

INFLUENCE OF SIT AT HOME ORDER BY IPOB ON ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-EAST GEO-POLITICAL ZONE OF NIGERIA

Ineye-Briggs Amarachi Cynthia

Department of Educational Management, Rivers State University, Nkpulu-Oroworukwo, Rivers State

Keywords: <i>Sit-at-home order, Academic Programs, School Attendance, Students, Teachers</i>	Abstract: <i>The study descriptively investigated the influence of sit-at home order by IPOB on academic programs of secondary schools in South-Eastern States of Nigeria. The study formulated two research questions and tested three corresponding hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The population consisted of all the 2750 school's principal of secondary schools in South-Eastern Nigeria; the sample size of 349 determined using Yamane's formula. The stratified random sampling method was used since the population consists of schools from different states that made up the region. The instrument used for data collection was a researcher's developed Questionnaire; designed on a modified four-point rating scale that ranged from very high to low Extent. Three experts in Educational management and Measurement and Evaluation validated the instrument, and the instrument test of reliability using the Cronbach's Alpha method yielded reliability indices of 0.83 and 0.85 respectively. Mean rating was used to answer the research questions and Z-test to test the hypotheses. The study revealed that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals regarding the influence of the sit-at-home order on school attendance and that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals regarding the psychological influence of the sit-at-home order on students and teachers respectively. Based on the findings, it was recommended that schools in south-east should establish counseling and mental health support services to help students and teachers cope with the psychological stress caused by the disruptions and that to mitigate the academic disruptions caused by the sit-at-home order, state ministry of Education should explore flexible learning options such as online classes, blended learning models, or adjusted school calendars.</i>
--	--

Introduction

The Sit-at-Home Order is a civil disobedience directive introduced by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), a separatist group primarily based in Nigeria's Southeastern region. IPOB's primary objective is the creation of an independent state of Biafra, a cause that traces

its roots to the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970), commonly referred to as the Biafran War, where the Southeastern region sought secession from Nigeria. The war ended in the reintegration of Biafra into Nigeria, but the sentiment for secession remained strong among some sections

Ineye-Briggs Amarachi Cynthia

of the population, leading to the rise of IPOB in 2012, founded by Nnamdi Kanu.

The sit-at-home order initially began as a peaceful protest strategy aimed at commemorating the lives lost during the Biafran war (Ekpo et al., 2022). IPOB later expanded its purpose, calling for a weekly sit-at-home every Monday to demand the release of its leader, Nnamdi Kanu, who was arrested in 2015 by Nigerian authorities on charges of treasonable felony, and again in 2021 after a period of exile (Okechukwu, 2021). The directive requires all residents, businesses, and institutions in the Southeastern states to observe a stay-at-home on designated days, shutting down normal activities in a show of solidarity with IPOB's cause (Ekpo et al., 2022). The rationale behind the order is both symbolic and political. It serves as a tool for demonstrating IPOB's influence and control in the region while reinforcing the group's resistance to the Nigerian state's policies and governance. According to IPOB, the sit-at-home order reflects the people's desire for autonomy and addresses historical grievances of marginalization, underdevelopment, and perceived political exclusion of the Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria (Nwankwo & Eze, 2023).

The sit-at-home order has had significant socio-economic repercussions, one of the most affected sectors being education. Schools in Southeastern states, including Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Abia, and Ebonyi, have reported severe disruptions to their academic programs due to the regular enforcement of the order (Ekpo et al., 2022). The educational sector, already grappling with challenges such as underfunding, inadequate infrastructure, and staff shortages, is

now facing the added burden of lost instructional time due to school closures; disruption of school attendance and psychosocial effects on students and teachers, among other aspects (Nwankwo & Eze, 2023).

Indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB)

The indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) is a separatist group, formed with the intention of restoring an independence state of Biafra is the old Eastern region of Nigeria made up of mainly South East States and parts of South-South region. The group came into limelight is 2012 by Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, a British - Nigeria political activist known for his prominent and vocal advocacy for the actualization of Biafran independence. The group was deemed a terrorist organization is 2017, under the Nigerian terrorism Act and was consequently proscribed.

Sit-at-home Order

This is a declaration made by the indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) to mount pressure on the federal government to unconditionally release their leader mazi Nnamdi Kanu who was arrested in June in Kenya and brought back to Nigeria. However, the group claimed that due process was not followed in bringing Kanu back to Nigeria. Hence, announced a sit-at-home every Monday or the day Kanu will appear in Court. During the sit-at-home order economic activities, human activity and schooling were brought to a halt.

Academic programs in secondary schools

Academic programs in secondary schools refer to the structured curricula and educational activities designed to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to succeed in higher education or vocational

pursuits (Ineye-Briggs & Okwu 2023; Dambo & Kayii, 2022; Nwogu, Ineye-Briggs & Nwankpa, 2021). These programs typically span several years, covering a wide range of subjects, and are aimed at preparing students for both academic progression and real-world challenges. Secondary education is the education offered to students after the primary school. Specifically, secondary education is the education meant for children between 11-17 years of age. The Federal republic of Nigeria (2012) in National Policy in Education defines Secondary education as the education children receive after primary education and before tertiary level of education. The broad goals of secondary education as contained in the Nation Policy on Education, was to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and higher education. The importance of secondary education to the development of an individual cannot be over — emphasized as it creates the opportunity for the advancement of mankind. This level of education enhances the mental and emotional development of an individual. Any attempt to disrupt the activities of secondary education will negatively affect the futuristic development of the students. Isha, Musa and Abduhafiz (2019) submitted that the socio-political and economic development of a nation are in many ways determined by the quality of education and level of educational attainment of the population. Since the declaration of the sit-at-home order in the South-East states, academic programmes have been brought to halt, as students and teachers skip school to avoid being harassed or maimed by IPOB officials.

In a report by Ajala (2022) who interrogated students, teachers and parents in South-East

geo-political zone, to find out how education programmes has been affected by the sit-at-home order in the region. The summary of the report reveals that, the sit-at-home order has contributed to students poor reading techniques, teachers inability to cover their scheme of work, which may thus, lead to examination malpractice which is not a good moral behavior. However, the on line report by Ikenga (2022) explicitly revealed how students educational programmes in primary, secondary and tertiary levels has been grossly affected as a result of the sit-at-home order. He narrated how suspected IPOB members attacked comprehensive secondary school Nkume in Imo State, when the students were preparing to sit for the English language examination in the ongoing Junior Secondary School examination before they were forcefully dispersed for the enforcement of the sit-at-home order. Going further, he recounts how the sit-at-home order has resulted to poor learning outcomes and thus has contributed to out of school drop outs for students who could not meet up with stringent conditions. The IPOB sit-at-home order has drastically affected the school system by disrupting academic Calendar and activities of schools (Achumba igbomereho and Akporobano, 2018). As the current situation disrupts the academic Calendar across all levels of education, the various curricular will not be covered during the stipulated time. Aligwekwe (2022) opines that the :citizens of the region whom the agitators claim to be fighting for, are the most traumatized, as the agitators have lost control of the situation as conflicting instructions come from various factions with criminal elements hijacking the process.

Ineye-Briggs Amarachi Cynthia

Disruption of School Attendance

A primary influence of the sit-at-home order is the decline in student and teacher attendance on affected days. Schools are often compelled to shut down entirely on Mondays due to safety concerns, as there have been reports of violent.

Research by Nwankwo and Eze (2023) shows that school attendance in the Southeastern states of Nigeria significantly drops on days when the sit-at-home order is enforced. In a survey of 20 secondary schools across Anambra and Imo states, they found that student attendance decreased by an average of 65% on Mondays. Teachers, fearing violent enforcement of the order, were also reluctant to come to school, which further disrupted academic activities. The study concludes that the sit-at-home order has contributed to an increasing number of lost instructional days, negatively affecting the region's academic output.

However, in another related study conducted by Okechukwu (2021) explained the psychological impact of the sit-at-home order on teachers and parents, particularly with regard to school attendance. The research, which involved interviews with 50 teachers and 100 parents in Enugu, found that both groups were hesitant to send children to school on sit-at-home days due to safety concerns. The parents reported that their fear of potential violent confrontations between IPOB enforcers and security forces influenced their decision to keep children at home, leading to absenteeism.

Ekpo et al. (2022) investigated the broader economic impacts of the sit-at-home order and its indirect effect on school attendance. Their research highlighted how the closure of businesses and transportation disruptions

during sit-at-home days affected families' ability to send their children to school. The study noted that many students, particularly those from low-income families, were forced to stay home not only due to safety concerns but also because their families could not afford transportation costs on disrupted days. This compounded the issue of absenteeism, especially in rural areas where transportation is already limited. Okoro and Ibe (2022) conducted a gender-focused study on the effects of the sit-at-home order on school attendance, noting that female students were disproportionately affected. Their research, which surveyed 300 students in Ebonyi State, showed that girls were more likely to stay at home due to the sit-at-home order, as parents expressed concerns over their daughters' safety. The researchers linked this to cultural protective tendencies, where parents felt that female students were more vulnerable to violence, contributing to higher absenteeism rates among girls compared to boys. Obi and Nnadi (2022) explored the differential influence of the sit-at-home order on public and private schools in Abia and Imo states. Their research found that while both types of schools were affected, private schools experienced a slightly lesser influence on attendance rates. Private schools, which are typically better funded, were more likely to implement measures such as flexible scheduling or online learning alternatives to mitigate the effects of the sit-at-home order. However, public schools, with fewer resources and higher student populations, faced greater disruptions, leading to a more significant drop in attendance on sit-at-home days.

Psychosocial Effects on Students and Teachers

Beyond academic performance, the sit-at-home order contributes to psychosocial stress among students and teachers. The uncertainty of safety, coupled with the pressure of catching up with missed lessons, can heighten stress levels (Anyediigwu & Nzekwu, 2022), leading to a reduction in focus and motivation for both teachers and learners. Additionally, the violence associated with enforcing the order in some instances creates a climate of fear and tension in communities, which extends into the school environment.

Oduah et al. (2022) conducted a study in Southeast Nigeria to assess the effects of the sit-at-home order on the psychosocial well-being of students and teachers. Their findings revealed that frequent sit-at-home directives disrupted learning schedules, leading to increased anxiety and stress among students due to academic uncertainty and fear of academic failure. Teachers also experienced increased workload stress, as they were forced to condense lesson plans into fewer instructional days, negatively impacting their mental health (Oduah et al., 2022).

Adewale and Igwe (2021) explored the effects of civil unrest, including sit-at-home directives, on students' mental health in conflict-prone regions of Nigeria. The study showed that prolonged school closures led to social isolation among students, who reported feelings of loneliness and depression. Teachers also experienced frustration and reduced job satisfaction, as the erratic school calendar affected their ability to meet curriculum objectives. The study highlighted the need for

psychological interventions for both students and teachers during periods of civil unrest (Adewale & Igwe, 2021).

Nwafor (2023) examined the impact of the sit-at-home order on students' academic performance and emotional well-being in Enugu State. The research revealed a significant decline in academic performance due to inconsistent attendance and learning disruptions. Nwafor also found that many students exhibited signs of emotional distress, including increased anxiety and irritability, which was linked to the uncertainty of school resumption and the fear of violence during sit-at-home days. Teachers, too, reported emotional burnout as they had to constantly adjust their lesson plans (Nwafor, 2023).

Okoye and Eze (2021) conducted a qualitative study on how the sit-at-home protests affected teacher-student interactions in secondary schools. Their study revealed that the lack of regular contact between students and teachers created a communication gap, reducing students' motivation to learn and engage in school activities. Teachers expressed concerns about their inability to adequately support students' emotional and academic needs, which further exacerbated stress levels on both sides (Okoye & Eze, 2021).

Chinwe et al. (2023) researched the psychological impact of the sit-at-home order on adolescent students in Anambra State. Their findings indicated that many students experienced increased levels of anxiety and fear due to the perceived threat of violence during protest days. The disruption in schooling also contributed to emotional instability among students, with many exhibiting symptoms of

Ineye-Briggs Amarachi Cynthia

post-traumatic stress. Teachers, on the other hand, reported feeling helpless in managing students' emotional responses, further heightening their own levels of psychological stress (Chinwe et al., 2023).

Eze and Nnaji (2022) conducted a study to evaluate how the sit-at-home orders impacted both the professional and personal lives of teachers in Imo State. Their research found that teachers were burdened with additional responsibilities, such as revising teaching plans and handling students' behavioral issues stemming from stress and anxiety. The study concluded that prolonged disruptions due to sit-at-home days resulted in decreased job satisfaction among teachers, with many reporting symptoms of burnout and emotional exhaustion (Eze & Nnaji, 2022). The reviewed studies have highlighted the adverse psychosocial effects of sit-at-home directives on both students and teachers, such as heightened anxiety, stress, and academic disruptions (Oduah et al., 2022; Adewale & Igwe, 2021; Nwafor, 2023). However, a gap remains in understanding the long-term psychosocial consequences of these disruptions, particularly with respect to how repeated sit-at-home orders may affect students' academic resilience and teachers' mental health over an extended period. Additionally, while the current literature explores emotional burnout and stress, there is a need for more empirical studies focusing on effective coping mechanisms and institutional support strategies that could mitigate these psychosocial effects. This gap suggests that future research should examine not only the immediate impact of sit-at-home directives but

also long-term psychosocial recovery processes for both students and teachers.

The sit-at-home order enforced by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Southeast Nigeria has significantly disrupted the academic programmes of secondary schools in the region. These directives, often accompanied by threats of violence, have led to frequent school closures and erratic school attendance, severely affecting the continuity of education. Students are forced to miss valuable instructional time, leading to a backlog in the curriculum and leaving many ill-prepared for examinations. The repeated interruptions create academic uncertainty, which fosters anxiety, stress, and fear of failure among students. Beyond the academic implications, these disruptions have severe psychosocial effects. Prolonged school closures have isolated students from their peers, diminishing social interactions that are crucial for their emotional and cognitive development. Many students are experiencing increased levels of depression, loneliness, and irritability due to the lack of routine and the uncertainties surrounding their education.

Teachers are equally affected by the disruption. The unpredictability of school closures forces them to condense lessons into shorter timeframes, increasing their workload and stress levels. As they struggle to meet curriculum goals under constrained timelines, many experience emotional burnout and diminished job satisfaction. The disruption also hampers teacher-student relationships, as irregular interactions weaken their ability to support students' academic and emotional needs. Teachers face the dual challenge of managing their own mental health while also

being responsible for addressing the psychological distress of their students. The cumulative effect of these challenges raises a critical problem: the sit-at-home order is not only undermining the academic development of students in Southeast Nigeria but is also creating a psychosocial crisis for both students and teachers. If this trend continues, the long-term consequences may include a decline in academic performance, mental health deterioration, and overall educational standards in the region. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive understanding of the extent of the problem, as well as targeted interventions to mitigate the impact on academic programmes and mental well-being. Therefore, the problem is: How has the sit-at-home order enforced by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) disrupted the academic programmes of secondary schools in Southeast Nigeria, and what are the psychosocial effects on both students and teachers, including academic uncertainty, stress, mental health challenges, and weakened teacher-student relationships?

Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of the Study is to investigate the influence of sit-at home order by IPOB on academic programs of secondary schools in South-Eastern States of Nigeria. Specifically, the study objectives are determined the:

- (1) Extent sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria.
- (2) Extent sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria.

Research questions

- (1) To what extent does sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria?
- (2) To what extent does sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals on the extent sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals on the extent sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey in this study “influence of the sit-at-home order by IPOB on academic programs of secondary schools in South-Eastern States of Nigeria” because it allows researcher to collect data from a large group of people, in this case, teachers and school administrators across multiple schools. This makes it possible to generalize findings to the wider population of secondary schools in the region. The population consisted of all the 2750 school’s principal of secondary schools in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Table1: Population of Secondary Schools in South-East, Nigeria

S/No	State	Junior	Senior	Total
1	Abia	257	250	507
2	Anambra	262	262	524
3	Ebonyi	227	227	454
4	Enugu	334	331	665
5	Imo	300	300	600
	Total	1380	1370	2750

Source: Nigeria Digest of Education Statistics, 2023

The sample size for this study was determined using Yamane's formula for finite population, which are approximately 349 principals. The stratified random sampling was used since the population consists of schools from different states, it is essential to ensure that each state is fairly represented. The total population of secondary school principals in the South-East is divided into five strata, corresponding to the five states.

The sample will be proportionately allocated across the states based on the total number of principals in each state. Using proportionate stratified random sampling, the number of principals were sampled from each state is calculated as follows: **Sample per state** = (State population/Total population × Total sample size).

Therefore, 64 respondents from Abia, 66 respondents from Anambra, 58 respondents from Ebonyi, 84 respondents from Enugu and 76 respondents were randomly selected to represent the sample of the study. A 12 item self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. The instrument was designed on a 4 point scale of very great extent (VGE) High Extent (HE) Moderate Extent (ME) and low Extent (LE) and Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD) respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Educational Management and measurement and Evaluation, Rivers State University. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot test of 10 principals who were not part of the sample. The scores obtained were calculated using the Cronbach aloha whose reliability yielded 0.82 and 0.85 respectively. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and z-test statistics for the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Research question 1: To what extent does sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Response and Standard Deviation on extent does sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

S/No	Statement	Items	JSS (175)		Decision	SSS (174)		Decision
			\bar{X}	SD		\bar{X}	SD	
1	The sit-at-home order significantly reduces the daily attendance of students in my school		2.71	0.61	HE	2.85	0.48	HE
2	A majority of students do not attend school on days when the sit-at-home order is enforced.		2.40	0.50	LE	2.15	0.62	LE
3	Parents are hesitant to send their children to school during the sit-at-home days, which affects attendance.		2.54	0.71	HE	2.75	0.62	HE
4	Teachers in my school report lower class attendance due to the sit-at-home order.		2.45	0.76	LE	2.47	0.45	LE
5	The sit-at-home order causes fear among students, resulting in poor attendance.		2.19	0.25	LE	2.35	0.22	LE
6	The sit-at-home order negatively affects student participation in morning assemblies and other important school gatherings.		2.50	0.76	HE	2.65	0.73	HE
7	School activities are often disrupted because students fail to attend during sit-at-home periods.		2.58	0.76	HE	2.90	0.45	HE
8	Attendance rates in my school are worse on sit-at-home days compared to normal days.		2.79	0.48	HE	2.65	0.73	HE
9	Students struggle to catch up academically because of frequent absenteeism during the sit-at-home order.		2.21	0.71	HE	2.32	0.56	HE
10	The sit-at-home order has led to a decline in overall student enrollment and attendance in the current academic term		2.71	0.73		2.82	0.50	
	Average Mean/ SD		2.59	0.63	HE	2.59	0.54	HE

N= 349

The findings in Table 2, the overall average mean response for both Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School (SSS) principals is 2.59, with standard deviations of 0.63 for JSS and 0.54 for SSS. Based on the decision rule (where a mean score of 2.50 and above is considered "High Extent" (HE) and below 2.50 is considered "Low Extent" (LE)), it is evident that the sit-at-home order influences school attendance to a high extent in the South-East. Therefore, the sit-at-home order influences school attendance to a high extent. The order significantly reduces daily attendance, disrupts school activities, and leads to parental hesitation in

Ineye-Briggs Amarachi Cynthia

sending children to school. However, some aspects like student fear and academic struggles are only moderately influenced. Both JSS and SSS principals generally agree that the sit-at-home order negatively impacts school attendance, indicating a widespread and substantial effect across secondary schools in South-Eastern Nigeria.

Research question 2: To what extent does sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Response and Standard Deviation on extent does sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

S/No	Statement	Items	JSS (175)		Decision	SSS (174)		Decision
			\bar{X}	SD		\bar{X}	SD	
11	The sit-at-home order makes students anxious about their safety when coming to school.		3.31	0.71	HE	2.90	0.74	HE
12	Students often express fear and worry about possible violence due to the sit-at-home order.		2.40	0.50	LE	2.15	0.62	LE
13	The sit-at-home order has caused students to lose motivation and interest in school activities.		2.70	0.91	HE	2.86	0.82	HE
14	The sit-at-home order makes students feel isolated from their peers and school community.		2.45	0.76	LE	2.47	0.45	LE
15	Teachers feel stressed and overwhelmed by the impact of the sit-at-home order on their teaching schedules.		2.19	0.25	LE	2.35	0.22	LE
16	The sit-at-home order causes teachers to feel anxious about their safety and the security of their students.		3.00	0.86	HE	3.12	0.83	HE
17	Teachers feel emotionally drained from managing both the academic and psychological challenges the sit-at-home order creates for students.		2.98	0.76	HE	2.80	0.45	HE
18	The sit-at-home order negatively affects teachers' mental health, causing feelings of frustration and helplessness.		2.79	0.8	HE	2.65	0.73	HE
19	The constant disruptions from the sit-at-home order cause teachers to lose enthusiasm and passion for teaching.		2.21	0.71	HE	2.32	0.56	HE
20	The sit-at-home order makes teachers feel isolated from their colleagues and school activities		2.71	0.73	HE	2.82	0.50	HE
	Average Mean/ SD		2.50	0.62	HE	2.55	0.55	HE

Table 2 shows the average mean responses indicate a consistent psychological influence on both groups, characterized by anxiety, emotional distress, and feelings of isolation. The overall mean response for junior secondary school (JSS) students is 2.50, and for senior secondary school (SSS)

students, it is 2.55, both categorized as having a high extent (HE) of psychological influence. This indicates that the sit-at-home order significantly affects students' mental and emotional well-being. While, teachers similarly exhibit a high extent of psychological influence from the sit-at-home order, with average scores of 2.50 for JSS teachers and 2.55 for SSS teachers. The data suggests that teachers are also experiencing significant emotional challenges. In summary, this finding highlights the significant psychological influence of the sit-at-home order on both students and teachers in South-Eastern Nigeria. Students experience anxiety about safety and loss of motivation, while teachers report feelings of emotional distress and a decline in enthusiasm for their roles. Both groups feel isolated, underscoring the critical need for supportive interventions to address these psychological impacts and foster a healthier educational environment during such turbulent times.

Hypotheses

1. H_{01} : There is no significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals on the extent sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

Table 4: Test Statistic on difference in the mean ratings of junior and senior secondary school principals on the extent sit-at-home order influence school attendance of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Z-cal	p-value	Level of Sign.	Decision
JSS	175	2.51	0.63					
SSS	174	2.59	0.54	347	1.27	0.204	0.05	Accepted

The results in Table 4 shows that the z-cal is 1.27 and p-value (0.209) is greater than the significance level (0.05), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals regarding the influence of the sit-at-home order on school attendance. This findings suggest that both groups perceive the influence of the sit-at-home order on school attendance similarly, indicating a consensus on the issue.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals on the extent sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

Table 5: Test Statistic on difference in the mean ratings of junior and senior secondary school principals on the extent sit-at-home order psychologically influence Students and Teachers of secondary schools in South Eastern states of Nigeria

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	z-cal	p-value	Sig.	Decision
JSS	175	2.67	0.70					
SSS	174	2.64	0.59	347	0.43	0.665	0.05	Accepted

The results in Table 5 shows that the z-cal is 0.43 and p-value (0.665) is greater than the significance level (0.05), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of junior and senior secondary school principals regarding the psychological influence of the sit-at-home order on students and teachers. Therefore, the findings indicate that both groups perceive the psychological impact of the sit-at-home order similarly, suggesting a consensus on its influences.

Discussion of Results

The findings presented align with various studies on the influence of the sit-at-home order in South-Eastern Nigeria, showing a substantial influence on both school attendance and the psychosocial well-being of students and teachers.

Nwankwo and Eze's (2023) study on school attendance in Anambra and Imo states revealed a 65% drop in attendance due to the sit-at-home order, a result consistent with the data in Table 2. The overall mean response of 2.59 for both JSS and SSS principals underscores that the order significantly disrupts daily attendance and school activities. The widespread reluctance of parents to send their children to school is also reflected in these findings, matching Okechukwu's (2021) observation that safety concerns led to absenteeism. Additionally, the economic impact highlighted by Ekpo et al. (2022), particularly in terms of transportation disruptions affecting low-income families, reinforces the extent to which attendance is affected in rural areas, where access to resources is already limited.

The psychological effects of the sit-at-home order are also well-documented. The findings from Table 2 indicate a high level of psychological distress among both students and teachers, with an average mean of 2.50 for JSS students and teachers and 2.55 for SSS students and teachers. This aligns with research by Anyediigwu and Nzekwu (2022) and Oduah et al. (2022), who highlighted the anxiety, stress, and emotional strain that students and teachers experience due to the uncertainty and disruptions caused by the order. Nwafor (2023) further emphasized the emotional toll, linking inconsistent school attendance with emotional distress and burnout in students and teachers.

The consensus between junior and senior school principals, as shown in the findings of Table 4 and Table 5, where no statistically significant difference was observed in their perceptions of the sit-at-home order's impact, supports the widespread understanding of its negative effects. The psychological strain felt by both groups reflects the findings of Eze and Nnaji (2022), which identified emotional exhaustion and burnout among teachers as a result of having to revise lesson plans and manage students' stress-related behaviors.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that the sit-at-home order has significantly disrupted school attendance and caused substantial psychological distress among students and teachers in South-Eastern Nigeria. Both Junior and Senior Secondary School principals agree that the order influences school attendance to a high extent, leading to parental hesitation and decreased daily attendance. Additionally, the sit-at-home order has had a profound

Ineye-Briggs Amarachi Cynthia

psychological impact, with high levels of anxiety, stress, and emotional exhaustion observed among both students and teachers. The consistency in the perceptions of these impacts across different school levels underscores the widespread nature of the issue.

Recommendations As a result of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Schools in south-east should establish counseling and mental health support services to help students and teachers cope with the psychological stress caused by the disruptions.
2. To mitigate the academic disruptions caused by the sit-at-home order, state ministry of Education should explore flexible learning options such as online classes, blended learning models, or adjusted school calendars.

References

- Achumba, Igbomereho, O. & Akpanirobero, M. (2018). Security challenges in Nigeria and the implications for business activities and sustainable development. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 4(2), 156-171
- Adewale, M., & Igwe, C. (2021). Impact of civil unrest on students' mental health: A case study of sit-at-home orders in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 45(2), 145-160.
- Ajala, S. (2022). How Monday's sit at home contributes to poor learning of south east students. *The Nation Newspapers*
- Aligwekwe, O. (2022). Examining impact of sit at home on South East region. Retrieved <https://www.punching.com>.
- Anyadiiegwu, J.C. & Nzekwu, I. (2022). The impact of insecurity and IPOB sit at home order on teaching and learning in secondary schools in South East Nigeria. *World Education Forum*, 18(1), 2350-2401
- Chima, J.K. (2023). Biafra and the discourse on the Igbo genocide. Manquette University Faculty of History Publication.
- Chinwe, O. A., Okafor, E., & Ibe, G. (2023). Psychological impact of the sit-at-home order on adolescent students in Anambra State. *African Journal of Psychology*, 31(3), 211-229.
- Dambo, B.I & Kayii, N.E (2022). Utilization of open educational resources for enriched instructional content of business education courses in Rivers State universities. *International Journal of Innovative Technology Integration in Education*, 6(1), 15-21
- Ejembeare, I.J. (2021). A study of Gowon's post Nigeria Civil Wars. Reconstruction on Esan people of mid-western, Nigeria. *International Journal of Arts and Social Science Research*, 4(1), 390-405
- Ekechukwu, V.I., Nwogu, J.N., Ugwukwu, V.O. & Emeribo, G.C. (2022). Socio economic implication of IPOB sit at home order on South-East Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of*

Sociology and Anthropology, 20(2), 78-90

Ekpo, C. E., Agorye, E. A., & Ewah, S. O. (2022). Civil disobedience and its impact on education in Nigeria: A case study of IPOB sit-at-home order in the South East. *African Journal of Political Science*, 18(2), 45-63.

Ewetan, O.O. & Urhie, E. (2014). Insecurity and Socio economic development in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development Studies*, 5(1), 40-63.

Eze, J. C., & Nnaji, O. B. (2022). Professional and personal effects of sit-at-home orders on teachers: A study in Imo State. *Journal of Teacher Education Research*, 18(4), 120-138.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2012). National policy on education. NERDC press.

Ineye-Briggs, A.C, & Okwu F.B (2023). School administrators' awareness of alternative education models in implementation of migrant fisher-folk education programme in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. *West African Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 1(3), 32-44.

I'shaq, A.B., Musa, T.A. & Abduhafiz, Z. (2019). Education and insecurity in Nigeria. Oasis of Educational Consults.

Ighebuike, G.O. (2020). Margilization of some ethnic nationalities in the Nigerian stte.

The Igbo Experience. *African Journal of Arts of Humanities*, 6(2), 78-92

Mbazullike, A. (2021). 60 percent of Igbo elders want Nmandi Kanu freed. Retrieved from <https://www.vah.guardian.com>

Nwafor, C. (2023). Academic performance and emotional well-being of students during sit-at-home protests in Enugu State. *Journal of Conflict and Education Studies*, 52(1), 101-115.

Nwankwo, I. C., & Eze, N. (2023). The role of civil disobedience in Southeast Nigeria: A focus on IPOB's sit-at-home directive. *Journal of Conflict and Peacebuilding*, 7(1), 89-101.

Nwogu, U.J., Ineye-Briggs, A.C & Nwankpa, L.E(2021). Management of Innovative Education in Secondary Schools for Sustainable Development Goals in Rivers State-East. *African Scholars Journal of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences*, 3(5), 86-92.

Oduah, K., Ogundele, J., & Uche, A. (2022). The impact of sit-at-home orders on psychosocial well-being of students and teachers in Southeast Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Social Science Research*, 38(2), 88-104

Okechukwu, C. (2021). IPOB sit-at-home order: Implications for education in Nigeria's South East. *International Journal of Social and Political Studies*, 4(3), 112-126.

Okoye, P., & Eze, M. (2021). Teacher-student interaction and motivation during sit-at-home protests in secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Communication*, 24(3), 87-104.