

Igbo Apprenticeship Practice: Resilience Vehicle for Venture Creation in Southeastern Nigeria

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Abstract

In the quest to generate wealth that could salvage the ravaging poverty after the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War, the Igbo-speaking people of southeastern Nigeria birthed apprenticeship practice which has until this day become a norm in the region. It was based on the relevance of this entrepreneurial spirit of the Igbo people and how they have consistently embraced apprenticeship culture to reduce unemployment and create new businesses across the Nigerian space that motivated the researchers to carry out this investigation with 204 mentors (Oga's) that passed through the apprenticeship practice before establishing their businesses. The purpose of this investigation is to examine the relationship between Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation in Southeastern Nigeria. The theories that explained Igbo apprenticeship practice are social learning theory and Igwebuiké theory. Descriptive statistics and regression were used to analyse the data. The study found that Igbo apprentice practice has a significant positive relationship with venture creation and job creation in the southeastern region of Nigeria.

Keywords

Apprenticeship, Igbo apprenticeship, Igba-Boi, venture creation, social learning, resilience, Igwebuiké

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Introduction

For over a decade, the Igbo-speaking people of southeastern parts of Nigeria are well known for venture creation through entrepreneurial socialization known as Igbo apprenticeship practice (Rufai et al., 2019). The apprenticeship practice of the Igbo people is guided by Igbo philosophy that says “*oye, fe’ eze, eze, eruoya aka*” (*anyone that serves a king, shall be a king*). Thus, it is this premise that has metamorphosed into Igbo apprenticeship practice where “Odibo or Boi” (mentee, protégé, servant) serves “Oga” (mentor) for five, six to ten years or even more before the servant (mentee) will be settled with a certain amount of capital that would enable the mentee to set up his/her own business (Ango, 2023; Kanu, 2019). The servant is usually a protégé; sometimes does not know the kind of venture or business the master (mentor) is into or is willing to mentor him/her into but because the protégé is handicapped from their community where he/she was picked up by the mentor (Omede & Nte, 2023; Okwuowulu, 2022).

Apprenticeship is a business and cultural heritage of Igbo people that was firepowered after the Nigerian-Biafra Civil War and further engineered by Nigeria’s government policy against the Igbo ethnic nationality that irrespective of the whatever amount that any Igbo person has in their bank account, he/she should be given twenty pounds (£20) (BBC, 2021; Igwe et al., 2018). This was what gave the Igbo people the courage to travel to different parts of the world to provide for their family and their community at large (Onu et al., 2023; Shahriar, 2023). Most Igbo people who traveled to cities and overseas started doing menial jobs which they used to sustain themselves, and thereafter ventured into different businesses which provided more opportunities for them to come home and carry one member of their family that would learn the trade. These groups of individuals that had settled in cities later came back to their various communities with good news which brought excitement to the entire people of Igbo ethnic group. To liberate raging poverty in the community, these groups of individuals that had traveled to cities were encouraged by the elders of the community to ensure that they took one or two persons from the community who would learn the same trade so that the burden of hardship would be reduced (Ogochukwu, 2023; Edeh et al., 2023a; Ifeanyi, 2021). Individuals who are expected to mentor those who were picked from the community are referred to as “Oga” (mentor) while those who are expected to learn the trade are known as “Boi” or “Odibo” (mentee or protégé). This is where Igbo apprenticeship practice began.

Nnonyelu and Onyeizugbe (2020) contended that the practice of Igbo apprenticeship practice amongst the Igbo people is a miracle that entrepreneurship scholars are yet to unravel. It is based on this assertion that Nnonyelu et al. (2023) stressed that Igbo apprenticeship practice has transformed many communities in the southeastern parts of Nigeria and hence should be replicated across other parts of the country to alleviate poverty. Orogbu et al. (2021) added that it is very rare to find any successful businessman from the southern parts of Nigeria that has not received apprenticeship training. A survey has revealed that the Igbo apprenticeship system would be sustained based on the antecedent and the practice of lifting one another amongst the Igbo people (Okwuowulu, 2022). It is this ontological belief that has metamorphosed into micro, small, and medium enterprises across the major cities in Nigeria.

In line with the above the significance of apprenticeship is enormous. Igbo apprenticeship practice has been a strong predictor of small, medium, and large family-owned enterprises across the globe (Chinweuba&Ezeugwu, 2017; Lady-Franca, 2016). Orugun & Nafiu (2014) opined that Igbo apprenticeship practice is a panacea for the economic growth and development of Nigeria. It has been shown that Igbo entrepreneurial mentoring is a panacea for unemployment in Nigeria (Mia et al., 2023; Omonijo et al., 2018).

Nonetheless, prior empirical studies had examined the impact, effect, and influence of Igbo apprenticeship model, and system and practice on the economic transformation of southeastern

Nigeria (Okwuowulu, 2022; Onu et al., 2023; Anago, 2023; Orogbu et al., 2021; Okeke & Osang, 2021; Nnonyelu & Onyeizugbe, 2020; Obaeko et al., 2019; Chinweuba & Ezeugwu 2017; Chinazor, 2016). On the other hand, none of the studies highlighted above has examined the effect of Igbo apprenticeship practice on venture creation amongst Automobile Spare Parts Dealers in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. This is the vacuum that this research has filled, and it was this gap that motivated the scholars to carry out this investigation. The purpose of this investigation is to examine the relationship between Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation in Southeastern Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to:

- 1) examine the relationship between Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation
- 2) investigate the relationship between Igbo apprenticeship practice and job creation

Literature Review And Hypotheses Development

Igbo Apprenticeship Practice (Igba-Boi)

The Igbo indigenous people of the Southeastern part of Nigeria believe that one of the ways to become an entrepreneur is to serve '*Oga*' (mentor) who has experience in a particular trade rather than to embark on a journey that does not have an end in pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities. *Igba-Boi* (Igbo apprenticeship practice) is an unpaid apprenticeship tradition that allow people especially (mentees or protégés) acquire business ideas from a master (*Oga*) for a defined number of years at the end of the apprenticeship tenure, the mentees or protégés receives capital from their *Oga* (mentor) to start-up their own business (Adoga & Ohajionu, 2021; Rufai et al., 2019). *Igba-Boi* is a form of on-the-job training where an apprentice enters an agreement with a mentor (*Oga*) to learn a particular trade between five to seven number years and also help the mentor (*Oga*) in his/her domestic affairs (Omede & Nte, 2023; Chinweuba & Ezeugwu, 2017). In this regard, the protégé is usually expected to exhibit a high form of discretionary behaviour in the domestic affairs of the mentor ranging from doing menial jobs at the mentor's home on weekends and other days as instructed by the mentor (*Oga*) (Okwuowulu, 2022). This discretionary behaviour is one of the qualities of loyalty to the mentor (*Oga*) and his family (if any) otherwise it would be said that the mentee (*Boi*) is not loyal and therefore should not be settled properly after the expiration of the agreement (Nnonyelu & Onyeizugbe, 2020; Chinazor, 2016).

Olulu and Udeorah (2018) argued that under the Igbo apprenticeship tradition, the parent or guardian of the protégé prefers choosing a profession for him/her and take them to a well-known mentor of that profession or trade for training who will later settle the mentee (protégé) when he/she has completed the apprenticeship. This cultural social learning is what is known as '*Igba-Odibo*' or '*Igba-Boi*' in the Igbo language (Obaeko et al., 2019; Okene, 2011). Young males and females of Igbo ethnic extraction are usually sent to an already established businessman or woman who has distinguished himself/herself in one form of trade or the other for training (mentoring) which lasts between five to seven years. At the beginning of the initiation of the '*Boi*' (protégé), the families of the protégé usually approach the family of the '*Oga*' (mentor) with some '*Oji*' (kola nut) and '*Nku-Ocha*' (palm wine). In this scenario, the parents of the mentee would be accompanied by some elders from his/her kindred or community to the family of the '*Oga*' (mentor) (Okeke & Osang, 2021). When they got there, the official initiation or induction would commence with the breaking of '*Oji*' (kola nut) followed by the palm wine then the father or guidance of the protégé would present the '*Nwa-Boi*' (Small Protégé) to the '*Oga*' (mentor) who would then give the conditions that the protégé is expected to follow when they have gotten to the city where '*Oga*' business is located (Orogbu et al., 2021). Prior empirical results have demonstrated that Igbo apprenticeship has a significant effect on economic growth, community development, job creation, and reduction of

poverty in southeastern parts of Nigeria (Omede & Nte, 2023; Anago, 2023; Onu, et al., 2023; Okwuowulu, 2022; Ifechukwu-Jacobs, 2022; Ifeanyi, 2021; Lady-Franca, 2016).

Igbo apprenticeship practice: Resilience vehicle for venture creation in Nigeria

Venture creation has received attention from concerned scholars due to its significance in job creation in many countries (Edeh et al., 2020; Wenninger, 2019; Pruthi & Wright, 2019). Venture creation is one of the major instruments for the reduction of unemployment and the development of host communities in any nation (Hossinger et al., 2023; Hack et al., 2016). Research has shown that the establishment of new businesses improves the standard of living of society (Shepherd et al., 2020). Khan et al. (2019) opined that the creation of new businesses reduces competition among rivalries that are in the same industry. In another dimension, Metallo et al. (2021) hold that individuals who create ventures helps government to prevent crimes and other negative vices in the society. In this article, venture creation is referred to as the process of starting a new or fresh business. Based on apprenticeship, venture creation refers to activities that surround the establishment of a new business after learning the skills from a mentor (Bazaluk et al., 2024; Mamun et al., 2017). Thus, Dada et al. (2023) argued that creating a new business is like building an estate that would stand the taste of time. Karitu and Muathe (2023) admitted that venture creation has removed the burden on the government thereby creating job opportunities for the teeming young population. It was also argued that venture creation is associated with mentoring (Edeh et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2019; Mai & Gu, 2012). Lafuente-González and Leiva (2022) accentuated that the best way to create new businesses is through apprenticeship which gives the protégé the advantage to learn the skills of running his/her business when it is created. Hunjra et al. (2020) disagreed with Lafuente-González and Leiva (2022) by asserting that venture creation begins with the conception of a business idea from the individual who is willing to start a business. It is this argument that convinced Dada et al. (2023) when they stressed that conceiving an idea does not translate to starting a new business without acquiring the knowledge associated with the trade. In another presentation, Edeh and Dan-Jumbo (2019) submitted that the ability to create a new venture is dependent on the culture of the individual. Igba Boi fosters community development and human capital development which on the one hand create value (Yakubu, 2023).

Aligning with the above submission, Sha et al. (2022) strongly recommend that for an individual to embark on venture creation, he/she should undergo training that would be needed to oversee the business from start to sustainability. A survey has revealed that most individuals who created existing businesses have received one form of training or the other from someone who has been operating such type of business (Ani & Edeh, 2022; Zayed et al., 2022; Zayed et al., 2022; Kirkley, 2016). Leaning on the above contention, Fadzil et al. (2017) maintain that creating a venture is not the ultimate but sustaining it is what matters. Based on this argument, Davidsson and Gruenhagen (2021) suggested that the easiest way to sustain a business is for individuals who are willing to start new ventures to undergo apprenticeship training. Nnonyelu and Onyeizugbe (2020) added that the relevance of apprenticeship in venture creation has been evidenced by the Igbo ethnic nationalities of Nigeria.

Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation

With the spirit of brotherhood, the Igbo people of the southeastern part of Nigeria have been able to create ventures across the geopolitical landscape of Nigeria and beyond (Okwuowulu, 2022). It was also affirmed that the apprenticeship system of Igbo people has given birth to so many businesses in different parts of Nigeria thereby promoting harmony among their communities (Olulu & Udeorah, 2018). Since the advent of *Igba-Boi* practice, so many young people have become successful entrepreneurs. Previous research on Igba-Boi philosophy established that the system has distinguished Igbo ethnic nationality as the fast-

growing traditional entrepreneurship scheme (Ango, 2023). Yakubu (2023) argued that *Igba-Boi* system of apprenticeship has empowered the southeastern people of Nigeria to the extent that they no longer rely on the central government for survival. Okeke and Osang (2021) accentuated that businesses that spread across Nigeria such as automobile spare parts, supermarkets, fast food restaurants, boutiques, building materials, and hotels, are mostly owned by the Igbo ethnic group. Onu et al. (2023) supported Okeke and Osang (2021) and stated that the resilience capacity of the Igbo people is what propelled them to be independent through apprenticeship. Anago (2023) argues that ever since the Nigeria-Biafra war ended, no business can be named without an attribute of an Igbomen and women. In addition, Orogbu et al. (2021) stressed that the resilience spirit of the Igbo people is what gave them the morale to continue with their apprenticeship practice. A survey released by Ekekwe (2021) shows that ninety percent of automobile businesses in Onitsha, Nnewi, and Aba were made possible by Igba-Boi apprenticeship practice. Sulaimon (2023) confirmed that one major attribute of the Igbo people is their resilience and consciousness in creating new ventures through the *Igba-Boi* apprenticeship model. An investigation carried out by Ifeanyi (2021) revealed that the development of southeastern Nigeria can be traced to *Igba-Boi* apprenticeship practice. Chinazor (2016) maintains that since Igba-Boi is hinged on wealth creation, young people from the southeast extraction attest that it is more profiting to learn a trade by becoming an apprentice to a mentor who would settle them at the expiration of the agreed number of years entered into. Onu, et al. (2023) submitted that the creation of ventures in southeastern Nigeria was orchestrated by Igba-Boi practice. Drawing from the above contention, the first research proposition is hereby formulated.

H1: Igbo apprenticeship practice is related to venture creation

Igbo apprenticeship practice and job creation

The creation of ventures through Igbo apprenticeship practice has drastically reduced the unemployment rate in southeastern Nigeria (Chinweuba & Ezeugwu, 2017). Okwuowulu (2022) opined that the “*onye anyana nwanneya*” held by the Igbo ethnic nationality has assisted them in providing jobs to young secondary school leavers who are still waiting to take secure admission into tertiary institutions. Ugwu (2023) contended that it is very rare to see young people roaming the streets in southeastern Nigeria because most of them are usually absorbed as salespersons by those who have created new ventures. Studies have shown that most of the jobs created in the southeastern Nigeria were products of Igba Boi except the government civil service (Orogbu et al., 2021; Chinazor, 2016). Investigations on the Igbo apprenticeship system show that about 2.5 million jobs were created between 2020 and 2021 (Muibi-Hammed, 2024). Another survey revealed that an average Igbomen and women are employed in one trade or the other (Obaeko et al., 2019). Ladelokun (2023) revealed that jobs are created every five to seven years through the *Igba-Boi* apprenticeship practice.

H2: Igbo apprenticeship practice is related to job creation

Theoretical underpinning

This study is anchored on the *social learning* theory of learning and *Igwebuike* theory. Igbo apprenticeship practice is learning by observation which corroborates with the social learning theory of Bandura (1977). Social learning affirms that the learner is motivated by the attributes and behaviour of the teacher (Edeh et al., 2023b). In this research, the mentee (*nwa-boi*) learns new trade by observing the behavioural skills of Oga (master) such as customer relationships; recording of daily sales; stocktaking, and ordering of goods from Onitsha and Aba International markets. Another behavioural acumen that *Nwa-Boi* (mentee) acquires from the *Oga* (mentor) through observation is patience, steadfastness, truthfulness, and consistency

with what the *Oga* (mentor) is known for by the customers. The essence of these attributes is to equip the *Nwa-Boi* with trading competencies whenever he/she becomes *Oga* (mentor) in the future. Another theory that best underpins this study is *Igwebuike* which was popularized by Amah (2010) and advanced by Kanu (2016). *Igwebuike* is translated to mean “*when we work as a team, we can achieve a lot*” (Kanu, 2019; Kanu, 2017). It was further broken down to mean “*community of strength*” (Amah, 2010). Amah (2010) added that *Igwebuike* theory implies that what makes a community is the willingness to help one another to achieve desired goals. To Kanu (2020), *Igwebuike* philosophy is a powerful force among the Igbo ethnic nationality of Nigeria that distinguishes them from other ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Drawing from the introductory section of this study, it was established that due to the economic hardship that bedeviled the people of southeast extraction after the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War, communities in Igboland gathered to chart a new course on how to come out from the situation they found themselves (Ifechukwu-Jacobs, 2022). It was from the deliberations above that it was agreed that “*anyone that has a means for survival (trade) should always carry ever other person along*” by coming back home to pick up other young men and women who would serve as apprentices so that they could also learn the same trade.

Research Methodology

The target population covers five hundred and sixty (560) Igbo businessmen and women who have served their *Oga* (mentor) and started their businesses and documented with the Association of Automobile Dealers of Nigeria (AADN) Abakaliki Branch in March 2024. To determine the sample size of 560, researchers used Krecjie and Morgan (1970) and the result is 222. A five-point closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data from automobile entrepreneurs who participated in the *Igba-Boi* practice and have established their businesses at Abakaliki Automobile Spare Parts Plaza, Ebonyi State. Thus, 222 copies of the questionnaire were administered to them one-on-one. At the point of retrieval, researchers discovered that about eighteen (18) copies of the questionnaire were wrongly filled, leaving about two hundred and four (204) copies as valid. Ethical procedures of informed consent, considering anonymity and confidentiality regarding human participants, were considered before the instruments were administered to the participants (Cumyn et al., 2021). IBM SPSS 25.0 was used to analyse the instrument validity, reliability, and research hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

The results of the participants' demographics in Table 1 revealed that 40 respondents representing 19.6% are female Igbo businesswomen while 164 respondents representing 80.4% are male Igbo businessmen who have passed through *Igba Boyi* apprenticeship system and have established their personal automotive businesses. The age bracket result indicated that 111 respondents representing 54.4% are between the ages of 30 and 47 years while the remaining 93 respondents representing 45.6% are between the ages of 48 years and above. Education attainment of the respondents shows that 89 respondents representing 43.6% attended primary education; 100 respondents representing 49.0% attended secondary education; and 15 respondents representing 7.4% attended tertiary education. The number of years served as *Nwa Boyi* revealed that 15 respondents representing 7.4% served their *Oga* for about 4 years; 32 respondents representing 15.7% served their *Oga* for about 5 years; 10 respondents representing 4.9% served their *Oga* for about 6 years; 103 respondents representing 50.5%

served their *Oga* for about 7 years; 7 respondents representing 3.4% served their *Oga* for about 8 years and, 37 respondents representing 18.1% served their *Oga* for about 10 years.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographic	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Female	40	19.6
Male	164	80.4
Age (Years)		
30-47	111	54.4
48 & above	93	45.6
Education		
Primary	89	43.6
Secondary	100	49.0
Tertiary	15	7.4
Number of Years Served (Years)		
4	15	7.4
5	32	15.7
6	10	4.9
7	103	50.5
8	7	3.4
10	37	18.1

Results presented in Table 2 revealed that the responses of the participants on Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation are positive. This is in line with the Likert scale rule of thumb which affirmed that mean values of 2.5-3.4 =neutral; 1.0-2.4=negative attitude; and, 3.5-5.0 = positive attitude (Rafiuddin & Tasmin, 2023; Andrade, 2020; Pariseau & Kezim, 2007). The results of the mean for each item in Table 2 are from 3.6 and above indicating good distribution. Therefore, the mean values in Table 2 indicated that the participants agreed that Igbo apprenticeship has improved the creation of new businesses across southeastern Nigeria. Also, the standard deviation demonstrates that the distribution is normal because all the results fall within +1 (McGrath et al., 2020; Livingston, 2004). This also implies that the respondents are well-informed and familiar with the Igbo apprenticeship practice.

Table 2: Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation

Code	Research Questions	SA	A	D	SD	NAD	Mean	Std. Dev.
IAVC1	My Oga settled me with sufficient capital to start my own business	84	49	32	22	17	3.79	1.309
IAVC2	I strongly believe that without Igba-Boi I would not have started my own business	76	48	25	33	22	3.60	1.402
IAVC3	Igba Boi has made me to be financially independent	80	49	33	21	21	3.72	1.349
IAVC4	Imu Ahia or Igba-Odibo requires endurance.	78	47	24	33	22	3.62	1.408
IAVC5	Igbo apprenticeship requires the mentee (Boi) to be resilient	89	55	33	16	11	3.96	1.184
IAVC6	I am about to open another shop in this market	89	51	29	20	15	3.88	1.275

IAVC7	I am training my younger ones in the tertiary institutions with my business	92	52	22	25	13	3.91	1.274
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Note: SA=Strongly agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly disagree; NAD=Neither agree nor disagree

The results in Table 3 show the participants' responses on Igbo apprenticeship practice and job creation in southeastern Nigeria. are positive. Based on the responses, the results indicated that the practice of Igbo apprenticeship in southeastern Nigeria creates jobs for the people in the region. The mean values for each item are from 3.5 and above which indicates good distribution which is in consonant with Andrade (2020) recommendation. In addition, the standard deviation affirms that the distribution is normal since the values fall within +1 as suggested by McGrath et al. (2020), and Livingston (2004).

Table 3: Igbo apprenticeship practice and job creation

Code	Research Questions	SA	A	D	SD	NAD	Mean	Std. Dev.
IAJC1	I have employed about one to five salespersons since I started my own business	85	54	29	19	17	3.84	1.290
IAJC2	My salespersons oversee my businesses whenever I travel to Onitsha or Aba to make purchases	88	51	25	19	21	3.81	1.352
IAJC3	I feel very happy to put smiles on the faces of people searching for jobs	76	49	37	22	20	3.68	1.332
IAJC4	I am satisfied whenever I am called Oga by my employees	83	53	24	23	21	3.75	1.361
IAJC5	Some of my employees are sponsoring themselves in tertiary institutions	75	52	40	20	17	3.73	1.280
IAJC6	I have empowered many young people from my community	73	50	38	24	19	3.66	1.321
IAJC7	Most of my young employees no longer depend on their parents for everything they need	71	48	27	37	21	3.54	1.391

Note: SA=Strongly agree; A=Agree; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly disagree; NAD=Neither agree nor disagree

The hypotheses result in Table 4 show that venture creation (VC) variation can be explained by Igbo apprenticeship practice (IAP). This means that Igbo apprenticeship practice (IAP) has a significant effect on venture creation (VC) ($R=0.827$; $0.000<0.0001$); and also Igbo apprenticeship practice (IAP) predicted job creation (JC) ($R=0.867$; $0.000<0.0001$). The models also indicate that the values of the coefficient of determination (R) are progressive. In addition, the values of R^2 and adjusted R^2 are less than 5% revealing that sample error in the models was not encountered (Zayed et al., 2022). The Cronbach α coefficient for Igbo apprenticeship practice and venture creation items shows an alpha (α) 0.704 coefficient while that of Igbo apprenticeship practice and job creation shows a high Cronbach alpha (α) coefficient of 0.717 implying that the items are reliable and consistent (Bujang et al., 2018; Agbo, 2010). This is in line with Cronbach's (1951) contention that for items in an instrument to be reliable, the Cronbach α coefficient should fall between 0.7 and 0.9. The sample is also adequate based on Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) recommendations that values from 0.7 to 0.8 are considered adequate (Kaiser, 1974). Thus, KMO results in Table 2 revealed higher values

of 0.782 and 0.797, which are greater than 0.05, indicating that the data is valid and sufficient (Shrestha, 2021; Nasaireh, 2020).

Table 4: Research Hypotheses, Reliability and Validity

Code	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F.Stat	Std. Error	T.Stat	Sig.	N	α	KMO
IAP→VC	0.827	0.684	0.682	436.913	0.036	20.902	0.000	204	0.704	0.782
IAP→JC	0.867	0.751	0.750	609.221	0.033	24.682	0.000	204	0.717	0.797

From the results presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4, it was found that Igbo apprenticeship practice has a strong significant relationship with venture creation and job creation in southeastern Nigeria. This implies that the practice of apprenticeship by the Igbo ethnic-speaking people of southeast Nigeria has revolutionized the approaches of job creation and venture creation for the teeming populace. The above findings are in line with previous empirical dissections such as Okwuowulu (2022); Nnonyelu et al. (2023); Onu et al. (2023), Ugboego et al. (2022), and Ifechukwu-Jacobs (2022). The findings of Okwuowulu (2022), demonstrated that Igbo apprenticeship system has a positive significant effect on the growth of Automobile Spare Parts in Nnewi, Anambra State, Nigeria. In the same vein, Nnonyelu et al. (2023) result shows that *Igba-Boi* apprenticeship practice of Igbo ethnic nationality is a vehicle through which many new businesses are birthed. It was also found that Igbo apprenticeship practice has a significant positive relationship with job creation. This is in line with the findings of Onu et al. (2023); Hossan (2022); and Mohamed (2022). The result of Ifechukwu-Jacobs (2022) also correspond with the second findings of this study. Ifechukwu-Jacobs result demonstrated that *Igba-Boi* apprenticeship system of Igbo people has reduced youth unemployment at Onitsha Main Market.

Conclusion and Implications

This investigation aimed to examine the effect of Igbo apprenticeship practice on venture creation and job creation. The results demonstrated that Igbo apprenticeship practice has a positive significant contribution to venture creation as well as job creation in the southeast region of Nigeria. This means that the Igbo apprenticeship practice (*Igbo-Boi* or *Imu-Ahia* or *Igba-Odibo*) is a game changer when it comes to self-employment and job creation for others. The overall findings of this study also imply that indigenous entrepreneurship if well sustained, would change the dynamics of job creation across every nation. It was also discovered that the Igbo apprenticeship practice has reduced the high rate of unemployment in the southeastern parts of Nigeria thereby making the youth of the region self-reliant. The practical implication of this study is that the government of Nigeria should come up with a poverty alleviation programme that would be anchored on the *Igba-Boi* practice as a template for unemployment reduction in the country. In addition, communities should embrace Igba-Boi apprenticeship practice for the empowerment of their youths.

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