INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH
Vol. 4| No. 3 | April 2024
Page No.: 251-271

DISRUPTION IN IGBO APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME: IMPLICATIONS FOR ENTREPRENEIRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA

Dr. EZINNE M. KEKEOCHA[1]& Prof. Ezimma K. NNABUIFE[2]
[1&2]Business Administration Department, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Corresponding Author:
Dr. EZINNE M. KEKEOCHA: me.kekeochcha@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract

The Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria is known for achieving appreciable success in business and entrepreneurial activities. This study examines possible disruptions, challenges and limitations on Igbo apprenticeship (Igba Boyi) and the implications for entrepreneurial development in South-east Nigeria. Applying conceptual analysis, the study critically surf the literature and investigate the major areas covering the concept of Igbo apprenticeship (Igba Boyi), various types of apprenticeship, the relationship between apprenticeship and entrepreneurship, history behind Igba boyi apprenticeship and recent disruptions' or challenges bedeviling the Igba Boyi in South East Nigeria. Findings revealed that there is dishonesty on the side of the mentor and the apprentice. that it was towards the expiration of the agreed apprenticeship period in some cases that Masters accuse the apprentice of frivolous crimes and send them away just to avoid their contractual obligations and thus deprive them of the settlement entitlements. In conclusion, dishonesty on the part of the Master or the apprentice is a source of disruption to the good intentions of the Igba-Boyi apprenticeship scheme. The policy implications to the government and financial institutions in Nigeria are to play mediating roles between the master and apprentice by introducing insurance scheme for "Igba boyi" to enable the apprentice to access start-up capital grants in case their "Oga" (mentor) fails to settle them at the completion of their apprenticeship.

Keywords: Igbo Apprenticeship, Nwa-Boyi Apprentice, Entrepreneurial Development.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the Igbo ethnic group is known for being successful in business and entrepreneurship, and this has been attributed to the Igbo apprenticeship scheme known as Igba boyi. People from Igbo ethnic group have dominated entrepreneurship and continued to excel above their contemporaries from other ethnic groups within the country and beyond. The Igbo have among other things used and continued to use Igba boyi as a unique approach, which entails working under a particular mentor and learning the intricacies of the mentor's innovation for a number of years, in order to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Iwara, Amechi & Netshandama, 2019).

The Igbo Apprenticeship Scheme has been around for many decades following the traditional Igbo established forms and conventions, although unwritten. It has similar characteristics to the master-apprenticeship relationship, where the apprentice is the teen or young learner, and the master is the experienced business owner (Anago, 2023). In this sense, some studies (Igwe, Newbery, Amoncar& White, 2018; Ebereonwu, 2021; Ogbu, 2021 and Anago, 2023; Nnonyelu, Nnabuife, Onyeizugbe, Anazodo and Onyima, 2022; 2023) assert that Igbo Apprenticeship (igbaboyi) scheme represents the practice of allowing a teenager, either from a poor or rich background, learn or acquire training or knowledge from a business managed successfully by a wealthy relative from close-knit or extended family, the same village, town or states. The master may pledge orally or put in writing that after a particular specific duration, ranging between 5-8 years, the apprentice would get a payoff; often involving the provision of informal seed capital to start his own business.

The Igba-Boyi form of apprenticeship as an integral part of the Igbo culture has played a significant role in passing down entrepreneurial knowledge and skills from one generation to another. The apprentice lives with the master and receives all forms of training from the family in addition to practical training involving the intricacies of the chosen trade or craft

which allows the apprentice to acquire hands-on experience, technical expertise, and business knowledge from seasoned practitioners (Ezejiofor, 2021).

Nonyelu et al (2021), observe that behind the success so far recorded in the Igbo entrepreneurial venture is the IgbaBoyi which has been described as the largest business incubator model in the world. The Igbaboyi scheme is as old as the igbo race itself continually nurturing the spirit of hard work and service of "onye fee eze, eze eruoya" which means when you serve your master very well, others will in turn serve you as their master. Furthermore, the igba-boyi is believed by the Igbo as a way to prepare the ones to take over the successful Igbo entrepreneurism which involves some type of informal vocational education of mentoring a younger one, the mentee, under the tutelage of the master or mentor (Oga), within a specified period of time, to learn the skills and secrets of a trade or craft, with the hope of graduating one day to start his own business venture (Nonyelu et al 2021).Igwe, Madichie&Amoncar, (2020) posit that it is safe to canvas that Igbo apprenticeship scheme resonates largely due to its proximity with the cultural milieu that embodies it. Iwara (2021), Adeola (2021), and Iwara, Amaechi&Netshandama (2019), assert that the distinct characters or traits of communities are implicated in the entrepreneurial behavior of the ethnic group.

In addition, entrepreneurial development has played a significant role in shaping the economies of advanced and developed nations for many decades (Anigbogu, Ukamaka, Onwueaka and Okoli, 2019). Indeed, entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in both developed and developing economies. The concept of entrepreneurship has gained prominence due to its significant contributions to economic growth, job creation, innovation, and overall development of various economies around the world. It's a key driver of progress and is often a focal point for policymakers and business leaders in their effort to stimulate economic growth and prosperity (Ezeajughu, 2021).

2. Disruption of Igbo Apprenticeship

Most recently, however, there have been lots of challenges bedeviling the smooth sail in the successes that the Igbo apprenticeship scheme of igba-boyi achieved over the years. This challenges which present themselves as disruptions seem to be appearing in several forms. This study therefore seeks to investigate what these disruptions are, how they have affected the igba-boyi apprenticeship scheme adversely and their implications in the development of future viable entrepreneurship, all with a view to recommending possible ways of re-igniting the spirit of service, hard work and resilience towards the sustainable development of entrepreneurship and Nigeria at large.

The concept of entrepreneurship has gained prominence due to its significant contributions to economic growth, job creation, innovation, and then overall development of various economies around the world. It's a key driver of progress and is often a focal point for policymakers and business leaders in their effort to stimulate economic growth and prosperity (Ezeajughu, 2021).

Entrepreneurship has generally described as the bedrock and engine of growth for most developed nations and it has been continued to shape developing and emerging economies for many centuries through employment and wealth creation. Entrepreneurship is a process that involves individuals becoming innovative and creative by investing their resources and time in taking various forms of risk, financially, physically, psychologically, and socially to be rewarded with some things that are remarkably different (Nonyelu, et. al, (2023) in addition to driving satisfaction. Thus, entrepreneurship is all about creating something new by willingly taking risks and making investment toward creating something within the environment (Akraman &Syed, 2017).

Entrepreneurial behavior refers to the discovery and exploitation of a new business opportunity for the purpose of profit and growth: it involves the identification of a new

business opportunity, and the establishment of a new venture to exploit that opportunity, and the management of the new venture to make it flourish over time (Nonyelu, et. al, (2023). Behind every entrepreneurial behavior, there are entrepreneurs who are ambitious and ever willing to take risks by investing their resources, innovating and creating wealth towards gaining rewards and solving social problems.

Ezejiofor (2021), escribe apprenticeship as an integral part of Igbo culture and has played a significant role in passing down entrepreneurial knowledge and skills from one generation to another. The traditional apprenticeship scheme, known as "Igba-Boyi," involves a young person learning a trade or craft under the guidance of a skilled master. The apprentice lives with the master and receives practical training, learning the intricacies of the chosen trade or craft which allows the apprentice to acquire hands-on experience, technical expertise, and business knowledge from seasoned practitioners

Olulu and Udeorah, (2018) view apprenticeship as a means of training people to learn trade or craft for their future wellbeing and livelihood and undergoing its training further, enables the absorption of extensive skills and erudition in a particular trade or craft under the guidance of an expert.This seeks to accelerate the career of an apprentice towards developing into an accomplished tradeperson.

Nonyelu et al, (2021) posit that apprenticeship is a system of training a new generational set of practitioners with a structured competency and expected basic set of skills. It can be likened to a type of vocational but informal vocational education as well as on the-job-training where the apprentice, Nwa-Boyi, is expected to graduate at the end of a specified period, ready to start his own trade/business with the learnt vocations or skill.

Nkamnebe (2012) describe igba-Boyi apprenticeship as ‘a training mode that facilitates the transmission of skill (or trade) from a master to an apprentice’. He further identified two forms of apprenticeship namely; formal and informal/traditional apprenticeship.A formal apprenticeship refers to long-term systematic training in a recognized business On the other

hand; the International Labour Organization (2011) defines informal apprenticeship as a training agreement between an apprentice and a master crafts person (and master trader or Oga). Such an agreement could be written or oral. The master (Oga) commits to training the apprentice in the skills for mastering a trade over a significant period, usually between 1 and 4 years, while the apprentice commits to contributing productively to the work of the business'.

Historically, apprenticeship, is generally, believed to be the oldest form of training in the world of work and business (Greslaa, 2019). Its emergence predates the mediaeval era, when guilds, journeymen, and craftsmen flourish, setting the template for exploitation of productive forces, and the corresponding relations of production (Nonyelu & Onyeizugbe, 2020). This notwithstanding, the age-old practice of apprenticeship did not receive adequate attention until recently. Pre-colonial apprenticeship scheme in Igbo Land has been present because of people were always seriously engaged in the world of work but it was not as popular as it became in the period after the Nigerian Civil War.

Following the end of the war which lasted three years (1967-1970) where over three million children and women were gruesomely decimated through hunger, not counting those slaughtered cold-bloodedly as the war was starting and the able-bodied men who died as solders during the war, there was confusion and utter hopelessness. As if these were not enough, a leveling measure was meted upon the Igbo people (those who had money in their bank accounts) shall only be entitled to 20 pounds). As insufferable as this was, the Igbo leveraged on their communal culture ethos of "Igwebuike" (kanu, 2020; Kanu, 2019) (strength in unity) and "onye aha na nwanneya" (be your brother's keeper) to respond to this starvation strategy. It is this cultural attribute that is implicated in the activation of Igbo entrepreneurship that was witnessed at the end of civil war in 1970 (Nonyelu et al, 2023).Furthermore, the first set that left their homes to nearby cities, came back after a few years to take their kin who were idle or engaged in peasant farming, fishing, craftsmanship, and even petty trading. Igbo apprenticeship in trade and commerce in the form of Igba-

Boyi, therefore, was given traction following the immediate post-war events (Nonyelu et al, 2021).

With the notable success witnessed from the entrepreneurial and apprenticeship activities, the -practice become so famous that parents then had to plead with relatives who were already successful to take their male children as Umu-Boyi. Those successfully trained and settled who could start their own enterprises later came back to take others. In this manner, success in trade and commerce became regenerative (Nonyelu et al, 2021).

Igbo people live at the south-eastern part of Nigeria, having a population of approximately 40 million, which amounts to 23 .5% of the total Nigerian population (Nwagu, 2023). The Igbo tribe is the third major groups out of the more than 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria. The after-effects of the Biafra war severely damaged most of the infrastructure in the eastern part of the country and rendered this ethnic group the poorest among the three major ethnic groups; hence, life in this part of Nigeria was marked by poor infrastructure, lack of jobs coupled with the loss of life-time savings of the Igbo and discrimination by other ethnic groups. The Igbo entrepreneurs were left with no better choice than to migrate to other places within and outside Nigeria. However, the Igbo as a people have faced a lot of marginalization and discrimination within the country (Nwagu, 2023).

For outstanding dexterity of the Igbo in business, commerce and innovation, some refer to them as the Jews of Africa, while others call them the Chinese or Japanese of Africa (Adeola, 2021). Indeed, there is hardly any part of the world where the Igbo are not found, the visible signs of Igbo business are seen globally in every nooks and crannies (Mbaegbu & Ekianabor, 2018; Olakunle, Iseolorunkanmi & Segun, 2016). In an incisive presentation, Adeola (2021), observes that the Igbo entrepreneurial orientation distinguishes them from other ethnic group in Nigeria given the uncommon attributes and qualities that they bring to business transactions.

The Igbo apprenticeship scheme also known as Igbo trade apprenticeship scheme and commonly referred to as Igba-Boyi/ImuAhia/Oru/Imu, Agozino, Biko, Anyanike and Ike, (2007) defined Igbo apprenticeship (Igba-Boyi) as a framework of formal and informal indentured servitude agreements between parties that ultimately facilitate flourishing entrepreneurial communities within the Igbo land. It is an economic model practiced widely by Igbo and originated in South-Eastern, Nigeria. Its purpose was to spike economic growth and stability, and sustainable livelihood by financing and investing in human resources through vocational training.

The Igbo apprentice scheme is an extension of entrepreneurial spirit where an induction strategy is utilized to induct mostly young Igbo into entrepreneurial ventures by established entrepreneurs locally referred to as Oga (Ejo-Orusa, Mpi and Lloyd, 2019). This venture can be a trade, an enterprise or a vocation (Alike, Umunze, Orjiako, 2019). The Ogas are former apprentices that had served and were handed resources to begin their own enterprises (Alike, Umunze, Orjiako, 2019). This system is informal and has unstructured training programs to learn and master skills required to embark on one's own enterprise (Ejo-Orusa, Mpi and Lloyd, 2019).

Apprenticeship, in general, is believed to be the oldest form of training in the world of work and business (Greslaa, 2019). Its emergence predates the mediaeval era, when guilds, journeymen, and craftsmen flourish, setting the template for exploitation of productive forces, and the corresponding relations of production (Nonyelu and Onyeizugbe, 2020). This notwithstanding, the age-old practice of apprenticeship did not receive adequate attention until recently. Pre-colonial apprenticeshipscheme in Igbo Land has been present because of people were always seriously engaged in the world of work but it was not as popular as it became in the period after the Nigerian Civil War.

Olulu &Udeorah, (2018), posit that apprenticeship is a means of training people to learn trade or craft for their future wellbeing and livelihood and undergoing its training further

enables the absorption of extensive skills and erudition in a particular trade or craft under the guidance of an expert. This seeks to accelerate the career of an apprentice towards developing into an accomplished trade's person. Ekesiobi & Dimnwobi, (2020) see apprenticeship as a form of mentorship programme where a younger person, Nwa-boyi, goes through the tutelage and intensive training of Igba-Boyi process expectedly with a high measure of commitment and sacrifice under the master, the mentor or Oga knowing, that one day he will be on his own, managing his own business and possibly, training potential Umu-Boyi or apprentice.

Nonyelu et al, (2021), describe apprenticeship as a system of training a new generational set of practitioners with a structured competency and expected basic set of skills. It can be likened to a type of vocational but informal vocational education as well as on the-job-training where the apprentice, NwaBoyi, is expected to graduate at the end of a specified period, ready to start his own trade/business with the learnt vocations or skill.

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012) define apprenticeship as "any system by which an employer undertakes by contract to employ a young person and to train him or have him trained systematically, for a trade for a period of the duration of which has been ficed in advanced and in the course of which the apprentice is bound to work in the employer's service". Certain conditions emanate from the definition of apprenticeship by ILO (2012) as follows; it will be based in the workplace supervised by an employer; it will be intended for young people; its fundamental aim is learning a trade/acquiring a skill; the training is 'systematic' ie follow a predefined plan; it will be governed by a contract between apprentice and employer (ILO, 2012). In categorizing apprenticeship, ILO (2012) maintained that there are informal and formal apprenticeships (ILO, 2012) both still aimed at transmitting the needed skills from an experienced master to the younger learner.

Olulu and Udeorah (2018) however, noted that the practice of apprenticeship can be divided into traditional, informal, and modern apprenticeship scheme. Informal

apprenticeship is synonymous with an informal economy and poor societies, where apprentice learn through observation and imitation from experienced masters to acquire the needed skills in particular trade before being inducted into the culture and network of the business and this exemplifies the Igba-Boyi apprentice scheme in Igbo land. On the other hand, ILO, 2012; Olulu and Udeorah, (2018), assert that formal apprenticeship is highly regulated and structured "usually by regulation at the national level, is waged, based on the workplace, on a contract which specifies a duration, programme of learning (including transferable skills) assessment and final certification and the entitlement to off-the-job learning".

Igbo apprenticeship scheme of Igba-Boyi can be said to have taken its deepest root during the post-war entrepreneurial and commercial activities necessitated by the unwanted treatment on Igbo people immediately after the civil war. Therefore, the civil war played an unprecedented role in the furtherance, nurturing and growth of the Igbo entrepreneurial skills and ventures. The Igba-Boyi model, therefore, can be seen as a socio-economic relational paradigm that simultaneously fosters individuals' socio-economic ambition and discharging of his responsibility towards the society. Arguably, such 'values and institutions are responsible for maintaining social harmony while supporting the values of personal freedoms found among the Igbo (Osiri, 2020).

The major advantage of Igbo apprenticeship can be traced to the training of the Nwa-Boyi in the secrets of a particular trade and commercial venture. Other advantages embedded in the social, psychological, physical, and spiritual training received by the Nwa-Boyi, especially if he co-resides with the Oga (master), Successfully trained apprentices also became sources of additional capital before they completely disentangled from their masters arising from the fact that sometimes the masters start a joint business with them as a way of raising funds for their settlement. Freed apprentices who left their masters peacefully and are successfully have been known to maintain a very cordial relationship

with their masters from whom the entire family benefited subsequently (Nonyelu et al, 2021).

Ezeajughu, (2021), asserts that entrepreneurship is the key driver of economic development in many societies. Itplays critical roles in contributing to economic growth, job creation, and national income. When individuals or groups start new businesses or innovate within existing ones, they often create jobs, stimulate economic activity, and generate income, which can lead to increased prosperity for a nation. Nwagu (2023) asserts that generally, entrepreneurship is a vital component of a thriving economy. It fuels innovation, job creation, and economic growth. Through their risk-taking, innovative mindset, and ability to effect change, entrepreneurs play a crucial role in shaping industries, markets, and societies, ultimately driving progress and prosperity.By starting new businesses or introducing innovative ideas, entrepreneurs stimulate competition, which leads to market efficiency and the allocation of resources in more productive ways (Nwagu, 2023). Furthermore, entrepreneurs are known for their willingness to take risks. They identify opportunities where others may see obstacles or uncertainty (Knight, 1921, cited in Nwagu, 2023). By taking calculated risks, entrepreneurs create value and contribute to economic growth. They invest their time, energy, and resources into pursuing their ideas, and even if they encounter failures, they learn from them and adapt their strategies, which can ultimately lead to future success (Nwagu, 2023).

Hisrichet. al, (2007) as cited in Nonyelu, et.al 2021), maintain that "entrepreneurship is a major source of employment, economic growth, innovation, promoting product and service quality, competition and economic flexibility as well as mechanism by which people enter the society's economic and social mainstream, aiding culture formation, population integration, and social mobility".It is an integral part of the economic renewal process and the impact and contributions made by entrepreneurship to global economies have led to the manifestation of its seeming indispensability (Nonyelu, et.al 2021).

From all indices, Igbo people of Nigeria have attained an entrepreneurial height. At the moment, they could be considered as the pillar of Nigerian economy(Ezeajughu, 2021). With regard to this fact, Igbo entrepreneurs play vital roles in the growth of Nigerian economy, their entrepreneurial activities have been observed to be the backbone for the economy of Nigeria, and have facilitated improved standard of living of the people at both rural and urban settings(Ezeajughu, 2021).The Igbo apprenticeship scheme of Igba-Boyi has been proclaimed by many as a sine qua non to the success so far recorded by Igbo entrepreneurship which has produced many wealthy Igbo and contributed immensely to employment and wealth creation (Ejo-orusa and Destiny, 2019; Nkamnebe & Ezemba, 2021; Nonyelu et.al 2023).

Nonyelu et al (2021) assert that behind the success so far recorded in the Igbo entrepreneurial venture is the Igba-Boyi apprenticeship which has been described as the largest incubator model in the world. There no gainsaying that the Igba-Boyi apprenticeship scheme has contributed in no small measures to growth, development and sustenance of entrepreneurship in Igbo land, since that is where the incubation and nurturing of successful Igbo entrepreneurship take root. By implication, it has directly resulted in creating employment and growing wealth in Igbo land, Nigeria and Africa as a whole (Nonyelu, et.al 2021).

Igba-Boyi is a socio-cultural and economic practice of mentoring and supporting younger members of the society to become successful entrepreneurs (Obunike, 2016). It is part of social responsibilities expected of successful members of Igbo society.Basically, research has it that there are two ways of practicing apprenticeship in Igbo lands; Igba-Boyi (serving), Imu-Ahia (to learn a trade) or Imu-oru (to learn a craft) (Obunike, 2016).

Nkemnebe & Ezemba(2021) describes Igba-Boyi as an unpaid business apprenticeship/incubator model that lets people learn a trade from a master for an agreed period, about 5–8 years, at the end of which, the master supports the apprentice to start his

own business; the process of effecting this support is generally referred to as Idu-uno or 'Settlement'. The apprentice receives no salary for the period of the apprenticeship; instead, the master agrees for the total upkeep and wellbeing of the mentee/apprentice. An important ritual is also performed during the settlement ceremony, which the Igbo consider very important and it is the prayers and blessings from the mentor to the mentee. This is part of the Igbo worldviewplays dominant roles in their belief systems and conduct (Nkamnebe & Ezemba, 2021). In addition, Adeola, (2021) note that with time this novice is transformed into experts in various fields. In this way, entrepreneurial traits like effective negotiations, risk-taking, saving culture, thrift, concept innovation and investment strategies are learned (Adeola, 2021).

"Imu-ahia" (business coaching): This is still within the business domain of apprenticeship, and they are those who pay to learn a trade (ImuAhia), under the tutelage of a master, usually do not live with the masters (Oga). They are excluded from the menial domestic tasks, and enjoy shorter period of training (Adeola, (2021).

Oyewunmi and Moses (2021) used the word "Imu-ahia and igba boyi" interchangeably. This may obfuscate the clear distinctive features that separate them. Odibo stands on its own, conveys and embodies the attributes of servility, and usually does not have rights as Nwa-Boyi or Onyenaamu Ahia (one who pays to trade). On the whole, however, the "Igba-Boyi" scheme is of great significance to Igbo as it serves as source of creation of entrepreneurs and enterprises, and provision of much needed capital for startups" Nkamnebe & Ezemba, 2021).

Iwara, Amechi & Netshandama.(2019) observe that "Imu-oru" (craft/vocational apprenticeship): involves working with different tools and equipment. It means learning the expert knowledge of a particular vocation which serves as a means of diversification. However, unlike Igbaboyi where mentees arrange a contract to have a complete training circle for free, ImuOru is not done for free. In this, apprentice is expected to pay a ransom

to their master to acquire skills. The contract is for a short period, often two years or less unlike the former which takes more years (Iwara, Amechi & Netshandama. 2019). On the other hand,"Igba-oso-ahia" (which means a form of business tricks), is also used by traders to raise capital for business. It involves selling another person's goods at a higher price (Iwara, Amechi & Netshandama. 2019).

Adeola, (2021) posit that with time this novice is transformed into experts in various fields. In this way, entrepreneurial traits like effective negotiations, risk-taking, saving culture, thrift, concept innovation and investment strategies are learned (Adeola, 2021).

Once an apprentice is under the care of his master, he becomes a servant. The master cares and caters for the servant's well-being for an agreed period of time, while, in turn, the servant assists his master in business and other domestic works while living with themNkamnebe&Ezemba, 2020). Further, the apprentice is expected to be faithful to his master and during this period, the master as the mentor exposes the strategies of the business to him. If the apprentice is intelligent enough to master the business, the master may start another business outlet for the servant to manage. This helps them to master all the strategies and techniques of the particular business. The apprentice is expected to serve his master without reservation. The Igbo believe that "onye fee eze, eze e-ruoya aka" (You will be measured in the same way you measure others). The implication of this is that when a servant serves his master faithfully and diligently, he will be served faithfully by another servant.

There have been lots of challenges in the smooth sail in successes that Igbo apprenticeship scheme of Igba-Boyi have achieved over the years. This challenges presents themselves as a disruptions,Minbaeva, (2021) define disruption as "an interruption in the usual way that a system, process or event works"), and as something that prevents the system, process or event from "continuing as usual or as expected". These disruptions appear in different forms which includes;

Non-Settlement of Apprentices: The major challenge apprentices, Umu-Boyi, face is the issue of non-settlement after serving the master or Oga for many years for which reasons or faults may not always be from master. The death of the Master has been known to lead to the problem of non-settlement. It can also result from harsh economic conditions which may have led to general business failures (Nonyelu et al, 2023). Oyewunmi and Moses (2021) maintain that the challenges of IgbaBoyi/ImuAhia within the environment are financialand investment illiteracy, death of mentor or apprentice, institutional disadvantages, policy somersaults, and child labour. Others are decline in apprenticeships, mistreatment, and breachof the settlement agreement, mistrust and insecurity.

Nkamnebe and Ezemba 2021; Nonyelu et al 2023) also examine the challenges of IgbaBoyi, the mentee, as dishonesty, theft, fraud, fear of the future, and peer group influence. NdiOga mostly fail in keeping to the agreement which is predominantly oral, mere promises, as a result of the trust arising from the Igbo values that used to work so well in Igbo land. The disadvantaged position of the poor NwaBoyi makes it easier for Ndi Oga to go against their word leaving the mentee Nwa-Boyi to his “chi” and the ancestors (Nkamnebe and Ezemba (2021).

Osiri (2020) also examine loss of social values as another challenges of Igba-Boyi.,due to several factors, including ‘trans-Atlantic slavery/human trafficking, unfavourable economic policies, demolition of market structures by government agencies and harsh economic situation, threaten the institution of Igba-boyi. In the process, honesty in wealth accumulation, which is part of the Igbo value system started to give way for get-rich-quick syndrome (Osiri, 2020).

Ezeajughu, (2021 also examine the inadequate legal framework to guide the system as another challenge that face Igba-Boyi apprenticeship scheme. The provisions of the Labour Act to regulate apprenticeship in Nigeria are at best merely good intentions and consequently, the laid down rules are never adhered to or implemented. Therefore, order

and formalization which the Labour Act was trying to create was a mere pretense and Nigeria still operates an unorganized, unregulated and broadly informal apprenticeship system without a defined vocational profile or framework.

4. CONCLUSION

The Igba boyi apprenticeship scheme of the Igbo people, that largely neglected, was currently described as the largest business incubator in Nigeria and the world at large (Adeola, 2021). But dishonesty on the part of the Master or the apprentice has tended to disrupt the good intentions of the Igba boyi apprenticeship scheme.

There is quest for materialism which has taken a new dimension, greed have also blossomed into the get-rich-quick syndrome and lack of patience to learn the necessary skill under master (Oga) have result in the decline of the Igba boyi apprenticeship scheme.

Lack of patience to learn the necessary skill under the master (Oga) and loss of requisite family values results in the decline of the Igba boyi apprenticeship scheme of the Igbo. The quest for materialism has taken a new dimension and greed has blossomed into the get-rich-quick syndrome which is currently thriving.

Some mentees engage in stealing and go as far as liquidating their Mentors secretly by giving out their Mentors ware in the warehouse to some previously settled servants that will keep equivalent cash for them and through this process hurls away their Mentors wealth

There is loss of social values on the part of the apprentice, honesty in wealth accumulation, which is part of the Igbo value system have give way for get-rich-quick syndrome.

The order and formalization which the Labour Act was trying to create was a mere pretense. There is inadequate legal framework to guide the system in Nigeria; Igba boyi apprenticeship still operates an unorganized, unregulated and broadly informal apprenticeship system without a defined vocational profile or framework.

There is loss of social value which stem from unfavorable economic policies, demolition of market structures by government agencies and harsh economic situation, threatens the institution of Igba boyi and pave way for get-rich-quick syndrome.

Insecurity in Nigeria, especially, in Igbo land creates tensions concerning the lives of businesses and business owners and the rate of establishing business has drastically reduced.

Security Challenges in Nigeria have span beyond terrorist activities and include: Financial insecurity (fraud perpetuated by hackers called yahoo and by fraudsters and kidnappers) Robbery attacks and destruction of properties etc. These pose a threat to life of future

POLICY STATEMENTS

Based on the findings of this study, the following policy statements were made:

1. Considering the vital role apprenticeship scheme plays in economic development, the government and the financial institutions in Nigeria should play a mediating role between the master and apprentice by introducing insurance scheme for "Igba-Boyi" to enable the apprentice to access start-up capital grants in case their "Oga" (mentor) fails to settle them at the completion of their apprenticeship.
2. The government should also setup a regulatory agency at the state, local government and at the community levels that will be charged with the responsibility of regulating the master and apprentice relationship and mentoring. This is to ensure that the apprentices are properly mentored on the basic principles that propel Igbo apprenticeship scheme.
3. Mentors/Owners of businesses should develop internal control system and carryout regular audit of their business to eliminate or reduce theft by apprentice. They should also strive to fulfill their agreement, once the apprentice served them diligently.

4. The people should hold firm their cultural values and discourage the attitude of get rich- quick-syndrome which is currently thriving in our society.
5. There is need to provide a workable legal framework for regulating apprenticeship scheme in Nigeria, especially in the South East, Nigeria.
6. Both state and federal government should create enabling environment by providing adequate security to protect lives and property.

REFERNCES

Adeola, O. (2021) Igbo traditional business school (I-TBS): An introduction in indigenous African enterprise: Igbo traditional business school (I-TBS) Advanced series in management, vol. 26(1): 3-12.

Agozino, B. & Anyanike I. (2007). Imu-ahia: traditional igbo business school and global commerce. culture, dialectical anthropology, vol. 31(3): 233–252.

Alike, M. & Orjiako-Umunze, I (2020). Social Economic Philosophy of contemporary Igbo apprenticeship system" Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 3(1):1-14.

Anayo, D., Nkamnebe, A.D., &Ezemba, E.N., (2021), Entrepreneurship Incubation among the Nigerian Igbos.The Igba-Boi indigeneous model. Advance Series in Management Vol.26: 27-38.

Cambridge Dictionary
https:/dictionary/englishlib/Cambridge.org/dictionary/english/disruption. Extracted, 30 January, 2021.

Ejo-orusa, H. &Mpi D. L. (2019). Reinventing the Nwaboi Apprenticeship system: a platform for entrepreneurship promotion in Nigeria, International Journal of Advance Research, 8(9): 1-10

Ebereonwu, C. (2021). The Role of Culture in Entrepreneurship: A Focus on the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System, ISM Journal, Vol. 4 (2021), pp. 23-29.

Ezeajughu, M. C. (2021), The Igbo Apprenticeship System: Nigeria's Gateway To World

Business Dominance. International Journal of Research Culture Society, Vol. 5(3): 1-5.

Ezejiofor, R. A. (2021). Entrepreneurship apprenticeship and mentorship as panacea for unemployment in Nigeria. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 26(3), 15- 21.

Ekesiobi, C. &Dimnwobi, S.K. (2020). Economic Assessment pf Igbo Entrepreneurship Model for Entrepreneurial Development in Nigeria" Evidence from Clusters in Anambra State, International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour Research, 27(2):416-433.

Gessler, M. (2019), "Concepts of apprenticeships: Strengths, weaknesses and pitfalls," in Handbook of Vocational Education and Training, McGrath. Et al, EdsSwitzerland: Springer Nature.

Hisrich, R., Langan-Fox, J., & Grant, S. (2007). Entrepreneurship Research and Practice: A call to action for Psychology. American Psychologist, 62(6): 575-596.

Igwe, P. A. Newbery, R., Amoncar, N., White, G.R.T. and Maduchie, N. (2018), keeping it in the Family: Exploring Igbo Ethnic Entrepreneurial Behaviour in Nigeria, International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour Research in Nigeria, 26(1), 34-54.

Igwe, P. A. Madichie, N.O.&Amoncar, N. (2020).Transgenerational business legacies and intergenerational succession among the Igbo (Nigeria), Small Enterprise Research, (27(2), 165-179.

ILO, (2012) Upgrading informal apprenticeship: A resource guide form Africa, https://www..ilo.org/skills/pubs/WCMS_171393/lang-en/index.htm

Iwara, I. O., Ameachi, K.E. &Netshandama, V, (2019), The Igba-Boi apprenticeship approach: Arsenal behind growing success of Igbo entrepreneurs in Nigeria. Ubuntu Journal of Conflict Transformation, 8(1), 227-250.

Iwara, I.O., and Adeola, O. (2021). Success indicators of enterprises anchored on an African Indigenous Apprenticeship Model of Entrepreneurship, Vol 16 (4), pp. 243-264.

Igwe, P.A., Newbury, R., Amoncar, N., White, G.R.T. Madichie, N.O. (2018) Keeping it in the family: exploring Igbo ethnic entrepreneurial behaviour in Nigeria, International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour& Research, 1355-2554.

Kanu, C. C.(2020). The context of Igwebuike: What entrepreneurship development systems in Africa can learn from the Igbo apprenticeship development systems. Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development, 2(1), 2640-2657.

Kanu, I.A. (2019), Igwebuikenomics: The Igbo apprenticeship system for wealth creatioin. African Journal of Arts and Humanities, 5(4), 56-70.

Mbaegbu, D. &Ekienabor (2018). The drivers of entrepreneurship among the Igbos of the Southeastern geo-political zone of Nigeria. International Journal of Advanced Studies in Economics and Public sector Management, 6(1): 49-62.

Minbeava, D. B. (2021) Building a credible Human Capital Analytical for Organizational Competitive Advantages.Human Resources Management Review. 31(4):100-820.

Nwagu, N, B, (2023), Igbo apprenticeship and Economic Development; A catalyst for Frowth and Progress. Nnadiebube Journal of Social Sciences (NJSS) Vol. 3(1):1-11.

Nkamnebe, A, D. &Ezemba, E. N. (2021), Entrepreneurship incubation among the Nigerian Igbos: The Igbaboi Indigenous model. Emerld Publishing: Advance Series in Manage,ent 26:27-38.

Nkamnebe, A.D. and Ezemba, E.N. (2021). Entrepreneurship Incubation Among the Nigerian Igbos: The Igba – Boi Indigenous Model, Indigenous African Enterprise: The Igbo Traditional Business School (I-TBS) Advanced Series in Management, Vol. 26, 27-38.

Nonyelu, N. and Onyeizugbe, C., (2020), Reimagining Igbo apprenticeship: Bringing it up to speed with Contemporary Realities. EJBMR, European Journal of Business and Management Research, 5(3):1-8.

Nonyelu, N. Au., Nnabuife, E.K., Onyeizugbe, C.U., Anazodo, R. &Onyima, B. (2023). Apprenticeship (IgbaBoyi) As Exemplar of Indigenous African Entrepreneurship Model, International Journal of management (IJM), 14(4):257-271.

Nonyelu, N. Au., Nnabuife, E.K., Onyeizugbe, C.U., Anazodo, R. &Onyima, B. (2023).Igba Boyi: A Study of Igbo Apprenticeship Scheme in Onitsha Markets Adonis & Abbey Publishers.

Obunike, C. L. (2016). Induction strategy of Igbo entrepreneurs and micro-business success: A study of household equipment line, main market Onitsha, Nigeria. ActaUniversitatis Sapientiae, Economics and Business, 4(2016), 43–65.

Oyewunmi, A. E., Oyewumi, A. O. & Moses, C.I. (2021), IgbaBoyi: Historical Transitions of the Igba Boyi Apprenticeship Model. Advanced series in Management Emerald Publishing 26:13-25.

Olakunle, O., Iseolorunkanmi, J. &Segun, O. (2016), Indigene – settler relationship in Nigeria: A case study of the Igbo community in Lagos. African Journal of Social Science, 7(3):2229-5313.

Olulu, R.M. &Udeorah, S.A. (2018), Contract of apprenticeship and Employment generation in Nigeria. International Journal of Scientific Research in Education, 11(3):335-344.

Osiri, J. K. (2020). Igbo management philosophy: A key for success in Africa. Journal of Management History, 26(3), 295–314. doi:10.1108/JMH-10-2019-0067.