

Igbo's Apprenticeship Style in Entrepreneurial Activity and Economic Development of the South East Region: A Study of International Market, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examined the Igbo's apprenticeship style in entrepreneurial activity and economic development of the South East Region: A Study of Margret Uhahi International Market, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey design, A Sample of 400 were drawn from the population of the market through purposive sampling technique. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. The data generated in the study was analyzed using simple percentage to answer the responses on each item while simple regression through SPSS was used to test the two hypotheses formulated in the study. The findings revealed that inadequate capital, fire incidence and lack of government support remained the major challenges facing the Igbo's entrepreneurial activity which has negatively affected the economic development of South East Region. Therefore, arising from the findings, the paper reached the conclusion that the Igbo's apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity has contributed immensely to the economic development of the south east region in the area of self-reliance, improve on the living standard of living of the people, reduction of unemployment and poverty among the people of the South East Region and to the Nigeria economy. In view of the above, the paper recommended that the South East governors should partnerships with the Igbo entrepreneurs to give them the necessary attention and support in the South East. Also, that the government should establish a special financial institution were the victim fire or any other disasters could get immediate small scale loan to support the business.

Keywords: Igbo Apprenticeship, Entrepreneurial Activity, Economic Development, International Market.

INTRODUCTION

Among the Igbos of the South East Region of Nigeria, apprenticeship system in their entrepreneurial activity has been attributed to economic development of the region. The economic development can be refer to as provision of self-reliance, improved standard of living, increase of income per-capita and reduction of poverty (Ajaero,2015). Apprenticeship is system whereyoungpeople between 12 to 17 years of age is sent for training referred to as Igba Odibo, Imu Ahia, andImu Oruaka to acquire the necessary skills needed for entrepreneurial activity. Iwueke, Halima &Oparaku (2020) pointed out that Igbo's apprenticeship is a form of human resource development programme that blends learning and training in

preparing individuals to set-up own and independent businesses. International Labour Organization (2017) defines apprenticeship as systematic long term training for a recognized occupation taking place substantially within an undertaking or under an independent craftsman, governed by a written a contract of apprenticeship, and is subject to established standards(Ajaero,2015)..

Apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos plays crucial roles in the economic development of the South East Region. The Igbo apprenticeship styles is an economic activity that exists between the “Oga” and “Nwaboi” that is a Master-Servant relationship where the master and his servant undertook to engage in economic activities for a period of time when the Master will establish his servant (Agazie,2012). The Igbos apprenticeship is mutual benefits to both the servant “Nwaboi” and the “Oga” Master. Millions of billionaires and millionaires among Igbos today were the product of apprenticeship from various entrepreneurial activities (Alake, 2018). The apprenticeship system of the Igbo people is the fastest means of economic growth among the people of the region. The Igbos styles of apprenticeship is an integral part of the economic activity, it has becomes a culture and tradition through which Igbo people groom their children of age to the economic prosperity. In Igbo land, both the rich and poor people, including the illiterates and educated ones had undergone the apprenticeship system because, the system provides the opportunity for quick economic success to the people. Igbos through the apprenticeship system have achieved self reliance, and contributes up to 80% of Nigeria’s economy while receiving the lowest decreasing allocation from the federal government (Amaechi and Netshandama, (2019).

The Igbo’s apprenticeship can be traced back the 15th century during the slave trade era, The period where about 320,000 Igbos were sold at Bonny as well as 50,000 sold at the Calaber and Elem Kalabari. It is interesting to note that Abakaliki was important centre for the slave trade in the 17th century (Isichei, 1976). The slave trade continued in the area with the Aro raids into Abakaliki and its surrounding areas through18th century. The Odozi Obodo society was one of the power secret cults operated at the period in Abakaliki. However, with the abolition of slave trade in the 19th century, the Igbo slaves who were exposed to entrepreneurship by their owners started in trading on commodities like sugar, tobacco, cotton for export to the Americans, Europeans and Asians. From there, the spirit for entrepreneurial activities among the Igbos continue galvanizing at the level they started moving into various areas of entrepreneurship during the pre-colonial era. As the Europeans traders continue to gain more access into the south east where the populated Igbos located, many new types of craftsmanship such as painting, driving, sewing, mechanic, bicycle repairing were introduced resulted from the industrial revolution. In view of the above, the modern apprenticeship was introduced in Igbo land. Basically,there are three (3)types of apprenticeship known as igbaodibo. They includes Igba Odibo apprentice house helper Imu Ahia apprenticeship on trade, and Imu-Oruaka- apprenticeship on craft, The three categories of apprenticeship differs but all geared toward on the improvement of economic development of the people (Olulu and Udeorah, 2018).

The Igbo’s apprenticeship goes involves the apprentice “Nwaboi” and the “Oga” Master. Before the commencement of the apprenticeship, the terms and conditions in the form of agreement are duly stated (Udu, 2015). For instance, an agreement is usually entered either written or orally between the prospective apprentice and Master to be. The agreement is made based on the nature of the entrepreneurial activity to be engage upon. In the case of craft making Imu-Oruaka, the Tutor will undertake to tutor the apprentice for the whole period of time agreed upon. Also, the prospective apprentice must agreed and demonstrate his readiness to serve with honest, humbleness, diligently and loyal to his Master until the expiration of the period of time agreed upon. For Imu-Oruaka (learn of Trade), the prospective apprentice may be demanded to provide certain amount of money that would cover his feeding, accommodation and other

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needs during his apprenticeship. In the case of Imu-Ahia (learn of Trade), the prospective apprentice and potential Master will determine the number of years the apprentice Nwa-Odibo will stay with his Master before he will established (Diyoke, 2014). Though, in spite of the contribution of the Igbos apprenticeship in entrepreneurial activity to the economic development of the Nigeria, the Igbo apprenticeship has often face with myriad challenges which often result in the closure of business and the termination of the apprenticeship agreement among the Igbos entrepreneurs. For instance, records revealed that often both within the South East and other part of Nigeria lost billions of naira through demolition and destruction by the government which often anchored of the illegal construction and even when the government mapped out billions for the compensation of the owners of the buildings, the Igbos who the occupant as tenants are been neglected by the government even their goods worth billions are been destroyed Nnonyeolu and Onyeizugbe, 2020). Other factors such as inadequate capital, fire disaster, absence of financial support by the government has remained the greatest challenged lead to the termination of the apprenticeship with the Master there by leading to frustration of the apprentice irrespective of the number of years that has served his Master in the business Chinweuba and Ezeugwu, 2017).

It is important to note Igbos apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity is practice in all part of the south east and all states in Nigeria Federation including Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory. Though, this paper has chosen Margret International Market Abakaliki. The International Market was constructed by the state government. The market has over 9000 shops including police station, fire service station, Motor Park and financial institutions operating in the market. Thus, this study sought to examine the apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos and economic development of the South East Region with special focus on Margret Umahi International Market, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Statement of the Problem

Apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos of the South East Region of Nigeria have remained an integral part of their economy. This apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity has been adjudged as one the best strategies of economic development around the world. Though, in spite of the contribution of the Igbos apprenticeship in entrepreneurial activity to the economic development of the Nigeria, the Igbo apprenticeship has often face with myriad of challenges which often result in the closure of business and the termination of the apprenticeship agreement among the Igbos entrepreneurs. For instance, records revealed that often both within the South East and other part of Nigeria lost billions of naira through demolition and destruction by the government which often anchored of the illegal construction and even when the government mapped out billions for the compensation of the owners of the buildings, the Igbos who the occupant as tenants are been neglected by the government even their goods worth billions are been destroyed. Other factors such as inadequate capital, fire disaster, absence of financial support by the government has remained the greatest challenged lead to the termination of the apprenticeship with the Master there by leading to frustration of the apprentice irrespective of the number of years that has served his Master in the business.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the Igbo’s apprenticeship style in entrepreneurial activity and economic development of the South East Region while the specific objectives are:

- (i) To investigate whether the Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria
- (ii) To ascertain whether the Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have contributed to standard living of the people of the South East Region

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Research Hypotheses

H₀: The Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have not contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria

H₀: The Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among have not contributed to the standard living of the people of the South East Region

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Framework

The Concept of Apprentice

Apprentice refers to a person who learns a job or skill by working for a fixed period of time, for someone who is very good at that job or skill (Burt, 2000). An apprentice is therefore one, in most cases, a teenager or young person who elects, or is persuaded to undertake or acquire practical, and in some cases, theoretical knowledge in a specialised area of interest, or occupation he/she would want to go into in future, or earn a living from. Apprentice refers is a person who has agreed to submit himself/herself within a period of time under the tutelage of a master/mistress, with the aim of acquiring practical, hands on, experience, and mastering the nitty-gritty of a trade, vocation or profession (Agomoh, 2010). Apprenticeship as systematic long term training for a recognized occupation taking place substantially within an undertaking or under an independent craftsman, governed by a written a contract of apprenticeship, and is subject to established standards International Labour Organization (ILO 2017). Vareto (2017) looks at “apprenticeship as a job that includes training”. This is too sweeping a definition, as it includes everything in employment circles as apprenticeship, whether it is training on the job, or off the job. Gonnon, (2011) opines that apprenticeship is a mode of learning that focuses on acquiring specialised skills pursuant to getting young adults ready for work and society. Generally speaking, apprenticeship provides the apprentice specific opportunity “to get a foot in the door for future employment (UNESCO, 2015).

Igbo Apprenticeship

The Igbo Apprenticeship Style is embedded in the culture and tradition of Ndi Igbo. Ab initio, the inclination of Ndi Igbo to business (Obunike, 2016), venture capitalism (Chinweuba & Ezeugwu, 2017) and business incubation (Neuwirth, 2017) has continued to elicit divergent connotations. Agbionu, Emejulu & Egolum (2015) perceived the Igbo entrepreneurship as a system of mentorship where the master is the mentor and the apprentice is the mentee. Another variant is master-servant relationship – apprenticeship (Obunike, 2016; Neuwirth, 2017). Both systems involve training or tutoring individuals by successful masters and professionals of a given skill or profession. Ekekwe (2021) further conceptualized the Igbo Apprenticeship System (IAS), as a Communal Enterprising Framework (CEF), where successful businesses develop others, and over time provide capital and give away [arguably] their customers to the new businesses. According to him, the uniqueness of this model is that few businesses grow to become very dominant, since they keep relinquishing market share, and in doing so, they accomplish one thing: a largely equal community where everyone has opportunities, no matter how small. It is alluded that the IAS is modeled to achieve more inclusive, just, and equitable economic systems that work for all, not just a few. In Igbo land, the apprenticeship system comes with various nomenclature like: Okpu-uzu na Nwa-uzu’ (meaning black smith and servant), where craftsmanship is involved; Oga na Nwa-boyi (meaning master and servant), where apprenticeship is involved. These names refer to the relationship between a master and apprentice, depending on the trade or type of business.

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Entrepreneur

An attempt at defining entrepreneurship or who is an entrepreneur is variously described metaphorically as; ‘wading through a jungle of theories (Hisrich, Peters, and Shepherd, 2008). The definition of entrepreneurship is as diverse as there are theorists, but three schools of thought appear dominant: The Economic, Sociological and Psychological. The economic school adopted the functionalist perspective (i.e. what the entrepreneur does). Here, the entrepreneur operated in the domain of a middleman, administrator/manager, uncertainty bearing, opportunity identification and exploitation (Cantillon, 1776; Say, 1803; Knight, 2006; Schumpeter, 1934; 197 RUIJMASS (Vol. 9 No 1) Jun 2023 Kirsner, 1961), cited in Onu (2017). The sociological school considered socio-cultural imperatives as important determinant of the entrepreneur’s behaviour, e.g. influences of family, socialization, religion, experience, values and reward system (Weber, 1947) as cited in Akpor-robaro (2012). Whereas these factors are important, they, at best, complemented other internal and external variables within the operating environment. On the other hand, the psychological school centered its discourse on the characteristics/personality traits of the entrepreneur, e.g. resourcefulness, resilience, perseverance, optimism, locus of control, risk tolerance, among others (McClelland, 1961), cited in Onu (2017). It would appear that future definitions of entrepreneurship took its bearing from the standpoint of these foundational beginnings. At different times, attempts had been made either to further elucidate the positions of these schools, or a contentious rhetoric against the categorization, or yet a synthesis of the different conceptual positions of the schools. Abstracting from the various definitions, cultural entrepreneurship is primarily supported by the sociological school, and complemented by the psychological and the economic schools.

The word “entrepreneur” can be trace to the French language used as “entreprenre” meaning to “undertake” thus, entrepreneur is defined as an undertaker (Vracheva and Stoyneva, 2020). According to Okafor (2020) entrepreneur is someone who has an idea and who works to create a product or services that people will buy as well as organisation support to that effort. An entrepreneurs are those who have the ability to see and evaluate business opportunities together with the necessary sources to take advantage of them and initiate opportunities and action to ensure success (International Labour Organisation,2016).

Types of Igbo Apprenticeship (Igba-Odibo)

Basically, research has it that there are two ways of practicing apprenticeship in Igbo lands; these types are the Igba-Boy (serving) and the Imu-Ahia (learning) apprenticeship system.

Today, Imu Ahia/Igba Boi has grown to become a cultural heritage in the Eastern region of Nigeria as it has been passed from generation to generation. The Imu-Ahia Igbo Apprenticeship system all started because the Igbo people needed to take back their future which was taken from them. Because they had barely to survive on and limited resources to use, they had to figure out a way of generating revenue at any time. Petty trade was one of the only ways to build back destroyed communities as well as farming, but then, farming required time that was not readily available at that moment.

Imu-Ahia (business coaching): this is used for a learner who is not under the direct supervision of a master/coach in marketing business, but who is just there to learn the business. It is mainly for those who have some capital to invest in a business but lack the knowledge thereof. Many traders use this also to diversify their businesses.

Imu-oru or Imu-Oruaka (craft/vocational apprenticeship): this involves working with different tools and equipment. It means learning the expert knowledge of a particular vocation. It is also a means of diversification.

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Igba-Odibo (apprenticeship): once a ward is under the care of his master/mistress, he becomes a servant “Odibo” (servant). The “Igba-odibo” (apprenticeship) in this context refers to someone who is being trained in the act of buying and selling or marketing concepts. It is a process whereby a family gives out their children to live and serve the wealthy ones in the society.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE NWABOI APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

The challenges facing the apprenticeship system(s) in Nigeria are numerous but some of those that relate directly to the Nwaboi apprenticeship System include the following: Non-Settlement of Apprentices: Dishonesty on the part of the Master or the apprentice has tended to dent the good intentions of the Nwaboi apprenticeship system. It has been observed that towards the expiration of the agreed apprenticeship period in some cases that Masters accuse the apprentices of frivolous crimes and send them away just to avoid their contractual obligations and thus deprive them of the settlement entitlements (Agomoh, 2010).

Similarly, due the fears of this scenario and sometimes due to inherent dishonesty, apprentices also run away with their Master’s money or properties. It has been contended that this type of mistrust is an obstacle to the future and survival of the system. The Igbo apprenticeship system often leads to abuses on both sides. Worst still, there has been news of Inductees liquidating their Mentors and hurling away their wealth. One of the outstanding enduring weaknesses of the Igbo entrepreneurship is the absence of most Igbo entrepreneurs to harness positively their entrepreneurial tendencies and proceeds to the development of the Igbo nation.

Review of Empirical Studies

Udu (2015) conducted survey on apprenticeship training system and business sustainability in Anambra state using a population of 1000 respondents from different trades/ crafts/ business. Questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection while Chi- Square was used to test the hypotheses. Related literatures on apprenticeship and business sustainability were reviewed. Findings revealed that the level of education of the apprentices determines the acquisition of the trade knowledge and also the Masters willingness to mentor the apprentices who must be ready and have the capacity to learn.

Ekesiobi & Dimnwobi (2020) studied the entrepreneurship practice of the Igbos of South Eastern Nigeria. The study intended to deepen entrepreneurial development and employment generation in the country as well as provide empirical support to situate the Igbo entrepreneurship model (IEM) among existing entrepreneurship literature, particularly for research in developing countries. The study adopted a quantitative approach to examine 1187 responses carefully drawn from the Onitsha and Nnewi business clusters in Anambra state. In addition to descriptive demonstrations, the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) technique was employed to estimate the effects of treatment on the treated by pairing treatment and control units with similar attributes on the propensity score and other likely covariates.

Anigbogu, Onwuteaka & Okoli (2019) examined the Igbo man perspectives of apprenticeship and entrepreneurial development in southeast Nigeria: Implications to economic growth using the Principal Components Analysis (PCA) and the regression model of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS). A total sample of four hundred and eighty two (482) SMEs owners of Igbo extraction were the respondents of this study. From the result of the PCA, the principal components that serves as motivations for apprenticeship by Igbo entrepreneurs is the cash infusion giving to apprentice as start-up capital. Secondly, the principal components form the Igbo man perspectives of factors influencing entrepreneurial development is tolerance for risk and thirdly, the principal components from the challenges in the Igbo man apprenticeship system is that apprentices sometimes steals from their masters and adds to their start-up capital. Regression results revealed that all the three coefficients (The motivations for apprenticeship by

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Igbo entrepreneurs; Igbo man perspective of factors influencing entrepreneurial development; and challenges in the Igbo man apprenticeship system) have significant effect on entrepreneurial development in southeast Nigeria.

Kanu (2019), investigated the relationship between Igwebuiké philosophy and the socioeconomic categories of Igbo reality, with particular reference to the Igbo apprenticeship system anchored on the Igbo social structure of reality, the Igbo think home ideology and the Igbo spirit of resilience. Using the philosophical idea of Igwebuiké, this piece has established the centrality of Igwebuiké in the Igbo apprenticeship system that has created wealth over the years for the Igbo, making the Igbo the most successful business men and women in Africa. The beauty of it is its simplicity. It is a system that does not take equity or require raising huge capital. It is driven by a human-platform and it works based on the Igwebuiké philosophy that understands the other as a part of me, and thus making me responsible for the other. Beginning with the question of who the Igbo is, this paper studied and unveiled the various dimensions of the Igbo apprenticeship system and the human platform or network that underlies its efficacy.

Onyima, Nzewi & Chiekezie (2013) investigated the effects of apprenticeship and social capital on new business creation process of Igbo entrepreneurs in Wukari Taraba State. The high success rate of apprentice turned entrepreneurs and increasing attachment of these entrepreneurs to their ethnic based union were the reasons that gave rise to the study. 40 businesses located in Wukari Local Government Area that were established by Igbos were randomly selected and questionnaire method was the mechanism applied in generating responses. Findings revealed that while apprenticeship had significant effects on pre-founding activities- when the business was taking off, social capital became important when the business had been established. Apprenticeship had significant effects on business idea generation, idea modification, business location and financing while social capital served as source of insurance services and access to information. The study recommended that apprenticeship practice should be revived and modernized and also that ethnic based unions should be given legal recognition and restructured to play both social and economic role

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. The study was conducted at Margret International Market Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. A sample size of 400 was taken from the total population of the traders operating in the Margate International market Abakaliki, Ebonyi State using purposive technique. Both primary and secondary data were utilised in the study. Primary data was collected through questionnaire The copies of the returned questionnaire were analyzed using simple percentage to answer the responses collected from items while Simple Regression Analysis with the use of statistical package of social science (SPSS) to test the two hypotheses at 5% level of significance.

Data Analysis and Results

The total of (400) four hundred questionnaire were issued out to the respondents of the study, three hundred and sixty (360) resending 90% of the questionnaires were retrieved while (40) forty representing 10% could not be retrieved back in the study.

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Table 1: The Response on whether the Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria

Summary of the Inferential Statistics

S/N	ITEM	N	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1	Apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity is a means to self sustenance in South East	360	170 (47.2)	150 (41.7)	15 (4.2)	5 (1.4)	20 (5.6)
2	Apprenticeship among Igbo’s has reduced poverty in the South East Region	360	180 (50)	140 (38.9)	5 (1.4)	10 (2.8)	25 (6.9)
3	Apprenticeship system among Igbo’s remained the best approach for poverty reduction in South East	360	170 (47.2)	150 (41.2)	10 (2.8)	20 (5.6)	10 (2.8)
4	Apprenticeship styles among the Igbo’s improves self-reliance in the South East Region	360	190 (52.7)	130 (36.1)	10 (2.8)	10 (2.8)	20 (5.6)
5	Apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbo’s has led to improvement of the South East Region	360	210 (58.3)	130 (36.1)	5 (1.4)	10 (2.8)	15 (4.2)
	Total	360					

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above, question (one) sought to know whether apprenticeship styles of entrepreneurial activity among Igbos contribute to the means to self sustenance in South East, 170 which represented 47.2% respondents strongly agreed, also, 150 which represented 41.7 % of the respondents agreed, on the other hand, 15 respondents which represented 2.8 . % were undecided 5 respondents disagreed while 20 respondents that represented 5.6% strongly disagreed. Question two investigated whether Apprenticeship among Igbos has reduced poverty in the South East Region it was observed that 180 respondents which represents 50 % strongly agreed; 140 respondents which represented 38.9 % agreed; 5 respondents representing 1.4% was undecided. Also, it revealed that 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % disagreed while 25 respondents which represented 6,9 % strongly disagreed. Question three of the table sought to find out whether the apprenticeship system among Igbos remained the best approach for poverty reduction in South East 170 respondents which represented 47.2 % strongly agreed; 150 respondents which represented 41.2 % agreed; 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % was undecided, 20 respondents which represented 5.6% disagreed while 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % strongly disagreed. Question four of the table seeks to find out whether apprenticeship styles among the Igbos improves self-reliance in the South East Region revealed that 190 respondents which represented 52.7% strongly agreed; 130 respondents which represented 36.1 % agreed; 5 respondents which represented 1.4 % was undecided,10 respondents which represented 2.8 % disagreed while 15 respondents which represented 4.2 % strongly disagreed. Question five of the table examined whether apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos has led to improvement of the South East Region indicated that 210 respondents which represented 58.3% strongly agreed; 130 respondents which represented 36.1% agreed; 5 respondents which represented 1.4 % was undecided, 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % disagreed while 15 respondents which represented 4.2 % strongly disagreed.

Table 2: The response on whether the Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have contributed to standard living of the people of the South East Region

Summary of the Inferential Statistics

S/N	ITEM	N	SA	A	UN	D	SD
6	Apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity improved income per capital of the people in the South East	360	210 (58.3)	120 (33.3)	10 (2.8)	12 (3.3)	8 (2.2)
7	Apprenticeship system in entrepreneurial activity among Igbo’s improves productivity in the South East Region	360	195 (54.2)	125 (34.7)	5 (1.4)	15 (4.2)	20 (5.6)
8	Apprenticeship system in entrepreneurial activity among Igbo’s encourage hard working and focus among the Igbo’s	360	180 (50)	140 (38.9)	10 (2.8)	10 (2.8)	20 (5.6)
9	Apprenticeship styles among the Igbo’s improves creativity in the South East Region	360	190 (52.8)	145 (40.3)	5 (1.4)	10 (2.8)	15 (4.2)
10	Apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbo’s led to fast economic growth among the people of South East Region	360	205 (56.9)	130 (36.1)	7 (1.9)	13 (3.6)	5 (1.4)
	Total	360					

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table above, question (six) sought to know whether apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity improved income per capital of the people in the South East shows that 210 which represented 58.3% respondents strongly agreed, also, 120 which represented 33.3 % of the respondents agreed, on the other hand, 10 respondents which represented 2.8% were undecided 12 respondents represents 3.3% disagreed while 8 respondents that represented 2.2% strongly disagreed. Question seven investigated whether Apprenticeship among Igbos has reduced poverty in the South East Region it was observed that 180 respondents which represents 50 % strongly agreed; 140 respondents which represented 38.9 % agreed; 5 respondents representing 1.4% was undecided. Also, it revealed that 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % disagreed while 25 respondents which represented 6,9 % strongly disagreed. Question eight of the table sought to find out whether the apprenticeship system in entrepreneurial activity among Igbos encourage hard working and focus among the Igbos 180 respondents which represented 50 % strongly agreed; 140 respondents which represented 38.9 % agreed; 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % was undecided, 10 respondents which represented 2.8% disagreed while 20 respondents which represented 5.6 % strongly disagreed

Question nine of the table seeks to find out whether the apprenticeship styles among the Igbos improves creativity in the South East Region revealed that 190 respondents which represented 52.8% strongly agreed; 145 respondents which represented 40.3 % agreed; 5 respondents which represented 1.4 % was undecided, 10 respondents which represented 2.8 % disagreed while 15 respondents which represented 4.2 % strongly disagreed. Question ten of the table examined whether the apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos led to fast economic growth among the people of South East Region indicated that 205 respondents which represented 56.9% strongly agreed; 130 respondents which

represented 36.1% agreed; 7 respondents which represented 1.9 % was undecided, 13 respondents which represented 3.6 % disagreed while 5 respondents which represented 1.4 % strongly disagreed.

Hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis 1

H₀: The Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have not contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria

H₁: The Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
1	.904 ^a	.817	.817	.918	.604	51.871	.001

Result shows that correlation coefficient (R) which has the value of 0.939 indicates that the linear correlation is positive and strong between the dependent variable and the independent variable. R-square is the coefficient of determination of the correlation which has the value 0.817 i.e. 82% approximately. This means that 82% of the total variation in the dependent variable, Margret Umahi International Market was explained by the independent variable, Apprenticeship Styles in entrepreneurial activity among Igbo’s. The above analysis indicated shows that p-value (0.001) is less than (0.05) level of significance. The coefficient of 0.801 and the t-value of 51.871 also show that the impact is positive. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld and concludes that the Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity have contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis (2)

H₀: The Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among have not contributed to the standard living of the people of the South East Region

H₁: The Igbo’s apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial activity among have contributed to the standard living of the people of the South East Region

Model Summary

Mode l	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Beta	T	Sig.
1	.936 ^a	.875	.875	.918	.909	50.166	.000

Result indicated that correlation coefficient (R) which has the value of 0.936 indicates that the linear correlation is positive and strong between the dependent variable and the independent variable. R-square is the coefficient of determination of the correlation which has the value 0.875 i.e 88% approximately. This means that 88% of the total variation in the dependent variable, Margret Umahi International Market was explained by the independent variable, Apprenticeship Styles in entrepreneurial activity among Igbo’s. The above analysis indicated that the p-value (0.001) is less than (0.05) level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld. The coefficient of 0.918 and the t-value of 50.166 also show that there is positive relationship between the Igbo’s

apprenticeship styles of entrepreneurial activity and improvement of standard of the living of the people of South East Region of Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis One: the result shows that the correlation coefficient (R) which has the value of 0.939 indicates that the linear correlation is positive and strong between the dependent variable and the independent variable. R-square is the coefficient of determination of the correlation which has the value 0.817 i.e. 82% approximately. This means that 82% of the total variation in the dependent variable, Margret Umahi International Market was explained by the independent variable, The above analysis indicated shows that p-value (0.001) is less than (0.05) level of significance. The coefficient of 0.801 and the t-value of 51.871 also show that the impact is positive. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld and concludes that the apprenticeship styles in entrepreneurial styles of entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos have significantly contributed to the economic development of the South East Region of Nigeria. This finding is line with Iwueke, Halima & Oparaku (2020) who conducted survey on apprenticeship training system and business sustainability in Anambra state. Their study revealed apprenticeship training system has contributed to the sustainability of business in Anambra State

Hypothesis Two: Result on the table 3 revealed that correlation coefficient (R) which has the value of 0.936 indicates that the linear correlation is positive and strong between the dependent variable and the independent variable. R-square is the coefficient of determination of the correlation which has the value 0.875 i.e 88% approximately. This means that 88% of the total variation in the dependent variable. The result also indicated that p-value (0.001) which is less than (0.05) level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld. Also, the coefficient of 0.918 and t-value of 50.166 indicated a positive impact of apprenticeship styles of entrepreneurial activity among Igbos on the standard of the living of the people of South East Region of Nigeria. This result is collaborated with Onyima, Nzewi & Chiekezie (2013) who investigated the effects of apprenticeship and social capital on new business creation process of Igbo entrepreneurs in Wukari Taraba State. The increase rate of success among the apprentice turned entrepreneurs and increasing attachment among the Igbos entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

The study “titled apprenticeship styles of entrepreneurial activity among Igbos and economic development of the south east region: A Study of Margret Umahi International Market, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, Nigeria” was conducted to examine the importance of the apprenticeship styles of entrepreneurial activity among the Igbos to the development of the economy of the South east in particular and to Nigeria in general. Arising from the findings. The study revealed that the apprenticeship styles of entrepreneurial activity had positive and significant impact on the economic development of the businessmen operating at the Margret Umahi International Market, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, This by implication shows that the apprenticeship styles has contributed in a large measure to the economic development of the South East Region.

Recommendations

(i) That government at all levels should embrace the Igbos apprenticeship styles in their development plans which bade on the people oriented

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(ii) There is the need to establish a special financial institution that will be funding the entrepreneurial activity. Therefore, government at all levels particularly the government of the south east should collectively establish the financial intuition to facilitate the small scale loans to the entrepreneurs.

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