

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria



Osita, Fabian Chinedu¹, Akam, Godwin Uche², Dike, Goodfaith Nnenna³

¹Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

^{2,3}Department of Business Administration, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus, Anambra State

ABSTRACT: The drastic decline in the Igbo model of mentoring their young ones by the Igbo businessmen in recent times, which was orchestrated by rising employment of salesgirls in place of apprentices by Igbo businessmen, and the unwillingness of young ones of Igbo extraction to go through apprenticeship training have engendered the awakened interest for an empirical investigation to determine the effect of Igbo model of business mentoring and the sustainability of small and medium enterprises in Anambra state. Appropriate conceptual theoretical and empirical literatures were reviewed. The study hinged on the need for achievement theory. A questionnaire was used for the collection of data. Borg and Gall sampling technique was used to determine the sample size of 327 respondents drawn from three commercial cities of Onitsha, Nnewi, and Awka, all in Anambra State. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as t-test statistics and multiple regression models. Findings revealed that the Igbo model of business mentoring has a positive influence on the sustainability of small and medium enterprises in Anambra state. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendation is made: government should come up with policies that encourage the Igbo type of mentoring of young ones because mentoring the apprentice by the master is very important because it helps to build a strong business synergy in the future. The engagement of salespersons by the businessmen should be scrapped.

KEYWORDS: Igbo Model of Business Mentoring, Sustainability, Small and Medium Enterprises.

I. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) have contributed significantly to the economic growth and development of various nations of the world (Ifekwem & Adedamola, 2016). SMEs are crucial to the expansion of any country that requires even more urgent development due to their enormous impact on economic growth. SMEs are companies with annual revenues of less than N100 million and/or fewer than 300 employees in Nigeria (Oyeyinka, 2020). According to the overwhelming body of research, 96% of businesses in Nigeria are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), compared to 53% in the United States and 65% in Europe. Regarding the number of businesses, SMEs account for about 90% of the manufacturing and industrial sector (Oyeyinka, 2020).

The Igbo people of South-East, Nigeria have a population of more than 40 million people (Obunike, 2016), and are the aborigines of only five states (Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo state) out of thirty-six states in Nigeria, and they are the predominant ethnic group in the southeast region of Nigeria. Though, there are Igbo people living outside the shores of these five mentioned states, mostly in the south-south region of Nigeria. Igbos are recognized for their entrepreneurial zeal and high business acumen among other tribes in Nigeria. Their type of business mentoring which is the foundation of their entrepreneurial doggedness may be the reason why Orugun & Nafiu (2014) opine that the Igbo entrepreneurial abilities have been believed by many to be one of the pillars of Nigeria's economy, and it has contributed to the improved standard of living of people in the region. Igbo people see business mentoring as a communal entrepreneurial framework where already established businessman mentors their young ones, and over time set them up in business by giving start-up capital or credit facilities to start their business. Neuwirth (2018) asserts that the Igbo technique of apprenticeship (business mentorship) is the biggest business incubation platform in the world due to the expectation that a master will establish an apprentice in business after a successful period of service (settlement). After completing his apprenticeship (after a predetermined number of years, typically 5-8 years), the apprentice is

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

expected to repay his mentor (Oga) by doing the same for other people at home. As a result, the recently graduated apprentice goes to the village and selects another trainee to guide. The inference is that few organizations expand to become really dominant because they continually give up market share, and in doing so, they achieve one thing: a mostly equal business community where everyone has chances, no matter how little (Ekekwe, 2022) No Nigerian market could function at its full potential without the Igbo population, according to a common proverb. (Paul, Laura, and Bohannam, 1968; referenced in Onwuzuluigbo, 2012) The Igbo people are renowned for their prowess in commerce and other economic endeavors. Through their enterprises and the Igba-boi apprenticeship model, they have spread throughout Nigeria and other African nations (Orugun & Nafiu, 2014). They have enjoyed a commanding position above other ethnic groups in Nigeria as far SMEs are concerned (Iwara, Amaechi & Netshandama, 2019) There is also a popular saying that, in any town or city you do not find Igbo man, then such a place is unfit for habitation and might be economically sterile.

The study is narrowed down to Anambra State in Southeast Nigeria because of a preponderance of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in the state. According to the National Bureau of Statistics / SMEDAN Collaborative Survey, (2019), Anambra has the second highest concentration of registered small and medium-scale enterprises after Abia state in the Southeast region of Nigeria.

However, the sustainability of SMEs which is the bedrock of the Igbo economy is one of the major challenges confronting the Igbo businessmen and women in recent times. The researcher observed a drastic decline in showing or developing interest in business mentorship in recent times by the young ones of Igbo extraction. The get-rich-quick syndrome, which has become a deified, observable trend most prominently shown, to varying degrees throughout social networks, was assessed to be the driving force behind this. It is not in the best interest of the Igbo people's economic progress and development, and by extension, Nigeria as a whole, for flashy automobiles to be flaunted with audacity, fancy clothing, and dazzling accessories to be the distinguishing traits of the haves and have-nots.

It is against this backdrop that the researchers seek to investigate the extent to which business mentoring affects the sustainability of small and medium enterprises in Anambra state, Nigeria.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE Conceptual Review

Business Mentoring:

Business mentoring, according to Nicoleta and Chioncel (2014), is a process that comprises two parties that encourage and enable individuals to manage their own learning so they can reach their full potential, develop their abilities, and perform better so they can become the person they want. The relationship between the mentor and the mentee is like two people working in a similar environment sharing similar experiences based on respect and trust. The mentor guides the mentee by helping him to find the right direction, to develop solutions to issues, and boost his confidence via asking questions and challenges providing guidance and encouragement, the mentor allows more self-aware, rather than leaving him to chance (Anoke & Ibrahim, 2022). Mentoring is a professional affinity that exists between a more experienced person, where the mentor willingly gives out his/her wealth of knowledge, insights, and wisdom to an inexperienced person (a mentee) who offers him/herself for learning. The relationship is one of medium to long duration and is built on trust, honesty, and respect for one another.

Business mentoring is a form of self-improvement where a more seasoned professional (mentor) assists a less seasoned individual (mentee) in advance and gets useful knowledge to help him become better than what he was (Uma, Onwusogbolu & Obidike, 2015). In both theoretical and practical contexts, mentoring is widely acknowledged across disciplines as a key factor in boosting individuals' and corporate organizations' potential. In general, leadership development, professional growth, career development, and personal development are the four long-term developmental areas that Lagace-Roy (2020) asserts mentoring mostly works on.

Types of Business Mentoring

Formal and Informal Mentoring: Formal mentoring is a controlled, structured, and planned learning process for designated roles inside an organization. Formal mentoring programs are typically designed to help mentees fulfill career aspirations or satisfy organizational goals and objectives. They frequently depend on the organization to "match" a mentee with a mentor and are usually time-limited (6 months to one year). The informal mentoring relationship develops by mutual identification; the mentor believes in the mentee's potential, and the mentee chooses mentors they view as role models. This kind of mentoring relationship is motivated by the developmental requirements of both the mentor and mentee and is frequently characterized by a stronger sense of association. The relationship has no set structure or duration and frequently develops over a number of

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

years. The Igbo apprenticeship model is a common illustration of this style of coaching. There are three types of mentoring: direct, collaborative, and indirect.

Direct Mentoring: This is a direct interaction between two people, often a more seasoned member of a group or organization (the mentor) and a less seasoned member of the same group or organization (the mentee). A mentorship program of this nature can involve supervisor and student interaction. This depends on the structure of the business and the sort of mentoring being used—formal or informal, horizontal or top-down.

Collegial mentoring: This mentoring approach strengthens the interaction between the mentor and mentee and encourages personal growth. Instead of being the outcome of professional requirements, it could start through social or peer contact. For instance, the junior football team and senior football team may form mentorship ties within the workplace. Another illustration is a connection between a servant and a master that develops into a collegial one, opening up prospects for economic collaboration that go above and beyond what is appropriate.

Indirect mentoring: This type of mentoring occurs as a result of a mentor making a conscious effort to be available to new or developing mentees rather than through direct contact between a mentor and mentee. Mentorship can occur without the mentor and mentee having any direct interaction by humanizing the organization's procedures, social customs, and culture and by being open to letting newcomers know about the mentor's private life.

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring:

The Igbo type of business mentoring has become part of the Igbo culture of raising their young ones in trade or vocation. In virtually all Igbo communities, it is frequently practiced: artisans, traders, and even traditionalists do mentor people to become their successors. In many cases the talented and the superiors are buried with their knowledge without passing it down, thereby creating a vacuum of services in society. The Igbo Apprenticeship Model is an unpaid business/vocational training program that enables primarily male individuals to learn a business or vocation from a mentor for a specific number of years based on an agreement reached by the families of the mentee and the mentor and receives financial support and assistance to launch his own business. Although the master provides for meals, clothing, and housing during the apprenticeship period, there is no pay during that time (Anoke, 2019).

The foundation of the Igbo's apprenticeship system for trade and craft was sturdiness, tenacity, and persistence. This is not to imply that other ethnic groups in Nigeria do not have their own apprentice systems, but rather to point out that the Igbo system of apprenticeship is distinct in several ways. In Western Nigeria, the Yoruba have their own system of apprenticeship. According to their own custom, the apprentice pays the master a "freedom fee" at the conclusion of the two to a three-year apprenticeship. They also buy drinks and have a party to mark the occasion. Before the apprentice can start his or her own business or profession, they must complete this crucial component of the apprenticeship. Following this celebration, a certificate confirming the candidate's graduation is given to them. The apprentice may not reside with the master throughout these two or three years, and as a result, the master may not always be in charge of the trainee's care (including lodging, clothes, and food).

The apprentice, however, must leave his parents in the Igbo setting and live under the care and supervision of an established business Igbo person who becomes his master/mentor. He does all of the home and professional duties that his master assigns him for the predetermined number of years while in his service. Even if his parents live in the same city as the master, he has no right to leave without permission from the master. To earn his master's confidence and respect, he must put in a lot of effort. The Igbo form of apprenticeship is not suitable for those who are weak, disobedient, impatient, or feminine people. The master teaches the apprentice about a future world that will be challenging and that can only be overcome through perseverance and hard work. The master does not always stay in the same store, business district, or city as the apprentice; after the apprentice is familiar with the rules and trade secrets, the master may choose to create a new shop somewhere else for him to run. When the master does business with trading partners, the apprentice oversees the new business branch on his behalf. This apparent independence of the apprentice in managing the company not only aids the master in growing his empire and generating more revenue, but also benefits the apprentice by instilling in him an ownership mindset that allows for trust, confidence building, and exposure—all of which are essential for the apprentice to succeed in the business world. The apprentice receives a take-off fee (also known as settlement) from the master at the conclusion of the apprenticeship year to be used for temporary housing as well as the leasing or outright purchase of a business, goods, and equipment when necessary. The fact that he has this take-off fund does not in any way imply that he no longer works with the master; instead, the latter continues to help him with product acquisition to cut down on overhead importation costs, fully aware of the apprentice's limited financial resources (Kanu, 2019) Some masters enjoy entering into partnerships (what they refer to as combined businesses) with graduated apprentices

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

on occasion, though this is quite uncommon. This happens when the master is unable to support the apprentice financially, faces financial difficulties before the apprentice graduates or the apprentice is a relative who is also regarded as a major player in their respective fields of endeavor. In such cases, the master and apprentice may decide to form a partnership.

Once an apprentice has completed his apprenticeship and has been established in business (settled) by his master (Oga), with his business having reached a specific level, he has a duty to return the favor to other young people in the area. He then travels to the village and chooses a person to a mentor who is from a respectable family and has impeccable character. . Meanwhile, before the graduation of any apprentice, the mentor must have found a perfect replacement for the outgoing one. It is thus a model that liberated the Igbo nation from the shackles of poverty, keeps young male youths off the street, curtails evil vices, and promotes economic equality in the region (Orugun &Nafiu, 2014). The young loitering in the streets in Igbo culture is frowned upon. The Igbo apprentice system makes sure that if a youngster is unable to attend school, instead of staying at home, he learns a skill or vocation—typically the kind his family members have been involved in. Because of this belief in inducting extended family members into their line of business, the Igbo apprenticeship model has made it feasible for one form/ similar type of business to be ascribed to a particular family, village, or town, and has continued for decades (Obunike, 2016).

This made it possible for different communities in southeast, Nigeria to be known for particular lines of business or vocation. For instance, Awka people are known for blacksmithing, Nnewi people for motor spare parts, Nando for pharmaceuticals, Agulu people are into bread making, Abiriba people are into Okirika (second-hand cloths), Awka-Etiti people are into cosmetics, etc. More millionaires and billionaires have been created by the Igbo apprenticeship program than by any prestigious international university. According to Neuwirth (2018), the Igbo business incubator platform produced nearly all of the multi-billionaires from the Igbo ethnic group. Some of the products of this Igbo business incubator platform are: Late Sir Augustine Ilofibe (Ekene Dili Chukwu Nig. Ltd), Mr. Cletus Ibetto, Mr. Innocent Chukwuma, Cosmas Maduka (Coscharis Nig. Ltd), etc. passed through the training of Igbo apprentice model. Surprisingly, none of these business titans went near a secondary school, and several of them didn't even finish elementary school, yet they ran organizations that hired people with undergraduate and doctoral degrees. A mentor should have demonstrated a willingness to offer advice on leadership, career, professional, and personal growth. They should also be dependable, experienced, and mentally sound. To the best of his or her ability, a mentor inspires, supports, and encourages the mentee. By imparting their knowledge and experience, mentors help their mentees find solutions. In most cases, a mentee (also known as a protege or apprentice) is a person with less experience who has a strong desire to equip themselves with the tools they need to advance and develop intellectually.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

David C. McClelland's need for achievement theory served as the foundation for this study. This motivating postulation, which he examined in his book "The Achieving Society," is founded on the concepts of achievement, affiliation, and power. According to the theory, each person or organization is motivated by one of the three main factors. These motivators do not come naturally to humans; instead, they are acquired through associations and experiences gathered through time and space.

According to the theory, achievers prefer to suggest answers to issues and achieve specific goals, whereas associates require affection and association more than anyone else. The demand for power is firmly anchored in the need to take charge of situations and occupy coveted positions in society. This theory's central thesis is that human motivation is based on the need concept, both in society and in individuals. Individuals with a strong need for success will go to any lengths to test their inventiveness and abilities in order to obtain it (Eboh, 2002). The Igbo apprenticeship model stands for this drive for success, and it also serves as the connecting element between the theory and the research.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Iwueke, Alhassan, and Oparaku (2020) examined Apprenticeship Training System and Business Sustainability in Anambra State South East Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the relationship between apprentice educational qualification and comprehension of trade knowledge. The study investigated 1000 respondents from different businesses. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The study adopted Chi-Square for the test of hypotheses. Findings reveal that the level of education of the apprentices determines the acquisition of the trade knowledge and also the Master's ability to mentor the apprentices who must be ready and have the capacity to learn. Therefore, they pointed out that, apprentices must know how to read and write for an effective understanding of trade knowledge and learning. Equally as important, the master must possess mentoring abilities to foster the apprentice's inventiveness while keeping track of market trends.

Fajobi, Olatujoye, Amusa, and Adedoyin (2017) investigated the challenges of apprenticeship Development and Youths Unemployment in Nigeria. The study aims to comprehend the significance of apprenticeship training to development in Nigeria,

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

the causes of the fall in apprenticeship development, and the career implications for young people who choose to enter the apprenticeship program. Understanding the topic required the use of the Parson functional prerequisite hypothesis and modernization theory. In order to gather crucial data from a few chosen wards in Ife-east Local Government, Osun State, the work employs a cross-sectional research approach that combines questionnaires and in-depth interviews. A questionnaire was utilized to collect data, and a sample size of 150 respondents was chosen using the cluster sampling method. Descriptive and content analysis were used to analyze the data. The study's findings showed that

Nigeria's economy cannot advance unless young people are encouraged to pursue apprenticeships, and among other recommendations, it was highly suggested that incentives be put in place for young people who desire to pursue skill development and apprenticeship.

Udu (2015) carried out a study on apprenticeship orientation and performance of micro-businesses in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by the fact that, in reality, teaching apprentices fundamental skills through an apprenticeship has proven a useful method. With a sample size of 301 businesses and a population of 52,291, the study used an exploratory survey research design. Pearson's product-moment correlation and p-value were used as the analytical technique. The results demonstrate positive correlations for LSQ ($r=38.2\%$), LFE ($r=88\%$), LFS ($r = 48\%$), EQA ($r=10.1\%$), and a negative correlation for AoA ($r=-55\%$). That the hiring of apprentices encourages the area's microbusinesses to function well.

Anigbogu, Onwuteaka, and Okoli (2019) investigated the Igbo man's perspectives of apprenticeship and entrepreneurial development in southeast Nigeria: Implications to economic growth. Principal Components Analysis and the Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model were both used in the study. Four hundred eighty-two (482) owners of SMEs were investigated. The study's results show, among other things, that giving an apprentice a monetary infusion as start-up money is one of the motivating factors. One of the biggest problems with the Igbo form of apprenticeship is that trainees occasionally plunder their master's treasure and use it as additional start-up capital. Risk tolerance is another characteristic that influences people to become entrepreneurs. According to the regression analysis, all three components have a substantial impact on the growth of entrepreneurship in southeast Nigeria. . The study suggests that, as a strategy for entrepreneurship growth, the government should adhere to the rules of the Igbo apprenticeship model and entrepreneurial development in southeast Nigeria.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This method was adopted because field research of the study was conducted and data collated were analyzed using largely descriptive statistics. Data were gathered using a questionnaire, and its validity was examined using the face and-content technique. While its dependability was evaluated using the Cronbach Alpha reliability test for internal consistency, where an alpha level of 0.773 was recorded, indicating a strong consistency level. Data were gathered from 1,737 registered SMEs with an overall sample size of 339. In total, 339 copies of the questionnaire were disseminated in accordance with the sample size; 327 copies were retrieved and used in the analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the study's data. The research questions were answered using simple percentages, and multiple linear regression and the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient were employed to test the hypotheses.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Using t-statistics and the individual variable significant values in the regression result, the study's hypothesis was put to the test. The purpose of this is to determine the significance of each independent variable's or explanatory variable's influence on the dependent variable. The table below provides a summary of the result.

Ha: Igbo model of business mentoring has a significant positive influence on the sustainability of small and medium enterprises in Anambra state

Multiple Regression Analysis

To examine the impact of independent or explanatory variables on the dependent variables, multiple regression analysis was used. The tables below show the results of the multiple regression analysis:

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

Table 4.1 Summary of the Regression Result

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.294 ^a	.686	.572	3.185	.086	6.151	5	326	.000	1.875

a. Predictors: (Constant), Igbo Model of Business Mentoring.

b. Dependent Variable: Sustainability.

Source: SPSS 21.0

According to Table 4.1, the R² statistic, which expresses how strongly an independent variable has an impact on the dependent variable, is 0.686. According to this, differences in Igbo Business Mentoring characteristics account for 69% of the variation in the sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses. Adjusted R², which was 0.572, corroborated this. Durbin-Watson statistics were used to determine whether the model included autocorrelation. Table 4.1 above demonstrates that the variables in the model are not autocorrelated and that the model is trustworthy for making predictions with a Durbin-Watson value of 1.875.

Table 4.2 Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	312.052	5	62.410	6.151	.000 ^b
Regression	3307.502	322	10.146		
Residual					
Total	3619.554	327			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Igbo model of Business Mentoring.

Source: SPSS 21.0

The independent variables have a large impact on the dependent, as evidenced by the f-statistics value of 6.151 in table 4.2 and the f-statistics probability of 0.000. This demonstrates how the Igbo model of business mentorship accounts for the disparities in the sustainability of small and medium-sized firms in the state of Anambra.

Table 4.3: T-Statistics and Probability Value from the Regression Result.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	18.916	1.918		9.863	.000
Igbo model of Business Mentoring	.123	.043	.158	2.870	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Igbo model of Business Mentoring

Source: SPSS 21.0

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION:

Summary of findings

The finding of the study shows that all the respondents were in agreement that the Igbo model of business mentoring has a significant positive influence on the sustainability of small and medium-scale enterprises in Anambra state, Nigeria. This is clearly supported by Brimah, Rabi, Bamidele and Sheu (2020) Agbionu, Emejulu and Egolum (2015) Jaques, Avila and Miralles (2014) Uma,

Onwusogbolu and Obidike, (2015) who noted that business mentoring has become part of Igbo culture of raising the young ones in trade or vocation. In virtually all Igbo communities, it is frequently practiced: artisans, traders, and even traditionalists do mentor people to become their successors.

CONCLUSION

This work examined the effect of the Igbo system of mentoring and sustainability of small and medium-scale enterprises in Anambra state, Nigeria. Utilizing both descriptive and inferential statistics, the data collected from the chosen small and medium-sized businesses were evaluated. Business mentorship, according to the study, significantly improves the sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses. Therefore, based on the aforementioned, the study draws the conclusion that the Igbo system of mentorship has a major positive impact on the sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses in the Nigerian state of Anambra.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation was put up:

The government as a matter of urgency should come up with policies and programs that will encourage the adoption of Igbo type of mentoring their young ones by every businessperson for unabated sustainability.

REFERENCES

- 1) Agbionu, C. U., Emejulu, G. & Egolum, P. C. (2015). Mentorship and business performance among Igbo entrepreneurs in Nigeria. *Worldwide Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 1(5); 40 – 45.
- 2) Anigbogu, T. U; Onwueateka, I. C. & Okoli, I. M. (2019). The Igbo man perspective of apprenticeship and entrepreneurial development in Southeast Nigeria: Implication to economic growth. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science (IJRIAS)*, 4(10), 90-99.
- 3) Anoke, A.F and Ibrahim, I.O. (2022). Microfinance financial strategies and business growth of women entrepreneurs in Gboko, Benue State, Nigeria, *Asian Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting*, 22(5):69-80
- 4) Anoke, A.F. (2019). Growth strategies and performance of listed insurance firms in Nigeria, *Journal of Accounting, Finance and Development*; 2(1):49-60
- 5) Brimah, B. A., Rabi, O., Bamidele, A. G. & Shay, M. O. (2020). Fostering an entrepreneurial mentoring culture for sustainable leadership performance in Nigeria: Evidence from selected SMEs in Ilorin Metropolis. *Business Ethics and Leadership Journal*, 4(3); 73 – 80.
- 6) Eboh, F. E. (2002). *Management theory: Model for decision making*. Computer Villa Publication, Enugu, Nigeria.
- 7) Ekekwe, N. (2022). *Harvard business review has approved the Igbo apprenticeship system*. www.tekedia.com>harvard-business-review
- 8) Fajobi, T. A., Olatujoye, O.O., Amusa, O. I. & Adedoyin, A. (2017). Challenges of apprenticeship
- 9) Ifekwem, N. & Adedamola, O. (2016). Survival Strategies and Sustainability of Small and Medium Enterprises in Oshodi-Isolo Local Government Area of Lagos State. *ACTA Universitatis Sapientiae: Economic and Business*, 4, 103-118.
- 10) Iwara, I. O., Amaechi, K. E. & Netshandama, V. (2019). The Igbo apprenticeship approach: Arsenal behind growing success of Igbo entrepreneurship in Nigeria. *Ubuntu: Journal of Conflict and Social Transformation*, 7(11); 1 – 12.
- 11) Iwueke, O. C., Alhassan, H. S., Okparaku, P. N. (2020). Apprenticeship training system and business sustainability in Anambra State, Southeast, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Social Sciences and Strategic Management Techniques*, 7(1); 184 – 193.
- 12) Jaques, T. M. N., Avila, N. R., Miralles, I. T. (2014). Mentoring in the acquisition of professional skills through practices in companies by degree students. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Education, Social and Technological Sciences*, 1(2); 124 – 141.

Igbo Model of Business Mentoring: A Gateway to Sustaining Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) In Anambra State, Nigeria

- 13) Kanu, I. A. (2019). Igbwebuikeconomics: The Igbo apprenticeship system for wealth creation. *An African Journal of Arts and Humanities* 5(4); 56 – 70
- 14) Lagace-Roy (2020). *Mentoring Handbook*. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net/mentoring.
- 15) Neuwirth, M, (2018). *Igbo apprenticeship system: The world's largest business incubation platform*. <https://www.information.ng.com/2018/11/igboapprenticeshipsystem-is-worlds-largest-business-incubation-platform-robert-neuwirth-reveal.html>
- 16) Nicolate, G. and Chioncel, C.P. (2014). The role of mentoring in Entrepreneurship Training
- 17) PREMIO Case study, Unpublished paper delivered to the 17th National Conference on Electrical Drivers (CNAE 2014) viewed on 05 March 2022, from <http://anale-ing.uem.ro/2014/331.pdf>.
- 18) Obunike, C. L. (2016). Induction strategy of Igbo entrepreneurship and micro-business success: A study of household equipment line, Main Market Onitsha, Nigeria. *Acta Univer. spaientie Economics and Business*, (4)1; 43 – 65.
- 19) Onwuzuluigbo, W. (2012). The traditional practice of business apprenticeship and mentoring among the Igbo business mentoring and microeconomic development in Africa: Strategies and options. *Department of Business Administration 2012 Conference Proceedings*, 91 – 93.
- 20) Orogun, J. J. & Nafiu, A. T. (2014). An exploratory study of Igbo entrepreneurship activity and business success in Nigeria as the panacea for economic growth and development. *International Journal of Scientific and Technology Research* 3(9); 158 – 161
- 21) Oyeyinka, B. (2020). Financial System Strategy 2020 International Conference on Small and Medium Enterprises: Issues, Challenges, and Prospect. International Conference Proceedings, 1-39.
- 22) Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (2013). *SMEDAN and National Bureau of Statistics Collaborative Survey: Selected findings*. Retrieved from <http://www.smedan.gov.ng>.
- 23) Udu, A. A. (2013). Apprenticeship orientation and performance of microbusiness in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. *European Journal of Biology and Medical Science Research*, 3(6); 1 – 11.
- 24) Uma, K. E., Onwusogbolu, R. D. & Obidike, P. C (2015). A Review Of Mentorship And
- 25) Entrepreneurship: Impact on Nigeria's Economic Development. *International Journal of Innovative Science, Engineering & Technology*. 2 (9).



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.