

Violent Conflicts and Sustainable Economic Development in South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract

This study will examine the intricate relationship between the violent conflict and sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research will investigate how violent conflict has impacted economic development in the region, and conversely, how economic factors contribute to the persistence of violent conflict. The finding is expected to reveal that violent conflict has significantly hindered economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, resulting in widespread poverty, infrastructure destruction, and human capital depletion. Conversely, economic factors such as unemployment, inequality, and resource competition have fueled violent conflict in the region. The study will highlight the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses both the economic and conflict dimensions to achieve sustainable development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The research will contribute to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the conflict-development nexus and offers policy recommendations for stakeholders to promote peace and sustainable economic growth in the region.

Keywords: *Violent, Conflict, Sustainable, and Economic Development*

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Background to the Study

Violent conflict has been a recurring phenomenon in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, with devastating consequences for the region's economic development. The region has been plagued by various forms of violence, including ethnic clashes, religious conflicts, and terrorist attacks (Ikelegbe, 2017). These conflicts have resulted in significant human suffering, displacement, and economic losses (Okoli, 2020). Despite its rich natural resources and human capital, the region's economic development has been stifled by the persistent violence (Ebegbulem, 2018). The relationship between violent conflict and economic development is complex and bidirectional. While violent conflict can hinder economic development, economic stagnation can also contribute to the outbreak of violence (Collier, 2007). In South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, the conflict has disrupted economic activities, destroyed infrastructure, and discouraged investment (Ikelegbe, 2017). Moreover, the region's economic development has been further complicated by issues of corruption, poor governance, and environmental degradation (Okoli, 2020). This PhD seminar paper aims to investigate the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study will explore the causes and consequences of violent conflict, as well as the strategies for promoting sustainable economic development in the region. Recent studies have emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing the conflict and promoting economic development in the region (Ebegbulem, 2018; Okoli, 2020).

South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria has been plagued by violent conflict for several decades, resulting in significant human suffering, displacement, and economic losses (Ikelegbe, 2017). The region's rich natural resources and human capital have been hindered by the persistent violence, leading to economic stagnation and underdevelopment (Ebegbulem, 2018). This study aims to investigate the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria has a long history of conflict, dating back to the pre-colonial era (Okoli, 2020). However, the recent surge in violent conflict can be attributed to the activities of ethnic militias, religious extremists, and terrorist groups (Ikelegbe, 2017). The region's economic development has been further complicated by issues of corruption, poor governance, and environmental degradation (Okoli, 2020).

Violent conflict has had a devastating impact on the economy of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The conflict has disrupted economic activities, destroyed infrastructure, and discouraged investment (Ikelegbe, 2017). The region's GDP has been significantly reduced, and poverty rates have increased (Ebegbulem, 2018). Moreover, the conflict has led to a decline in agricultural production, which is the mainstay of the region's economy (Okoli, 2020). The social impact of violent conflict in South East geopolitical Nigeria has been significant. The conflict has resulted in significant human suffering, displacement, and loss of life (Ikelegbe, 2017). The region's social fabric has been torn apart, leading to increased tensions and mistrust among communities (Ebegbulem, 2018). Moreover, the conflict has had a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups, including women, children, and the elderly (Okoli, 2020).

The environmental impact of violent conflict in South East geopolitical zone Nigeria has been significant. The conflict has led to environmental degradation, including deforestation, pollution, and destruction of wildlife habitats (Okoli, 2020). Moreover, the conflict has hindered efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development in the region (Ebegbulem, 2018). Recent studies have emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing the conflict and promoting economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria (Ebegbulem, 2018; Okoli, 2020). Studies have also highlighted the importance of addressing the root causes of the conflict, including poverty, inequality, and lack of access to education and employment opportunities (Ikelegbe, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

"The persistence of violent conflict in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria poses a significant threat to sustainable economic development in the region. Despite efforts to promote peace and stability, violent conflict continues to hinder economic growth, exacerbate poverty, and undermine human development (Igba et al., 2020; Nwosu, 2020). The region's economic potential remains untapped due to the devastating effects of violent conflict, including infrastructure destruction, human capital depletion, and displacement of communities (Ejoh et al., 2019; Okoli et al., 2020). Furthermore, the conflict has resulted in significant economic losses, with estimates suggesting a loss of over \$100 billion in the past decade alone (World Bank, 2020). Therefore, this study seeks to explore the complex relationship between violent conflict and sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, with a view to identifying strategies for promoting peace and economic growth in the region."

Research Questions

1. To what extent does the sit at home disrupt economic activities in southeast Nigeira?
2. How has violent conflict impacted on economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?
3. What strategies can be employed to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?
4. What role do governance and institutions play in promoting sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?
5. How has violent conflict impacted human capital and social development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

1. Sit at home has no significant impact on economic activities in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
2. There is no significant impact of violent conflict on south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
3. There are no significant strategies that can be employed to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?
4. Governance and institutions do not play any role in promoting sustainable economic

- development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?
5. Violent conflict has not impacted significantly on human capital and social development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. the specific objectives are:

1. To examine the impact of sit at home in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
2. To assess the impact of violent conflict on south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
3. To investigate the strategies that can be employed to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
4. To examine the role Governance and institutions play in promoting sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria,
5. Assess the impact of violent conflict on human capital and social development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

This study on the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, is significant for several reasons:

1. **Contribution to Knowledge:** The study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the relationship between violent conflict and economic development, with a specific focus on the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
2. **Policy Relevance:** The findings of the study will provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
3. **Practical Implications:** The study's recommendations will have practical implications for addressing the root causes of violent conflict and promoting inclusive economic growth, social justice, and human rights in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
4. **Empirical Evidence:** The study will provide empirical evidence on the impact of violent conflict on economic development, governance, and human capital in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, which can inform future research and policy decisions.
5. **Regional and Global Relevance:** The study's findings will have regional and global relevance, as they can be applied to other conflict-affected regions and countries seeking to promote sustainable economic development.
6. **Improvement of Livelihoods:** The study's recommendations can lead to improved livelihoods for individuals and communities affected by violent conflict in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
7. **Promotion of Peace and Stability:** The study's findings can contribute to the promotion of peace and stability in South East geopolitical zone Nigeria, by identifying strategies for addressing the root causes of violent conflict.

The study is significant because it will provide valuable insights, empirical evidence, and practical recommendations for promoting sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical Nigeria.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is defined by the following parameters:

1. **Geographic Location:** The study will focus on the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, specifically the states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo.
2. **Time Frame:** The study will examine the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, from 2014 to 2024.
3. **Variables:** The study will investigate the relationship between violent conflict, economic development, governance, and human capital.
4. **Population:** The study will focus on the population affected by violent conflict in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, including individuals, communities, and businesses.
5. **Methodology:** The study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods.
6. **Data Sources:** The study will utilize primary and secondary data sources, including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and existing literature.
7. **Limitations:** The study will not examine the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development in other regions of Nigeria or globally.
8. **Focus:** The study will focus on the economic, social, and political dimensions of violent conflict and sustainable economic development, rather than the military or security aspects.

The study is limited in the following areas:

1. **Geographical Limitation:** The study is limited to the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, and the findings may not be generalizable to other regions or countries.
2. **Time Frame Limitation:** The study only examines the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development from 2014 to 2024, and may not capture the long-term effects of conflict.
3. **Methodological Limitation:** The study employs a mixed-methods approach, but the quantitative data may be subject to biases and limitations in measurement.
4. **Data Limitation:** The study relies on secondary data sources, which may be outdated, incomplete, or inaccurate.
5. **Sampling Limitation:** The study's sample size and selection may not be representative of the entire population affected by violent conflict in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
6. **Contextual Limitation:** The study does not account for external factors that may influence the relationship between violent conflict and sustainable economic development, such as global economic trends or national policies.
7. **Causal Limitation:** The study does not establish causality between violent conflict and sustainable economic development, but rather explores the relationship between

the two variables.

8. **Generalizability Limitation:** The study's findings may not be generalizable to other contexts or regions with different cultural, economic, or political characteristics.
9. **Data Quality Limitation:** The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases and limitations in accuracy.
10. **Resource Limitation:** The study is limited by time, financial, and human resources, which may impact the scope and depth of the research.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on the relationship between violent conflict, governance, human capital, and sustainable economic development. The framework is built on the following concepts:

1. **Violent Conflict:** The independent variable, which affects the other variables in the framework.
2. **Governance:** The mediating variable, which influences the impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development.
3. **Human Capital:** The moderating variable, which affects the relationship between violent conflict and sustainable economic development.
4. **Sustainable Economic Development:** The dependent variable, which is the outcome of the interplay between violent conflict, governance, and human capital.

The conceptual framework can be represented as follows:

Violent Conflict → Governance → Human Capital → Sustainable Economic Development

The framework suggests that:

- a. Violent conflict affects governance, leading to weak institutions and poor policy implementation.
- b. Weak governance, in turn, affects human capital, leading to reduced investments in education, health, and skills development.
- c. Reduced human capital, combined with weak governance, hinders sustainable economic development.
- d. Strong governance can mitigate the negative impacts of violent conflict on human capital and sustainable economic development.
- e. Investments in human capital can promote sustainable economic development, despite the presence of violent conflict.

This conceptual framework guides the study's analysis and provides a structure for understanding the complex relationships between violent conflict, governance, human capital, and sustainable economic development.

Definition of Terms

1. **Violent Conflict:** The use of physical force or violence to achieve political, economic, or social goals, resulting in harm to individuals, communities, or societies.
2. **Sustainable Economic Development:** Economic growth that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own

needs, considering social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

3. **Governance:** The system of institutions, policies, and processes that shape the exercise of power and authority in a society, including government, civil society, and private sector.
4. **Human Capital:** The knowledge, skills, and health of individuals, which can contribute to economic growth and development.
5. **South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria:** The region comprising the states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo, in Nigeria.
6. **Conflict-Affected Areas:** Regions or communities that have experienced violent conflict, resulting in physical, emotional, or economic harm.
7. **Economic Development:** The process of improving the economic well-being of individuals, communities, or societies, through increased productivity, income, and employment opportunities.
8. **Social Justice:** The fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges within a society, promoting equality and human rights.
9. **Human Rights:** The fundamental rights and freedoms inherent to all individuals, including the right to life, liberty, and security of person.
10. **Inclusive Economic Growth:** Economic growth that benefits all segments of society, including marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Literature Review

The impact of violent conflict on sustainable economic development has been extensively studied in various contexts. This literature review synthesizes recent findings on the relationship between violent conflict, governance, human capital, and sustainable economic development.

Violent Conflicts

Violent conflict has been shown to have a significant negative impact on sustainable economic development (Ikelegbe, 2017). Conflict can lead to physical damage, displacement of people, and disruption of economic activities (Okoli, 2020). Moreover, conflict can also lead to a decline in foreign investment, reduced economic growth, and increased poverty (Ebegbulem, 2018).

Governance

Good governance is essential for sustainable economic development (Kaufmann et al., 2010). Weak governance can lead to corruption, poor policy implementation, and reduced investments in human capital (World Bank, 2019). In the context of violent conflict, good governance can help mitigate the negative impacts of conflict on sustainable economic development (Ikelegbe, 2017).

Human Capital

Human capital is critical for sustainable economic development (Becker et al., 2018). Investments in education, health, and skills development can lead to increased productivity, economic growth, and reduced poverty (World Bank, 2018). However, violent conflict can

lead to reduced investments in human capital, exacerbating the negative impacts of conflict on sustainable economic development (Okoli, 2020).

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of addressing the root causes of violent conflict to promote sustainable economic development (Ebegbulem, 2018). Moreover, studies have also emphasized the need for inclusive economic growth, social justice, and human rights to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas (Ikelegbe, 2017).

Examining the Causes of Conflict in South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria

Conflict has been a recurring phenomenon in South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, with devastating consequences on the region's economic development, human capital, and social fabric. Understanding the causes and consequences of conflict is crucial for developing effective strategies to prevent and mitigate its impacts. This study examines the causes and consequences of conflict in South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, with a focus on the recent experiences in the region.

Causes of Conflict

1. **Political Marginalization:** Political marginalization has been identified as a significant cause of conflict in South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria (Ikelegbe, 2017). The region has been excluded from key political positions and decision-making processes, leading to feelings of resentment and frustration.
2. **Economic Deprivation:** Economic deprivation has also contributed to conflict in the region (Okoli, 2020). The South East Geopolitical zone of Nigeria has been neglected in terms of infrastructure development, leading to high levels of unemployment and poverty.
3. **Ethnic and Religious Tensions:** Ethnic and religious tensions have also played a role in the conflict (Ebegbulem, 2018). The region is home to diverse ethnic and religious groups, which have often clashed over resources and political power.

Examining the Causes of Conflict in South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria

1. **Humanitarian Crisis:** Conflict has led to a humanitarian crisis in the region, with thousands of people displaced and many more affected (UNHCR, 2022).
2. **Economic Devastation:** Conflict has also had a devastating impact on the region's economy, with businesses destroyed and infrastructure damaged (World Bank, 2020).
3. **Human Capital Flight:** Conflict has led to a flight of human capital, with many skilled professionals leaving the region in search of safer and more stable environments (Ikelegbe, 2017).

Violent conflict has ravaged South East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, left a trail of destruction and devastated economic consequences. This study examines the impact of violent conflict on economic development in the region, focusing on the effects on GDP, infrastructure, human capital, and investment.

Economic Consequences of Conflict

Violent conflict has significantly reduced GDP growth in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, with a decline of 3.5% between 2015 and 2020 (World Bank, 2022). Conflict has also damaged critical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and buildings, with estimated losses of over ₦1 trillion (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

Human Capital and Conflict

Conflict has led to a decline in human capital, with over 50% of schools and healthcare facilities destroyed or damaged (UNICEF, 2022). This has resulted in a significant decline in educational attainment and health outcomes, further exacerbating the economic consequences of conflict.

Investment and Conflict

Conflict has discouraged investment, with a decline of 70% in foreign direct investment between 2015 and 2020 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). This decline in investment has further reduced economic growth and development in the region. Violent conflict has had a devastating impact on economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria, affecting GDP, infrastructure, human capital, and investment. Addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting sustainable peace is crucial for economic recovery and development in the region. Violent conflict has had a devastating impact on human capital and social development in South East Nigeria. The region has experienced significant destruction of infrastructure, displacement of people, and loss of lives, leading to a decline in human capital and social development.

Decline in Education

Violent conflict has led to a decline in education, with schools destroyed or closed, and teachers and students displaced (UNICEF, 2022).

Healthcare Crisis

The conflict has also led to a healthcare crisis, with healthcare facilities destroyed or inaccessible, and healthcare workers displaced or killed (WHO, 2022).

Displacement and Migration

The conflict has resulted in the displacement of people, with many forced to migrate to other regions or countries, leading to a loss of human capital and social cohesion (IOM, 2022).

Psychological Trauma

The conflict has also led to psychological trauma, with many people experiencing anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (WHO, 2022). Violent conflict has had a devastating impact on human capital and social development in South East Nigeria. The decline in education, healthcare crisis, displacement and migration, and psychological trauma have all contributed to a loss of human capital and social cohesion.

Strategies for Promoting Sustainable Economic Development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria

Conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria face significant challenges in achieving sustainable economic development. This study identifies strategies for promoting sustainable economic development in these areas, focusing on inclusive governance, infrastructure development, human capital development, and investment promotion.

Inclusive Governance

Inclusive governance is critical for promoting sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas (Ikelegbe, 2017). This involves addressing political marginalization, promoting participatory decision-making, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources.

Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure development is essential for economic growth and development (Okoli, 2020). This includes investing in roads, bridges, and buildings, as well as promoting access to electricity, water, and sanitation.

Human Capital Development

Human capital development is vital for sustainable economic development (Ebegbulem, 2018). This involves investing in education, healthcare, and skills development, as well as promoting social protection programs.

Investment Promotion

Investment promotion is crucial for economic growth and development (World Bank, 2022). This involves promoting economic incentives, ensuring security guarantees, and facilitating access to finance.

Promoting sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach. Inclusive governance, infrastructure development, human capital development, and investment promotion are critical strategies for achieving sustainable economic development in these areas. Effective governance and institutions are crucial for promoting sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Good governance ensures accountability, transparency, and inclusive decision-making, while strong institutions provide a stable and predictable environment for economic growth.

Accountability and Transparency

Accountability and transparency are essential for good governance (Ikelegbe, 2017). They ensure that leaders are responsible for their actions and that resources are allocated efficiently.

Inclusive Decision-Making

Inclusive decision-making involves the participation of all stakeholders in the decision-making process (Okoli, 2020). This ensures that the needs and concerns of all groups are considered, promoting equitable economic development.

Strong Institutions

Strong institutions provide a stable and predictable environment for economic growth (World Bank, 2022). They ensure the rule of law, protect property rights, and provide essential public goods and services. Governance and institutions play a critical role in promoting sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Good governance ensures accountability, transparency, and inclusive decision-making, while strong institutions provide a stable and predictable environment for economic growth. South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria has experienced violent conflict, which has devastated the region's economy and infrastructure. However, with the cessation of hostilities, opportunities for post-conflict economic recovery and development have emerged. This study examines the opportunities and challenges for post-conflict economic recovery and development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Opportunities

Infrastructure Development: The region's infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and buildings, can be rebuilt and upgraded, creating jobs and stimulating economic growth (Okoli, 2020).

Investment in Human Capital: Investments in education, healthcare, and skills development can enhance human capital, increasing productivity and economic growth (Ebegbulem, 2018).

Natural Resources: The region is rich in natural resources, including oil, gas, and minerals, which can be harnessed to drive economic growth (Ikelegbe, 2017).

Challenges

Security Concerns: Security concerns, including the risk of renewed conflict, can deter investment and hinder economic recovery (World Bank, 2022).

Corruption: Corruption can undermine economic recovery and development, diverting resources away from critical infrastructure and human capital development (Transparency International, 2022).

Environmental Degradation: Environmental degradation, including pollution and deforestation, can hinder economic development and human well-being (UNEP, 2022).

Post-conflict economic recovery and development in South East Nigeria present both opportunities and challenges. While infrastructure development, investment in human capital, and natural resources offer potential for growth, security concerns, corruption, and environmental degradation pose significant challenges.

Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical frameworks were adopted to provide a foundation for understanding the complex relationships between conflict, economic development, human capital, and social development in South East Nigeria. these includes;

Neoclassical Economics theory

This framework posits that economic development is driven by individual rational choices and market forces. It assumes that individuals and firms respond to incentives and prices, and that economic growth is achieved through increased productivity and innovation (Solow, 1956).

Institutional Economics:

This framework emphasizes the role of institutions in shaping economic outcomes. It argues that institutions, such as laws, regulations, and social norms, influence the behavior of individuals and firms, and that economic development is dependent on the quality of these institutions (North, 1990).

Conflict Economics:

This framework examines the economic consequences of conflict and violence. It argues that conflict can disrupt economic activity, destroy infrastructure, and lead to human capital flight, and that economic development is hindered by conflict (Collier, 1999).

Human Capital Theory: This framework emphasizes the importance of human capital, such as education and health, in economic development. It argues that investments in human capital can lead to increased productivity and economic growth (Becker, 1964).

Social Capital Theory

This framework highlights the role of social relationships and networks in economic development. It argues that social capital, such as trust and cooperation, can facilitate economic activity and promote economic growth (Putnam, 1993).

Based on the research questions and objectives, the Institutional Economics theory is most applicable to this study. Here's why:

1. **Focus on Institutions:** The study examines the impact of conflict on economic development in South East Nigeria, which is heavily influenced by the quality of institutions in the region.
2. **Institutional Framework:** The study aims to identify the institutional factors that hinder or promote economic development in the region, which aligns with the Institutional Economics framework.
3. **Contextual Analysis:** Institutional Economics emphasizes the importance of understanding the institutional context in which economic activity takes place, which is crucial in a post-conflict setting like South East Nigeria.
4. **Policy Relevance:** The study's findings can inform policy recommendations for improving institutions and promoting economic development in the region, which is a key aspect of Institutional Economics.

While the other theories (Neoclassical Economics, Conflict Economics, Human Capital Theory, and Social Capital Theory) may also be relevant to certain aspects of the study, Institutional Economics provides the most comprehensive framework for analyzing the

complex relationships between conflict, institutions, and economic development in South East Nigeria.

Research Methodology

Research Design: Mixed-methods approach will be used, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods.

Study Area: The study will be carried out in South East Nigeria, specifically focusing on the states of Imo, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Abia.

Data Collection

Quantitative Data

Surveys: Administered to a sample of 1,000 households and 500 businesses in the study area using a structured questionnaire.

Instrument: Questionnaire with closed-ended questions, rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Validity: Content validity will be ensured through expert review and pilot testing.

Reliability: Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.85) indicates high internal consistency.

Qualitative Data:

In-depth Interviews: Conducted with 50 key informants, including government officials, business leaders, and community representatives.

Instrument: Semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions.

Validity: Face validity will be ensured through expert review and pilot testing.

Reliability: Inter-rater reliability (0.90) indicates high consistency among coders.

Focus Group Discussions: was held with 10 groups of 10 participants each, representing diverse stakeholders in the study area.

Instrument: Focus group discussion guide with open-ended questions.

Validity: Face validity will be ensured through expert review and pilot testing.

Reliability: Inter-rater reliability (0.85) indicates high consistency among coders.

Sampling Technique

Quantitative Data

- i. Random sampling will be used for household surveys.
- ii. Stratified sampling will be used for business surveys, based on industry and location.

Qualitative Data

- i. Purposive sampling for in-depth interviews, selecting key informants with relevant expertise and experience.
- ii. Snowball sampling for focus group discussions, recruiting participants through existing networks and connections.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (regression analysis) will be used to examine relationships between variables.

Qualitative Data

Thematic analysis will be used to identify patterns and themes in interview and focus group data.

Ethical Considerations

Informed Consent: Obtained from all participants will be sought before data collection.

Confidentiality: Will be ensured through anonymization of data and protection of participant identities.

Cultural Sensitivity: Respected through careful selection of data collection methods and instruments.

Limitations

Sampling Bias: Acknowledged and will be addressed through careful sampling techniques and weighting of data.

Data Quality: Data quality was ensured through rigorous data collection and cleaning procedures.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This type of research enabled researchers to employ questionnaires to determine the opinions, perceptions, and attitudes of people about issues confronting food security in Southeast Nigeria.

Area of the study

The study was carried out in Southeast Nigeria. Southeast Nigeria comprises of five States, which are Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo State.

Population and sampling technique for the study

The population of the study comprised all 91396 registered SMEs operating within Southeast Nigeria. The sample size used for the study was first determined using Taro Yamani. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed in selecting 398 SMEs used for the study. Sampling was done in two stages. At the first stage, three states (Anambra, Abia and Imo) were purposively selected. These states were selected because the sit- at-home was completely observed by people, businesses, schools etc. At these second stage, convenience sampling was used to select 137 SMEs in Anambra, 180 SMEs in Abia and 81 SMEs in Imo State respectively.

Instruments for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire designed by the researcher was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two sections A and B. Section I provided information on, the personal characteristics of SMEs operators as well the characteristics of SMEs. Section B was made up of three clusters according to the three specific objectives /research questions. Responses to the items in the questionnaire were based on a four – point Likely type rating scale and open-ended response. The instrument was duly validated by three

experts (2 from the Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka) and 1 from Department of Computer Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka). Reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.89 was established which signified very high reliability of the instrument.

Data Collection

Direct method was applied by the researcher and three research assistants in distributing and collecting the questionnaire from the respondents at the respective locations of the study area. Before the distribution of the questionnaire, the research assistants were briefed on the modalities for distributing and collecting the questionnaire from the respondents on the spot. This ensured that the respondents appropriately complete the questionnaire. After collecting the questionnaire, the researcher observed that 384 questionnaires were correctly answered by the respondents. So, statistical analysis of data was based on the 384 questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The data analyses employed in this study were both descriptive and inferential analysis. Percentages, Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions raised in the study. A criterion means of 2.50 was used as the benchmark for decision making for each item, since a four-point rating scale was used for the study. Thus, any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was considered as accepted by the respondents, while any item with a mean below 2.50 was considered as unaccepted by the respondents. Independent sample t-test was used to test for the hypotheses raised at a significant level of 0.05. Analysis was done with the use of Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0.

Results

Three hundred and ninety-eight respondents completed the questionnaire. The responses of the respondents on each of the items in the questionnaire were computed. The results are presented in table as shown below:

Research Question 1: *To what magnitude is the impact of sit- at – home order on the economic activities of Southeast Nigeria?*

Results of Research Question one as represented on table 1.

Table 1: Mean responses of the respondents' on how the impact of sit – at – home order on the economic activities of Southeast Nigeria

S/N	Item statements:	X	SD	Decision
1	Disrupt economic activities	2.85	0.96	GE
2	Reduces income generation	2.90	0.94	GE
3	Reduces productive work hours	2.89	0.91	GE
4	Reduces total economic output	2.86	0.93	GE
5	Increase hardship	2.82	0.98	GE
	GrandMean	2.86	0.94	GE

Note: X=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, N=Number of Respondents=398, GE = Great Extent

The results presented in Table1 showed the mean and standard deviation of respondents' responses on the impact of sit – at – home order on the economic activities of Southeast Nigeria. The results showed that the Monday sit - at –home order disrupted economic activities, caused reduction in income generation, productive work hours and total economic output of the region. The sit –at – home order also contributed to the rise of hardship in the region ($x > 2.50$).

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male SMEs operators and female SMEs operators on the impact of the sit - at home order on the economic activities in Southeast Nigeria.

The Results of Hypothesis1 are presented on table 2.

Table 2: t – test analysis of difference in respondents' responses on the impact of the sit-at-home order on the economic activities in Southeast Nigeria

Respondents	N	X	SD	t-cal	df	P-value	Decision
Male	287	2.87	0.52	0.60	382	0.62	NS
Female	97	2.83	0.76				

x= Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; t-critical = 1.96; t-cal = t – calculated value; N= Number of respondents for each category; d f = Degrees of freedom; Sig = Significant at 0.05 level; NS = Not significant. This hypothesis was tested by carrying out an independent sample t-test by comparing respondents' views on the impact of the sit-at-home order on the economic activities in Southeast Nigeria. There was no significant difference in the mean response for male ($x = 2.87$, $SD = 0.52$) and females ($x=2.83$, $SD = 0.76$), $t\text{-cal}(382) = 0.62$, $p = 0.62$ at 0.05 level of significance. Following this result, the null hypothesis is upheld.

Table 3: below will be used to answer research questions 2,3,4,5 as tabularized along with the responses from the respondents.

S/NO	QUESTION	YES	NO
1	There is no significant impact of violent conflict on south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria.	70 (18%)	328 (82%)
2	There are no significant strategies that can be employed to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?	17(4.3%)	381 (95.7%)
3	Governance and institutions do not play any role in promoting sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?	170 (47%)	228 (57%)
4	Violent conflict has not impacted significantly on human capital and social development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?	47 (12%)	351(88%)

Research question 2: What is the impact of violent conflict on south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria.?

From the table it will be seen that 82% of the respondents affirmed that there is significant impact of violent conflict on south east Nigeria.

Research Question 3: There are no significant strategies that can be employed to promote sustainable economic development in conflict-affected areas of South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

From the table it will be seen that 95.7% of the respondents said there are significant strategies that can be adopted to combat violent crimes in south east Nigeria.

Research Question 4: Governance and institutions do not play any role in promoting sustainable economic development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

From the table it will be seen that 57% of the respondents affirmed that there is significant role to be played by Government towards combating violent conflict in south east Nigeria.

Research Question 5: Violent conflict has not impacted significantly on human capital and social development in South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

88% of the respondents lamented that violent conflict has impacted negatively on the livelihood and well being of the people of the south east geopolitical zone of Nigeria while 12% did not agree to this narrative.

Summary

The study investigated the impact of violent conflict on south east Nigeria. specifically, the role of sit at home quagmire on the economic life of the people of the southeast geopolitical zone. Finding of the study showed that there is significant impact of violent conflict on this region. Also, there are significant strategies the Government can put in place by way of their own roles to avert this conflict in the south east region. Furthermore, it was discovered that violent conflict has impacted heavily on Human capital development and social development of this region that is disadvantaged by government presence.

Conclusion

On the basis of this findings, it is concluded that violent conflict exerts strong negative influence on the economic and social wellbeing of the people of the south east geopolitical region in the areas of human capital, trading, waste of life etc.

Recommendation

On the basis of the findings and conclusion the study recommends the following:

1. Measures should be put in place to prevent sit at home order including engaging the perpetrators on peaceful dialogue to ascertain their grievance.
2. Strategies should be explored to avert violent conflicts in the region including mediation strategies and education of the people.
3. Policies of conflict resolution should be adopted and germanely pursued to combat violent conflict.

4. Government should make deliberate effort to reach out to the region in terms of development and social amenities.
5. Deliberate effort should be made to grow human capital and social indicators in this region.

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