

IMPACT OF MONDAY SIT-AT-HOME ON THE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of Monday sit-at-home on the production and marketing of agriculture products in Enugu state, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Five research questions including a thematically structured oral interview questions guided the study. The sample of the study comprised of 300 respondents (150 Farmers and 150 Agricultural product marketers) drawn from three Local Government Areas purposively selected in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research instruments namely the Impact of Sit-at-home on Agricultural Production and Marketing Questionnaire (ISAPMQ) and Impart of Sit-at-home Oral Interview Questionnaire (ISOIQ) were used to collect data used for the analyses. Three experts subjected the instruments to face validation from the Departments of Agricultural Education, Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu. The internal consistency of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha Method and it yielded a reliability index of 0.74. Data collected was analyzed using percentages, mean and Standard Deviation, while thematic analysis was used to analyze the transcribed interview statements. The findings of the study revealed that the Monday sit-at-home has brought untold challenges to agricultural production and marketing in Enugu State, and has equally caused more harm than good to the people and economy of the South East, Nigeria. It was therefore, recommended amongst others that the Nigerian government should go into a negotiation and dialogue with the aggrieved IPOB group to see how this sit-at-home malady can be stopped in South-East, Nigeria.

Keywords: Production and Marketing, Sit-at-Home, Impact, Agricultural products, perception.

Introduction

The Nigerian agricultural sector is one that has the potentials of boosting the country's economy, create employment to its teeming population and accrue massive foreign exchange to the country. The Agricultural industry is a very important sector in the production of raw materials required for the manufacturing of most economic goods and products in the nutritional, pharmaceutical, industrial, and textile industries today.

To most countries especially the developing countries, agriculture has been the main stay of their economies as most of them operate at the primary products level. Nigeria before the discovery of oil in large quantity held agriculture at high esteem as the industry was the main stay of the nation's economy. According to Irglobal (2021) in the 1960's the agricultural sector contributed 85% of Nigerian's foreign exchange earning, 80% of the Gross domestic product (GDP) and 90% at total employment in the country. The country was rich in the production of exportable crops such as palm fruits, palm kernel, cotton, cocoa, rubber and groundnuts. These remained the country's major export till the oil boom era of 1970 (Offoronedu, et al. 2022). However, since the country

started experiencing some civil unrest such as tribal/tribal clashes, students and youth protests, herdsmen clashes with farmers, kidnappings, lockdowns and various sit-at-home orders the country's agricultural sector has encountered reduced crop yields, food insecurity, scarcity, economic losses and instability.

The current Monday sit-at-home imposed by the indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) in the South East for the unconstitutional release of their leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, who is currently in detention, is a significant impediment on the production and marketing activities on agricultural products. Every Monday of the week citizens of the country in the South East zone comprising five States (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo) were not allowed to go out as there are usually total lockdown (Sahara reporter, 2021). This is synonymous to what happened during the Covid-19 pandemic. This has adversely affected agricultural production and marketing in the zone. This is so, as some major crops that are supposed to be planted or even harvested for distribution or consumption were totally abandoned. This scenario has led to a low production and distribution of food products. This is due to a shortage of labor as most

farm service providers stopped working due to the fear of traffic/movement restrictions (Wei and Lu, 2020). This has constituted a major challenge to agricultural growth to the nation, especially to the South East geopolitical zone of the nation.

Agriculture has been a medium of livelihood and sustenance to so many families in the urban and rural areas of South East, Nigeria. This has left so many families struggling to make ends meet through food production and marketing in order to satisfy the family needs (Amadi & Raji, 2020). Agricultural production is the production of any growing grass, crops, trees or farm animals attached to the surface of the land that has economic value. Agricultural production affects society in many ways including, supporting livelihoods through food, habitat, Jobs, providing raw materials for food and other products, and building strong economies through trade (Maryville University, 2022).

Agricultural marketing is the performance of all business activities that ensures the sequential flow of agricultural products from the place of production to the place where these products are used up by the end users. According to Kohl and Uhl (2002), Agricultural marketing is the performance of all business activities involved in the flow of food products and services from the point of initial agricultural production until they are in the hands of the final consumers. This is so as production is said to be complete only when that which is produced is marketed and gotten to the hand of the end user.

The weekly Monday sit-at-home phenomenon in the South East has really brought about a decline in the production and marketing of agricultural products. This is so as people are forced to remain at home due to fear of the unknown. Corroborating with the above Owoeye, Ezeanya and Obiegbunam (2022) admit that the sit-at-home order has generated a lot of controversy between the group and the Federal Government with deadly consequences on the economy in general. However, not many people envisaged the disastrous consequences that followed the order as lives and properties of residents of the South East region worth millions of dollars had been lost due to non-adherence to the sit-at-home directive (Okoye,2021). Furthermore, he emphasized that the IPOB Monday sit-at-home has had serious negative effects on national development, political activities, agricultural productions, agri-business and investments. As it is, every Monday, while farmers and agricultural product marketers on different parts of the country attend to their productive and agri-business

activities, their counterparts in the South-East avoid going to farm and market in order not to fall victims to the overzealous adherents. This however, draws back agricultural production and marketing enterprise in the region. Based on the above, one may ask the following questions. In an environment of panic fear and uncertainty, can effective production and marketing take place? Will the Monday sit-at-home promote or aid bountiful production and effective marketing of Agricultural products in the South East generally and the area of study specifically? It is against this background therefore, that the study investigated the impact of Monday sit-at-home lockdown on the production and marketing of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Determine the socio-economic characteristics of respondent farmers and marketers in the study area.
- ii. Determine the impact of sit-at-home lockdown on the production of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- iii. Determine the impact of sit-at-home on the marketing of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- iv. Ascertain the perceptions of farmers and marketers on the impact of sit-at-home lockdown on the production and marketing of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- v. Ascertain the challenges to agricultural production and marketing due to Monday sit-at-home lockdown in the study area.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- (i) What are the socio-economic characteristics of the respondent farmers and marketers in the study area.
- (ii) What are the impacts of sit-at-home lockdown on the production of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- (iii) What are the impacts of sit-at-home lockdown on the marketing of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- (iv) What are the perceptions of farmers and marketers on the impact of sit-at-home lockdown on the production and marketing of Agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.
- (v) What are the challenges to agricultural production and marketing due to Monday sit-at-home lockdown in the study area.

Design of the Study

This study employed a descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey research design makes use of interviews, questionnaires and observations to determine people's opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions (Anyakoha, 2009). In agreement with Anyakoha, Okwo (2012) corroborates by saying that a descriptive survey design allows for the behaviours, perceptions and state of affairs to be described as they currently exist. Nworgu (2015) further explains that descriptive survey design involves collecting and describing data in a systematic manner pointing out the characteristics, features or facts about a given population.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Aninri, Isi-Uzo and Uzo-Uwani Local Government Areas of Enugu State. The three Local Government Areas were selected because of their high involvement in food production and marketing and adherence to the compulsory Monday sit-at-home lockdown in South-East, Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of the study was 300, respondents which comprises 150 farmers and 150 Agricultural product marketers from the 3 selected Local Government Areas of the State. For the sample distribution, 50 farmers and 50 Agricultural product marketers were drawn from each of the three selected LGA's using simple random sampling technique thereby making a total of 300 respondents. Out of this sample, 30 respondents (15 farmers and 15 marketers) were randomly drawn and orally interviewed.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data was collected using two researchers-developed instruments namely the impact of sit-at-home on agricultural production and marketing questionnaire (ISAPMQ) which was used in answering research questions one, two, three and five and a structured interview guide named impact of sit-at-home oral interview Questionnaire (ISOIQ), which addressed research question four. The questionnaire items were structured on a four-point response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD) with assigned weightings of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The oral interview has three structured questions divided into themes one, two and three.

Method of Data Collection

The instrument was administered by the researchers and three hired research assistants each

from the three selected Local Government Areas. Data was also collected using oral interview. The reason is to avoid bias responses from the interviewees. The consent of the interviewees were obtained to have the interview audio-recorded. The essence of equally interviewing some respondents was to get a direct heart-felt, reliable and authentic information concerning the topical issue of discussion and to give the respondents the opportunities to express their heart-felt responses, rather than restricting them to the items contained in the instruments alone.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using percentages, mean and standard deviation. The real limits for the mean scores used for decision making was $3.50-4.00 = SA$, $2.50-3.49 = A$, $1.50-2.49 = D$ and $0.50-1.49 = SD$. The mean scores of 2.50 and above were rated as agree while 2.4 and below was rated as disagree. The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a useful method of investigating the viewpoint of different research participants. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as an interview or transcripts (Caulfield, 2019).

Validation of the Instrument

The two instruments were validated by three experts from the Departments of Agricultural Education and Business Education of the School of Vocational Education, Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu, State. Suggestions and corrections noted by the experts were effected before the instrument was used for data collection.

Reliability of the Instrument

A reliability test was conducted at Nsukka Local Government Area to determine the reliability of the instrument. Ten farmers and ten agricultural product marketers were used. The internal consistency of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha method. The instrument was considered reliable having yielded a reliability index of 0.74.

Results

The results of the analysis are presented in line with the research questions that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the socio-economic characteristics of farmers and marketers in the study area.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of respondent farmers and marketers in the study area.

Characteristics	Farmers (150)		Marketers (150)		Total (300)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gender						
Male	82	54.7	96	64	178	59.3
Female	68	45.3	54	36	122	40.7
Age						
21-30	10	6.7	21	14	31	10.3
31-40	41	27.3	39	26	80	26.7
41-50	52	34.6	55	36.7	107	35.7
51-60	33	22.0	27	18	60	20
61- and Above	14	9.3	8	5.3	22	7.3
Marital status						
Married	111	74	106	70.7	217	72.3
Single	17	11.3	24	16	41	13.7
Widowed	22	14.7	20	13.3	42	14
Household size						
1-5	68	45.3	90	60	158	52.7
6-10	57	38	45	30	102	34
11 and above	25	16.7	15	10	40	13.3
Educational status						
No Formal Education	35	23.3	30	20	65	21.7
Primary Education	75	50	68	45.3	143	47.7
Secondary education	40	26.7	47	31.3	87	29
Tertiary education	-		5	3.33	5	1.6
Years of Experience						
1-5	21	14	28	18.7	49	16.3
6-10	35	23.3	40	26.7	75	25
11-15	42	28	48	32	90	30
16-20	30	20	24	16	54	18
20 and Above	22	14.7	10	6.66	32	10.7

Table 1 shows the respondents socio-economic characteristics. Most (54.7%) males were farmers while 64% marketers of agricultural products were females. The table revealed that 35.7% of the respondents were between the age limit of 41 to 50 years. Most (75.3%) of the respondents were married, 52.7% had a household size of 1-5 persons, 47.7% had

primary education and 29% had secondary education. Findings showed that 28% of marketers and 32% of the farmers had 11-15 years of farming and marketing experience respectively.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of the Monday sit-at-home lockdown on the production of Agricultural products in the study area?

Table 2: Percentage, mean and standard deviation of farmers on the impact of Monday sit-at-home lockdown on the production of Agricultural products in Enugu State N=150.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Decision
1.	Farmers are restrained from the purchase of necessary farm inputs	80 (53.3)	43(28.7)	23 (15.3)	4 (2.7)	3.32	0.83	Agreed
2.	It increases the cost of production	92 (61.3)	30(20)	18 (12)	10 (6.7)	3.36	0.93	Agreed
3.	It demoralizes farmers that are committed to Agricultural production	86 (57.3)	41 (27.3)	20 (13.3)	3 (2)	3.40	0.79	Agreed
4.	It may lead to poor yield and reduced production	77 (51.3)	49 (32.7)	16 (10.7)	8 (5.3)	3.30	0.74	Agreed
5.	Delays harvesting of crops that leads to crop wastage and spoilage	90 (60)	42 (28)	14 (9.3)	4 (2.7)	3.46	0.77	Agreed
6.	Restriction of farmers 'movement to their various farms and markets	100 (66.7)	41 (27.3)	6 (4)	3 (2)	3.58	0.67	Agreed
7.	It led to reduced labour availability	97 (64.7)	38 (25.3)	9 (6)	6 (4)	3.50	0.78	Agreed
8.	Management practices of the farm were kept on hold which ultimately affects crop yield	93 (62)	41 (27.3)	11 (7.3)	5 (3.3)	3.48	0.77	Agreed
9.	It instills fear of the unknown thereby reducing the level of commitment of farmers	89 (59.3)	45 (30)	8 (5.3)	8 (5.3)	3.43	0.82	Agreed
10.	It keeps farmers away from farm which lead to the death of some crops	74 (49)	39 (26)	20 (13.3)	17 (11.3)	3.13	1.03	Agreed
Aggregate mean							3.39	

Result in table 2 revealed that majority of the farmers and marketers of agricultural products agreed that Monday sit-at-home has adverse impact on the production of agricultural products. This is evident as all the means scores of the items were more than 2.5. The aggregate mean of 3.39 falls within the scale range of agreed. This simply indicates that the inability of farmers to be able to buy necessary farm inputs, the increase of the cost of farm production, the

demoralization of farmers commitment to agricultural production, poor production yield, restriction of farmers movement to the farm, reduced farm labour and fear of being attacked in the farm are impacts of the Monday sit-at-home on the production of agricultural products in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What is the impact of the sit-at-home lockdown on the marketing of Agricultural products in the study area?

Table 3: Percentage, mean and standard Deviation of marketers on the impart of Monday sit-at-home lockdown on the marketing of Agricultural Products in Enugu State. (N = 150).

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	DEC
1.	It restricts movements of marketers from buying and selling Agricultural products	85	40	20	5	3.37	0.84	Agreed
2.	It increases the cost of marketing agricultural products	90	32	17	11	3.34	0.94	Agreed
3.	It creates unavailability of labour needed for marketing activities	88	36	20	6	3.37	0.86	Agreed
4.	It leads to scarcity in the supply of agricultural products	77	32	29	12	3.16	1.00	Agreed

5. It increases the selling/buying cost of Agricultural Products	93	36	15	6	3.44	0.83	Agreed
6. Creates fear of the unknown in the hearts of the marketers /buyers	86	29	19	16	3.23	1.00	Agreed
7. It demoralizes the commitments of marketers in the marketing of agricultural products	72	45	24	9	3.22	0.94	Agreed
8. It leads to product wastage or spoilage in the store	66	58	20	6	3.23	0.83	Agreed
9. It leads to low business patronage	71	46	17	16	3.26	0.10	Agreed
Aggregate mean					3.31		

Analysis of results of table 3 revealed that majority of the respondent marketers indicated that Monday sit-at-home lockdown has negative impacts on the marketing of Agricultural products in Enugu State. This is evidenced by the fact that all the items have mean scores above 2.50. For instance, the table reveals that the Monday sit-at-home lockdown restricts movements of marketers, increases the cost of marketing, leads to scarcity of agricultural products, creates fear in the heart of the marketers, demoralizes the commitment of marketers and leads to product wastage or spoilage in the store. This is also strengthened by the fact that the agreed mean of 3.31 also falls within the scale range of agreed.

Research Question 4: What are the perceptions of farmers and marketers on the effect of Monday sit-at-home lockdown on the production and marketing of Agricultural Products in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Theme 1: Are you aware of the Monday sit-at-home in the South-East Zone of the country?

The analysis of some of the farmers and marketers interviewed showed that the Monday sit-at-home in the South-East Zone of the country is a reality. The respondents interviewed in the interaction made it clear that the sit-at-home directive by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) holds every Monday and everybody, markets, banks and schools obey it directly or indirectly. Below are excerpts from some of the farmers and marketers interviewed.

"Hein! There is nobody in the zone that is not aware of the Monday sit-at-home. It holds every Monday and any other day the leader of the group will be appearing in court. It is compulsory for everyone. On such days, schools, banks, markets, transportation companies, private business centres and offices compulsorily closes.

A farmer, (name withheld) in the interview said that people are forced to obey the sit-at-home order because they are afraid of being attacked by unknown gunmen or some hoodlums using the opportunity to attack people. This collaborates with the

statement of a renowned businessman in Eke market in Eha-Amufu, Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State, who asserts that every Monday and any other day Mazi. Nnamdi Kanu will appear in court, the South-East is always a Ghost region as all businesses will be shut down because all residents stay at home mainly out of fear of being attacked.

Another trader, who wants to remain anonymous, narrated how he nearly lost this life while going to supply goods to a customer waiting for him somewhere on a Monday sit-at-home. He said he often comply with the sit-at-home directive but decided just to deliver goods to someone at Nkpologu in Uzo-uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State on that fateful Monday due to urgency. He lamented thus:

"I was riding my motorcycle with the goods at about 2pm on that fateful Monday. I ran into a group of young boys who almost mobbed me. They furiously asked me questions. I shouted I am Biafra, I support Biafra, but just want to deliver this goods to a customer waiting for me. Imagine if I could not speak Igbo, it would have been a regrettable experience".

Consequently, all farmers and marketers interviewed admitted that they were all aware of the sit-at-home order in the South-East. All the respondents interviewed had a story to tell about the sit-at-home phenomenon. They all assert that Monday is for now a day hallowed in the South East by sit-at home from 6am to 6pm.

Theme 2: What are the implications of sit-at-home on the production and marketing of Agricultural products in South-East, Nigeria.

From the information gathered from both the farmers and marketers on the implication of the sit-at-home lockdown reveals a huge negative impact on the production and marketing of Agricultural products in South-East Nigeria. A direct speech from one of the respondent farmers is represented thus.

"We usually derive pleasure going to farm on Mondays' after resting on Sunday, but since the Monday sit-at-home order, we are unable to do so as

much as we usually do before the lockdown. This has consequently affected our rate of production since this lockdown started in 2021”.

Collaborating to the above statement, another respondent marketer had this to say: “we no longer go to market on Mondays either to buy or sell. The lockdown directive of the IPOB group has really affected our marketing business negatively in the sense that losing a day weekly is cumulatively disadvantageous to our business and financial status”.

The above agrees with the statement of Mr. Ufodu in Ugwu (2022) and Ofoma (2023) that the sit-at-home has made business patronage to drop drastically. Umahi (2021) asserts that the region (South-East, Nigeria) loses nothing less than ₦10 billion Naira every Monday sit-at-home-day. It is worth saying that the sit-at-home directive has resulted in a diminishing return on the economy, agriculture, finance, transportation, education and business in the zone. Without any doubt people’s means of livelihood have been negatively affected especially those that live by their daily income.

Theme 3: What possible solutions do you think can curb the sit-at-home menace?

Information gathered from both farmers and marketers on possible solutions to curb the sit-at-home

menace reveals that the Federal Government have to take the bull by the horn to dialogue or negotiate with the aggrieved IPOB group. This dialogue or negotiation will go a long way in restoring peace, orderliness and most importantly the economy of the South East. Based on the findings, a respondent farmer commented thus:

“All I am saying is that the Federal Government should try to use dialogue to really find a lasting solution to thus National challenge. So many souls have been lost, innocent souls for that matter. Coupled with the problem of unknown gunmen, kidnapping and ritual murder. To be candid, we cannot sleep with our two eyes appropriately closed”.

From another dimension, a respondent marketer in Nenwe, Aninri Local Government Area proffered solutions to curbing this menace as she expressed her concern below.

“If you ask me, I will say that the Federal Government has kept quiet for a long time. I advocate for peace. If releasing, Nnamdi Kalu will restore peace let him be released. I was told that Senegal and Gambia were one country before. Today they are divided and there is peace now. If they say they want Biafra, let them follow the right process. All I am saying is let there be peace. Na mine own bi that” (Nigeria Pidgin English).

Research Question 5: What are the challenges of sit-at-home lockdown to agricultural production and marketing.

Table 1: Challenges of sit-at-home lockdown to agricultural production and marketing. (N=300).

S/n	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	DEC	
1.	Fluctuation in Price	156 (52%)	74(24.7%)	47 (15.6)	23 (7.7)	3.21	0.97	Agreed	
2.	High transportation cost	201 (67)	81 (27)	10 (3.3%)	8 (2.7%)	3.58	0.69	Agreed	
3.	Lack of storage facilities	144(48.6%)	50 (17%)	60(22.3%)	46(15.3%)	3.05	1.61	Agreed	
4.	High cost of farm inputs	158(52.6%)	72 (24%)	39 (13%)	31 (10.3%)	3.19	1.02	Agreed	
5.	Attack by hoodlums	220(73.3%)	62(20.6%)	10 (3.3%)	8 (2.7%)	3.64	0.67	Agreed	
6.	Low level of demand/Patronage	152 (50.7%)	86 (28.7)	46 (15.3%)	16 (5.3%)	3.24	0.90	Agreed	
7.	Spoilage of farm products	167 (55.7%)	65 (21.7%)	42 (04%)	26 (8.6%)	3.24	0.99	Agreed	
8.	Insufficient fund	69 (23%)	51 (17%)	80 (26.6%)	100 (33.3%)	2.29	1.16	Agreed	
Aggregate mean							3.18		

From the result in table 5 it shows, that Monday sit-at-home constitutes a challenge to agricultural production and marketing in the study area. This is evidenced as all the 8 items mentioned only insufficient

fund out of the eight items mentioned had a mean score that is below 2.50 bench mark of acceptance except insufficient fund with a mean score of 2.29. The aggregate mean of 3.18 that fell within the scale range

of agreed indicates that the Monday sit-at-home lockdown constitute a challenge to agricultural production and marketing in the study area.

Discussion of the Findings

The results of this study in research question one show that males dominated in the production while females dominated in the marketing of agricultural products in the study area. Most of the respondents were married with a household size of 1-5 persons. Educationally, Most of them attended primary school with 11-15 years of experience in the production and marketing of agricultural products. This agrees with the study of Oladejo and Sanusi (2008) where 65.5% of the respondents had 11-20 years of marketing experience in the marketing of plantain in Owo and Ose Local Government Areas of Ondo State, Nigeria. The study further revealed that the Monday sit-at-home lockdown affects negatively on the production and marketing of agricultural products in the study area. These perceived negative impacts include: farmers are restrained from purchasing necessary farm inputs, it increases the cost of production and marketing, demoralizes farmers and marketers commitment to production and marketing activities, it instills fear of being attacked and decreases productivity. Lending credence to this Babagana, Madaki, Ibrahim, Adama and Gujja (2019) state that the aftermath of Fulani herdsmen and farmers conflicts tends to instill fear to farmers and brings about decreased productivity of agricultural products.

From the findings of the study on the interviews conducted, it was revealed that the farmers and marketers are fully aware that sit-at-home order exists in south-East Nigeria. Many of the respondent farmers and marketers pointed clear scenarios depicting IPOB activities and how it has affected the production and marketing of agricultural products in the area. This finding collaborates with the study of Owoeye, Ezeanya and Obiegbonam (2022) who asserted that Monday sit-at-home is operational in the South-East. The authors buttressing on this, stated that the sit-at-home was a strategy by the Biafran agitators to register their grievance to restore an independence state of Biafra in the old Eastern region of Nigeria. The perceptions of the farmers and marketers on the consequence of the sit-at-home in the South-East revealed that the lockdown has brought serious untold adverse effects on the economy and agricultural productivity of the zone. It is worth mentioning here that the lockdown is more or less a threat to people in the region as many unwanted problems have occurred. Okoye (2021) lamenting on this asserted that many of

the Igbo people sympathize with the cause of IPOB agitation and Nnamdi Kanu's fate but the unfavourable condition caused by the sit-at-home order is fast prompting them to change their minds.

The study further revealed that the sit-at-home order brought untold challenges to agricultural production and marketing such as fluctuation in price, high transportation cost, lack of storage facilities, spoilage of farm products and attack by hoodlums. By the above challenges, the sit-at-home may be referred to as 'sit-at-home gone wrong' as it has caused more harm than good to the people of the South-East zone of the country. Considering the level of stagnation, decline and economic destruction the sit-at-home lockdown has brought to the zone, Mark, Obi and Chibuzor (2022) as a way out of the net, recommends a quick-end to the sit-at-home order. Accordingly to the authors, it is the surest way to resuscitate the 'about to die' economy, education, agricultural productivity, trade and commerce of the South-East zone of Nigeria.

Conclusion

All efforts by the State Governments of the South-East zone, the Ohaneze Ndigbo (the umbrella organization of the Igbo people worldwide), the traditional leaders and the law enforcement agencies to stop the sit-at-home order has proved abortive. This is so as every Monday farmers, marketers, civil servants students and other residents in the zone stay indoors. Any person that braves it to go out is usually careful because anything can happen. This sit-at-home order has brought about a decline in the production and marketing of agricultural products, hunger, untold suffering, business failure, conflicts, untimely deaths and poor quality education in the zone. Due to the Monday sit-at-home farmers are lagging behind in their agricultural productivity and marketing in the zone. There is need therefore, for something to be done drastically so as to resuscitate the state of things and to save the zone from economic collapse.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The federal government and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) should go into a dialogue on how to bring solution to the weekly Monday sit-at-home scenario that is adversely affecting the economy of the South East and the nation at large.
2. Since the aim of the sit-at-home was to pressurize the federal government to release the IPOB leader, it is recommended that the federal government should mandate the

judiciary to deliver judgement on the detained IPOB leader. This will help to restore normal business, transportation, agricultural and educational activities in the zone.

3. Farmers and agricultural product marketers should extend their operational time in order to make up for what was lost on Monday sit-at-home observations.

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