioritized by key actors, particularly the state governments and the private sector. The organized private sector can support youth capacity building and skills acquisition, while state governments develop and fund regional development plans.
6. Governments should withdraw from direct involvement in town union governance. They should allow town unions to run traditionally in line with the culture and values of the Igbo.
7. Government should provide security vehicles to the operatives. Which will enable the security operatives to go into the interior in search of this hoodlums.

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