

# Corporate Social Responsibility: A Case for the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a Sustainable Model of a Startup Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa

*International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Studies*

Vol. 6, No. 1, 194-213, 2019  
e-ISSN: 2226-4809/p-ISSN: 2304-6945



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## ABSTRACT

One of the current issues in corporate social responsibility is social entrepreneurship, which is seeking social change through an entrepreneurial approach. It is an innovative bottom down economy that seeks to help the community grow economically in a sustainable way that produces economic efficiency. From the findings in this study, there is a significant relationship between the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and social entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa. It is clear that the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System as a startup incubator is a sustainable model for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach). Also, corporate organizations can adopt the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a sustainable model of a startup incubator for social entrepreneurship in their corporate social responsibility projects not only in Nigeria but in other parts of Africa and the world as well. ITAS has already proven to be successful in parts of Nigeria. It has helped the Igbo tribe to survive in the aftermath of the Nigerian-Biafran war. It helped in reducing the rate of poverty in Igboland by producing wealthy Igbo entrepreneurs and businessmen. It helped apprentices in the skill of business bookkeeping (recording of purchases and sales). It helps in providing for employment job seekers. It also helps in providing apprentices with some funds to start their business, and in handling cultural and legal problems in their businesses by developing in them the cultural intelligence (CQ) for adapting in any given environment and culture.

**Keywords:** *Igbo trade apprenticeship system, Social entrepreneurship, Sharing economy, Corporate social responsibility.*

**JEL Classification:** *M14 Corporate Culture; Diversity; Social Responsibility, L26 Entrepreneurship, L31 Nonprofit Institutions; NGOs; Social Entrepreneurship, L32 Public Enterprises; Public-Private Enterprises.*

**DOI:** 10.20448/802.61.194.213

Citation | Ugbaja Solomon Chukwuemeka (2019). Corporate Social Responsibility: A Case for the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a Sustainable Model of a Startup Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa. *International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Studies*, 6(1): 194-213.

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**Funding:** This study received no specific financial support.

**Competing Interests:** The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

**History:** Received: 1 April 2019/ Revised: 3 May 2019/ Accepted: 12 June 2019/ Published: 30 July 2019

**Publisher:** Online Science Publishing

### **Highlights of this paper**

- One of the current issues in corporate social responsibility is social entrepreneurship, which is seeking social change through an entrepreneurial approach.
- From the findings in this study, there is a significant relationship between the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and social entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### *1.1. Background of the Study*

The need for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become increasingly evident during the last decade and is currently the trend in corporate organizations, implying that corporate organizations are expected to do businesses in a sustainable way that integrates the economy environment, and the society into their businesses. This is within the aim of the United Nations' goals of achieving a sustainable society that is based on the 17 sustainable development goals. This will help organizations to satisfy the demands of the current age without jeopardizing the capacity of the subsequent age to be able to satisfy their demands.

According to the Premium Times Newspaper reports under the heading, "The National Population Commission-Nigeria's population now 198 million" (Adeyemo, 2018) that Nigeria is the largest populated country in Africa and is the seventh most populated country globally with approximately 198-200 million people. It is predicted to be the third largest country by 2050. However, it is currently facing the problems of extreme poverty and youth unemployment. This has become a great concern for academicians, economists, corporate organizations, Non-Profit organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the United Nations and even the government of Nigeria considering that the country's economy is largely dependent on oil and seriously needs diversification. Nigeria plays a major role in the economy of Africa as it is a country within a continent that will soon be the continent with the largest and youngest population in the world. Nigeria and Africa calls for urgent attention.

It is in light of the social problems mentioned above in Nigeria, this research intends to investigate whether the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) business model is a sustainable model of a startup incubator for social entrepreneurship and whether corporate organizations can adopt it as part of their corporate social responsibility contributions in social entrepreneurship projects, either as incubators or accelerators, in helping the Nigerian society where they operate to eradicate the high degree of poverty and youth unemployment towards achieving the sustainable development goals of the United Nations for the attainment of a sustainable society in Nigeria.

There have been studies on the effects of Igbo apprenticeship system and social capital in the new business creation process of immigrants Igbo entrepreneurs, the Igbo entrepreneurship activity as the panacea for the Nigeria economic growth and development, the effect of entrepreneurship in fostering economic growth and development, and the social-economic philosophy of contemporary Igbo apprenticeship system but no study has investigated the relationship between Igbo apprenticeship system as a sustainable model of a start-up incubator through social entrepreneurship (social change over poverty, unemployment, war, etc. through entrepreneurial approach) and calls for corporate organizations to adopt it as their corporate social responsibility projects in Nigeria, Africa. This is the gap this research seeks to fill in this study.

### *1.2. Statement of Problem*

The current high level of extreme poverty and unemployment in the country of Nigeria has been a concern to all stakeholders ranging from academicians, economists, corporate organizations, nonprofit organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and even the government of Nigeria. According to the report of Vanguard Newspaper's "112 Million Nigerians currently live below Poverty Line" (Ahiuma-Young, 2016) the National

Bureau of Statistics (NBS) stated for the current poverty record, more than 67.1 percent, of 112 million Nigerians, from the nation’s total population of 167 million are unemployed. The implication of the above report is that as one billion people are recorded in the global poverty rate, 112 million (67.1) Nigerians currently live below the poverty line. This is from the statement made by the International Labour Organization ILO’s Director-General, Guy Ryder. He also lamented that in spite of the fact that work is the actual way out from poverty, 327 million hard-working men and women are currently at the level of extreme poverty while 967 million men and women are at the moderate level or almost at the poverty level.

Also, looking at the Quartz Africa Digital News of 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2017 edition under the heading “Most of the World most populated Countries have tried to decrease extreme poverty-excluding Nigeria” (Kazeem, 2017) it was reported that according to the available data, among the 10 countries that have the highest populations in the world, Nigeria was the only country that has an increase in the number of nationals that still live in extreme poverty despite Nigeria’s enormous oil wealth and stirring economic progress. This is from the report of Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals of the World Bank’s 2017 that indicated the comparison of Nigerians that were living in extreme poverty in 1990 and 2013 showed that in the year 2013; about 35 million Nigerians were recorded to live under the extreme poverty line, according to the report of Atlas tracking the advancement that countries are making towards achieving the United Nations’ 17 sustainable development goals, which includes goals such as reducing economic inequality as well as poverty eradication, reducing illiteracy rates, and the use of green energy etc. According to Atlas’s definition of ‘extreme poverty’, it is anyone that lives below \$1.90 in a day. In 1990, Nigeria recorded the number of 51 million nationals living in what Atlas called extreme poverty but it increased to 86 million Nigerians living in extreme poverty in 2013. Figure 1 shows the data of the indication of humanity present in severe poverty in the world’s 10 largest countries by population.

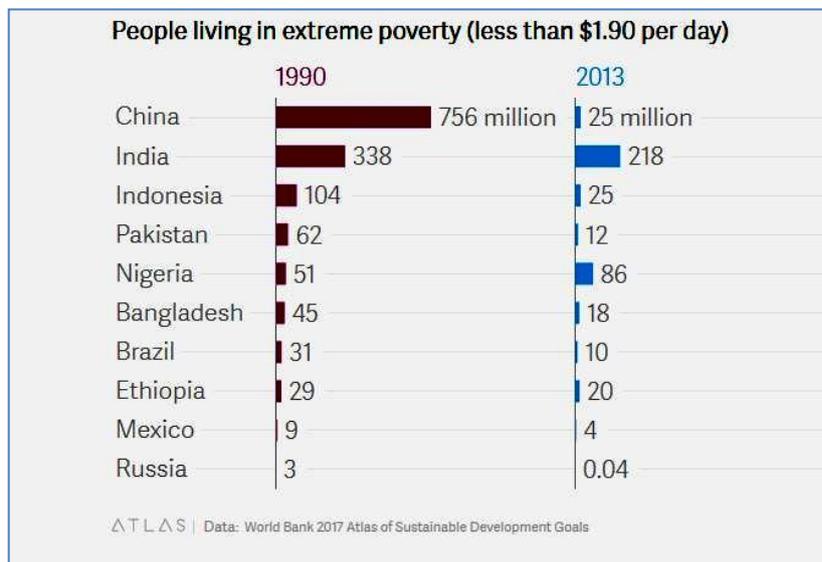


Figure-1. Comparison of nations present in severe poverty line.

Source: The Data of the Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals Statistic from World Bank 2017. <https://www.theatlas.com/charts/SIG3LerCg>.

According to the report of The Economist of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017 under the heading “The World has made huge advancement in reducing severe poverty” (The Economist, 2017) about 0.8 of people in the world who live in extremely poverty are people that live in the non-urban area of Africa; more than half of those people live in the region of Sub-Saharan Africa. See Figure 2 below to see where misery persists (number of people living in absolute poverty).

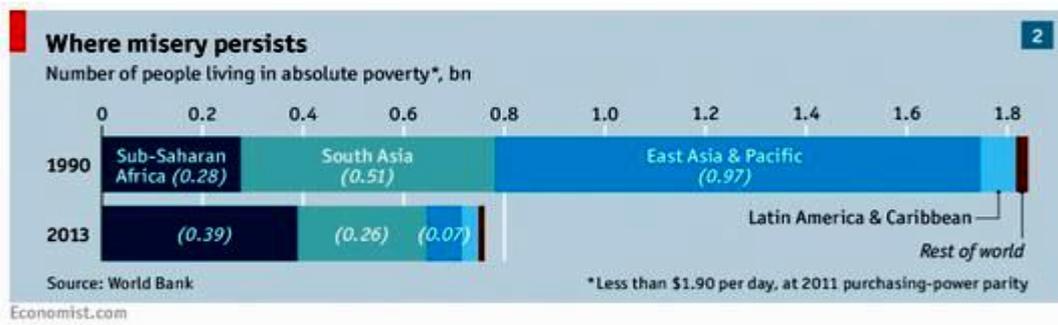


Figure-2. Where Misery Persists.

Source: World Bank. <https://www.economist.com/international/2017/03/30/the-world-has-made-great-progress-in-eradicating-extreme-poverty>

The continent of Africa is filled with examples of non-successful stories while Asia is loaded with success stories. In 1985, Kaushik Basu, an economist at the Cornell University, stated that 45% of Nigerians live below the international poverty level, which when compared to countries like Indonesia and China is a lower proportion. Currently, Nigeria has a higher percentage of people living in severe poverty than either country in the world.

Furthermore, according to Ventures Africa News of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017, edition under the heading “2018, Nigeria the Serve Poverty Capital of the World” they reported that according to the World Poverty Clock, that in February, 2018, Nigeria will become the nation with the highest numbers of nationals living in severe poverty. This means that Nigeria overtook India to be the country with the highest record of nationals living in severe poverty. World Poverty Clock is an innovative world data lab that follows the poverty records of 99.7% of countries in the world. They use the data they get from these countries’ government records, the United Nations, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund. Looking at the United Nations first goal in the Sustainable Development Goals, this is aimed at poverty alleviation for all people in the world before the year 2030. It is estimated that to attain this goal all over the world, 90 people are required to exit poverty for each minute that passes by in order to obliterate poverty completely by 2030.

To attain this sustainable development goal of poverty alleviation for all people in the world in Africa before 2030, it is estimated that at least 57 people in Africa should be leaving the severe poverty line for every minute that passes by. But, it is not so, because instead of 9 persons to be leaving the severe poverty line, 9 people are getting into severe poverty line for a minute that passes by. The countries of Democratic Republic of Congo and the country of Nigeria are the ones that are the cause of the 9 persons getting into severe poverty for a minute that passes by. The World Poverty Clock suggests that 11.9 Nigerians are expected every minute to leave extreme poverty line. However, record has it that -6.8 Nigerians enter extreme poverty line every minute. This means that 6.8 Nigerians are entering extreme poverty line every minute that goes on rather than leaving.

The country of Nigeria has a dwindling economy because of the global oil price reduction. The country’s economy is oil-dependent for years and would affect the growing Gross Domestic Product. The country’s ineffectiveness to initiate diversified revenue slowed down the economy after the recession since 2016. The International Monetary Fund forecasted that in 2018, the GDP of Nigeria will only increase by 0.8 percent. Currently, the government of Nigeria has been borrowing to fund its national budget which increases the country’s external debts.

According to the report of Vanguard Newspaper of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018, under the heading “Nigeria’s unemployment rate, a national threat- LABOUR” the latest unemployment rate reported in the National Bureau of Statistics, (NBS), indicates that of the 85.08 million people of the Nation’s labour force, only 7.53 million are unemployed. The NBS’ report shows that the rate of unemployment in Nigeria increased from 12.1% in the Q1 of

2016 (January 2016) to the rate of 18.8% in the Q3 of 2017 (September 2017). This is the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive increase in the unemployment rate of Nigeria for as much as 2014. It also shows that the underemployment rate of Nigeria increased from 19.1% in the Q1 of 2016 up to 21.2% in the Q3 of 2017. This is to say that 58.1% of Nigerian youth within 15-34 age brackets are currently underemployed in Nigeria. Also, over 2.9 million graduates and 5 million semi-skilled workers lost their jobs within this period following the 2016 recession in Nigeria's economy, though the nation's population increased by 0.5% within this period. See Figure 3 below to see the level of unemployment in the country of Nigeria.

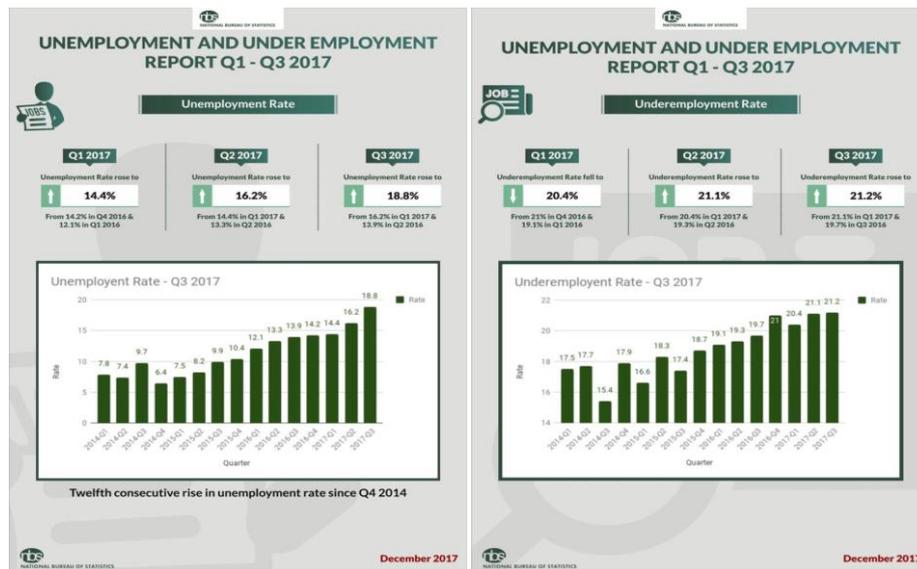


Figure-3. National Bureau of Statistics of the level of Unemployment in Nigeria.  
Source: <http://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/>.

The National Bureau of Statistics, (NBS), indicated that from Q4 2017 reports has shown that 7.9 million Nigerian youth ranging from age 15-34 are currently unemployed. See Figure 4 below to see the statistics of the underemployment and unemployment rates according to age group.

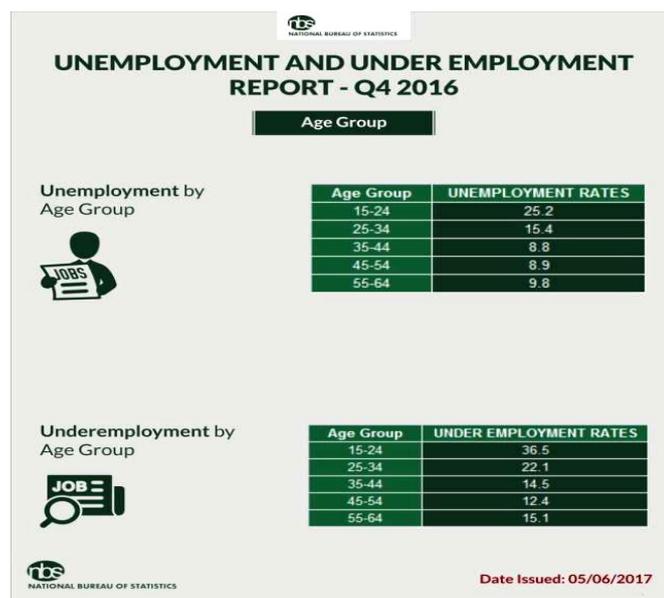


Figure-4. Underemployment and Unemployment Rates according to Age Group.  
Source: <http://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/>.

This shows that 61.6% of Nigerian youth are unemployed. This is alarming because the strength of the nation's workforce is the highest in the unemployment rate.

According to CNN Money of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017, under the heading "In 2016, Nigeria's economy was a failure. Will the year 2017 be contrasting?" Nigeria, being Africa's top oil producer, depends heavily in the revenue that comes from oil. The country's crude oil sales account for about 70% of Nigeria's revenue which is far beyond 90% of Nigeria's export earnings. Looking at the result, it has revealed that there is an urgent need to diversify the economy and encourage entrepreneurs to engage in social entrepreneurship that will bring social change to the issue of poverty, and unemployment towards the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals in 2030.

Furthermore, according to the report of The Washington Post of 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2018 edition under the heading, "Nigerians Returns from Slavery in Libya to thriving Sex-traffic industry back home" (O'Toole, 2018) the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was able to send away from Libya about 2,000 Nigerians back to their country Nigeria in December 2017. This was actually far beyond double of the number of Nigerians that were sent home from Libya during the year 2016. During the year 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was able to return about 6,700 Nigerians who were in slavery from Libya back to their country. They also added about 300 so far this year. These Nigerians were victims of human-trafficking in Libya where they were bought and sold in an unsympathetic and cruel, organized trade. According to Leonard Doyle, United Nations' agency spokesman for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said that this portrays the picture of contemporary slavery in the Libya and should prick the heart of the political elites. He went further to say that this contemporary slavery in Libya should be seen as a serious systematic social problem. The truth is that some of the causes of why these Nigerian youths ran away from Nigeria to another country like Libya are because of the level of poverty, unemployment and harsh economy weather (like the recession) that have plagued the country. In fact, it has been reported that some of these youths returned to Libya because they could not cope with the degree of poverty and unemployment in their country.

It is in view of the above problems that this research investigates on whether the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a startup incubator is a sustainable model for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in Nigeria and whether corporate organizations that are into corporate social responsibility can adopt ITAS model as a social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) projects in Nigeria towards the eradication of poverty and unemployment according to UNs Sustainable development goals.

### *1.3. Research Question*

The above problems which have been a thing of concerns among all stakeholders ranging from academicians, economists, corporate organizations, nonprofit organizations, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and even the government of Nigeria have led to the research questions motivating this present study.

1. Is the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a startup incubator a sustainable model for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in Nigeria, Africa?
2. Can corporate organizations adopt the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a sustainable model of startup incubator for social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in their corporate social responsibility projects in Nigeria and other parts of Africa and the globe?

#### *1.4. Objective of the Research*

The primary target of this research is to examine whether there is a relationship between Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and Social Entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) is a sustainable model of startup incubator for corporate sustainability through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in Nigeria and whether corporate organizations can adopt the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) in Nigeria and other parts of the globe.

The results of such a study are thought to be leading to construct a background related to the readiness and the tendency of corporate organizations in adopting the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a sustainable model of startup incubator for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) projects in Nigeria and in other parts of Africa as well as globally. Also, the results of the current research may present the current situation related to corporate sustainability through social entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa and globally. Consequently, the analysis presented in this research is useful for corporate organizations in order to engage actively in their pursuit of corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship projects in Nigeria, Africa.

#### *1.5. Research Hypothesis*

For the research questions to be answered based on a valid scientific argument and validate necessary factuality concerning the objective of this dissertation, a hypothesis was drawn:

**H:** There is a relationship between Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and Social Entrepreneurship in Nigeria. In other words; Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) is a sustainable model of startup incubator for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa.

#### *1.6. The Significance of the Study*

The significance of the present study links to the current discussion regarding corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship. This study is important because it reflects, investigates and provides reasons how corporate organizations that are into corporate social responsibility can adopt the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a sustainable model of startup incubator for social entrepreneurship helping build business ecosystem on cultural model that can survive and thrive in a challenging environment like Nigeria. If it is proven in this research that the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) is a sustainable model of startup incubator for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship projects in Nigeria, then it can be sustained for long-term by corporate organizations in pursuing solutions in bringing social change in the communities that they operate in Nigeria or even Africa at large. It also advocates that corporate organizations and investors who are into corporate sustainability especially in the area of social entrepreneurship should take advantage of this cultural startup incubator model like the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) to build and support businesses in Nigeria which will bring a positive social change to the current societal problems of the high level of extreme poverty and unemployment in the country.

It is the above issues that set the stage for this study in investigating whether the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) is a sustainable model of startup incubator for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in Nigeria and whether corporate organizations can adopt this cultural startup incubator model in their corporate social responsibility projects in Nigeria, Africa.

### *1.7. Scope and Limitations of the Research*

The conceptual framework developed in this study is designed to address corporate social responsibility attending to its multidimensional understanding especially in the area of social entrepreneurship in investigating whether the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) is a sustainable model of startup incubator for corporate social responsibility through social entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Africa. It will be impossible for the researcher to cover all the Igbo entrepreneurs in the 36 states in Nigeria with the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja because of their vestries, insufficient fund ( lack of financial resources), and time constraint. The researcher will, therefore, restrict the research work on Igbo entrepreneurs from Abia State in the southeastern part of Nigeria.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility*

The concept of corporate sustainability can be seen as a mixture of the concepts of stakeholder theory, corporate social responsibility, corporate accountability, and the concept of sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development supports the concept of corporate sustainability by assisting to distinguish or identify various aspects or areas that organizations should concentrate on, which are the social, environment , and economic. The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) supports the concept of corporate sustainability by pointing at the roles of businesses play in the society. This means that since society is interested in achieving the sustainable development goals, corporations have an ethical obligation to help the society they operate in to move towards the achievement of these goals. While the concept of stakeholder theory supports the concept of corporate sustainability through assisting in strengthening the connection between organization or corporations with their stakeholders which enables the corporations to achieve their business objectives. Also, the concept of corporate accountability theory supports the concept of corporate sustainability via assisting to define the characteristics of the connection between organizations or corporations with in the society they operate in [Wilson \(2003\)](#).

Corporate sustainability is related to an organization's capability towards attaining its organizational objectives or goals and being able to augment long-term investor or stockholder values via incorporating environmental issues, social issues, as well as economic aspects in its organization's strategies into the society. This implies that managers are going beyond the traditional growth and profit maximization model to achieve sustainable development goals in the society they operate in.

### *2.2. Social Entrepreneurship*

Consequently, the current trend of corporate social reasonability is social entrepreneurship which is an entrepreneurial approach to social problems, signaling the necessity to drive social change and has the potential to offer a lasting, transformational benefit to the society in which corporate organizations or corporations operate in. *Entrepreneurship is when you act upon opportunities and ideas and transform them into value for others. The value that is created can be financial, cultural, or social.*"([Bacigalupo et al., 2016](#)). Therefore, Social entrepreneurship or sustainable entrepreneurship according to [O'Neill et al. \(2009\)](#) is an entrepreneurial innovative process which connects entrepreneurship approaches towards the attainment of sustainable values related to environmental and social goals. Social entrepreneurship is becoming apparent as an innovative way of handling complex social needs ([Johnson, 2000](#)). It tends to start with a small; localized initiative but often hopes to provide solutions to complex and large-scale societal problems ([Santos, 2012](#)). So, social entrepreneurship is the process of identifying social problems and developing entrepreneurial sustainable solutions to these problems in order to achieve a positive

social change. These societal problems can be poverty, youth unemployment, at-risk youth, diseases such as HIV and AIDS, hunger, civil war, and many more.

Askilden and Nilsen (2005) opined that both the apprenticeship training and course attendance programs are found to have a positive impact on the probability of employment. In many countries apprenticeship programs are important step into the labor market contributing to alleviate youth unemployment problem the younger generation.

### *2.3. Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS)*

According to Onyima *et al.* (2013) the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System came to limelight after the Nigerian-Biafran War. Many parents in order to survive the hardship of the aftermath of the civil war were forced to send their children to learn trade from other Igbo entrepreneurs. These children ranged in ages from eight to twenty years old. In this apprenticeship system, the 'Oga', (Igbo entrepreneur-Boss), 'Nwaboyi', (the apprentice) and his family usually enters into an informal agreement for a period ranging from 4-7 years before the Oga can settle him. The mode of settlement is usually contained in the informal agreement which could be that the 'Oga', (Boss) will help to set up business for the graduated apprentice (Nwaboyi) by paying for shop outlet rent for him/her for few years (1-3 years) and giving cash infusion to start a business or Supply goods to the graduated apprentice worth a decent amount for him to start. Also, giving him accesses to goods procurement on credit for sometimes and having him pay up after selling them.

The Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) is a cultural formal startup incubator mentoring and training program for building business ecosystem, structured for an agreed period, which a person (an apprentice) undergoes in order to acquire a desirable and needed shrewd business model and strategic acumen for entrepreneurship skills that equip the trainee (the apprentice) for business success and the person (the apprentice) is settled (supported) at the end of the program with seed funding to start-up his/her own business. The apprentice is expected to build his own business to eventually mentor, train, and support the next apprentice as the ITAS is designed to be a reproducible model within a society. This cultural startup incubator model which started mostly after the Nigerian Civil war, also known as the Biafra War, and has survived and has been successful among Igbo entrepreneurs for many years (Dibia, 2011; Nafiu and Orugun, 2014).

### *2.4. About the Igbo Entrepreneurs*

According to Nafiu and Orugun (2014) the word Igbo Entrepreneurship was derived from Igbo (culture) and Entrepreneurship. This simply means planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling other factors of production and the production process in the Igbo learning culture. Therefore, an Igbo entrepreneur is a person who does not only coordinate other factors of production, but who from time to time seeks opportunities to make profit through his/her innovativeness, creativity, customers' satisfaction and efficient utilization of scarce resources in a consistent cultural pattern. Thus, Igbo entrepreneurs are visionaries, enthusiastic and result driven. These are not far from the rationale behind their undertakings in high business risk. In fact, it is never gainsaying that people at the rural and urban areas in Nigeria depend heavily on the Igbo entrepreneurs' initiatives, inventions and efficient outcomes. The Igbo entrepreneurs have dominated Nigeria and even across the national boundary, such as South Africa, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Gambia, China and so on. According to Maliga (2013) a research result by an Independent body show that 74% of investment in Lagos are owned by Igbos, 5% by Hausa/Fulani, 15% by Foreigners (Non-Nigerians), 5% by other Nigerians (Non-Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba), 1% by Yorubas. Scholars like Udegbe (2013) added that statistics show in Lagos that Igbos investment is not less than N300 trillion; it is double

of that in Abuja at about N600 trillion; In Kano and Kaduna, Igbo investment run up to N10 trillion respectively, while in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States, Igbo investment run into N5 trillion respectively; In Plateau State, Igbo investment is hovering over N15 trillion. According to [Agazie \(2012\)](#) remove the Igbos from the country, and Nigeria will collapse like 1-2-3, like a flimsy deck of cards.

[Neuwirth \(2017\)](#) opined in his TEDxTalk proved with empirical evidence that the Igbo Apprenticeship System that governs the Alaba International Market in Lagos, Nigeria, is the largest business incubator platform in the world. It is the sharing principles of wealth in a growing community. It is a sharing economy not a capitalist or individual economy. It is an innovative bottom down economy that seeks to help the community grow economically in a sustainable way that produces economic efficiency.

### *2.5. Recent Studies on Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS)*

A study done by [Onyima et al. \(2013\)](#) tested the hypotheses about the effects of the Igbo apprenticeship system and social capital in the new business creation process of immigrants Igbo entrepreneurs in Wukari Taraba State. 40 businesses located in Wukari Local Government Area that were established by Igbos were randomly selected and they responded to the questionnaire administered to them. The study revealed that the Igbo apprenticeship system had significant effects on pre-founding activities-when the business was taking off. ITAS had a significant effect on apprentices' confidence in starting their businesses, entrepreneurial (business) idea generation and modification, as a major determinant of apprentice's business location, impact on apprentice's customer relation management, business decision making which includes a price decision, apprentices' ability in securing and maintaining business suppliers, apprentices' ability to handle cultural and legal problems in their businesses, and apprentice's business financing (Bookkeeping). It concluded with empirical evidences that the ITAS had contributed positively and significantly on the apprentice's confidence in starting their businesses, entrepreneurial (business) idea generation and modification, determinant of apprentice's business location, impact on apprentice's customer relation management, business decision making which includes price decision, had helped apprentices significantly in securing and maintaining business suppliers, had contributed significantly in helping apprentices to know how to handle cultural and legal problems in their businesses, and had contributed significantly to apprentice's business financing (Bookkeeping).

Also, a research done by [Nafiu and Orugun \(2014\)](#) to test the hypothesis in order to ascertain whether the Igbo entrepreneurship activity is the Panacea for the Nigeria Economic Growth and development. The researchers systematically selected 400 Igbo entrepreneurs in the metropolises of Lagos State-Oshodi and Apapa; and Ogun State-Sango-Ota and Ifo, which are outside the Eastern part of the country in order to divorce there search from bias opinion. The study reveals that the Igbo entrepreneurship activities are the panacea for the Nigeria Economic Growth and development and that the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System is a business success factor. It went further to recommend that Nigerians and other developing countries of the world should adopt ITAS as a sustainable model for economic development.

According to [Adeoye \(2015\)](#) examined the effect of entrepreneurship in fostering economic growth and development. It indicated that Nigeria's economy continued to grow over the last decade- with the real GDP growth rate hovering around 7%. It also revealed that entrepreneurship can enhance economic growth and development primarily by generating employment and foster the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises in Nigeria.

Also, a study by [Obunike \(2016\)](#) investigated the Induction Strategy of Igbo Entrepreneurs and Micro-Business Success: A Study of Household Equipment Line, Main Market Onitsha, Nigeria. It revealed

that The Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System “Igba-odibo” aids in the provision of capital/fund for the business of young entrepreneurs. It also has a positive impact on business profitability and indicates a positive significant relationship between the Igbo trade Apprenticeship system “Igba-odibo” and business /customer networking.

A study by [Alike and Umunze \(2019\)](#) investigated the Social-Economic Philosophy of Contemporary Igbo Apprenticeship System by looking at the effects of apprenticeship and social capital in the new business creation process of Igbo entrepreneurs in Nigeria. It revealed that while Igbo apprenticeship had significant effects on pre-founding activities when the business was taking off, social capital became important when the business had been established. It further revealed the different roles Igbo apprenticeship and social capital play in business development as well as the stages when they are needed.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Design

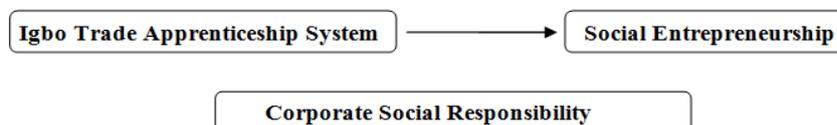
This study is quantitative in nature and the study adopted a descriptive survey research design to collect reliable primary data from the respondents.

#### 3.2. Population, Sampling Technique and Sample Size of the Study

The target population of this study comprises of all the Igbo businessmen that have businesses and apprentices in Nigeria. The primary source of data is a structured questionnaire to gather data from the sample size of 251 Igbo entrepreneurs (businessmen). For this study, the model of convenience sampling which is a non-probability sampling procedure (method) will be used. The researcher gathers data from the participants of the population who are conveniently available and willing to respond to the questionnaire. The sampling techniques developed by Patton will be utilized for this study, for determining sample size and to determine the portions of questionnaires that are fair enough to be distributed to the selected sample will be adopted.

#### 3.3. Instrument for Data Collection

Structured questionnaire was used with items from [Onyima et al. \(2013\)](#) scale (questions 4-6) and modified by the researcher with additional questions (1-3) to collect primary data. Secondary data was collected from journals in connection to the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and Social entrepreneurship (Corporate Social Responsibility) for the study. The Likert scale structured questionnaires will be utilized to get feedbacks from the chosen sample. The questionnaire units comprise of the 5- point Likert scale types of feedbacks (answers) as follow: Strongly Agree 5, Agree 4, Undecided 3, Disagree 2, and Strongly Disagree 1.



**Figure-5.** Conceptual framework of the relationship between the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and Social Entrepreneurship in form of Corporate Social Responsibility.  
Source: Researcher.

The conceptual framework is used to show the relationship that exists between the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System and Social Entrepreneurship in form of Corporate Social Responsibility practices by corporate organizations if adopted.

3.4. Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data gathered for this study, descriptive statistical tool, Likert scale, percentages and table will be used. The data will be examined or surveyed by the use of percentages and the mean results (scores) value of data analysis. Percentage will be used for examining and surveying the demographic of Igbo respondents (businessmen) while the mean results (scores) value will be used to survey the less of the research questionnaires. In this view, the mean result value of 3.05 and above will be recognized to be valid or correct (Accepted) but any mean value that is below 3.05 will be dismissed as invalid(Rejected).

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N}$$

Where  $\sum FX$  = weighted sum of frequencies and  $N$  = Total Response.

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$

Where  $\sum X$ = sum of nominal value and  $n$  = number of responses categories.

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

Cut-off Point =Mean + e = where e = error term i.e 5% (0.05)

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table-1. Shows Questionnaires as Administered.

Questionnaires	Total	%
Questionnaires Administered	251	100%
Questionnaires Returned	251	100%
Questionnaires Unreturned	0	0%

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

The researcher administered 251 questionnaires to respondents and 251 questionnaires were returned to enable the researcher to carry out the data analysis Table 1.

From the Table 2 above, 128 respondents (51%) were male and 123 (49%) respondents were female. 5 respondents (2%) were up to 25 years of age; 12 respondents (4.8%) were 26-35 years; 29 respondents (11.5%) were 36 – 45 years; 44 respondents (17.5%) were 46 – 55 years; and 161 respondents (64.1%) were more than 55 years. Accordingly, 42 respondents (16.7%) were Primary School Certificate holders; 53 respondents (21.1%) were Secondary School Certificate holders; 32 respondents (12%) were Diploma/ ND Certificate holders; 65 respondents (25.9%) were HND/B.Sc/B.A holders; and 59 respondents (23.5%) were holders of Masters and above. Furthermore, 106 respondents (42.2%) were into trading enterprise; 84 respondents (33.5%) were into service enterprise; and 61 respondents (24.3%) were into Manufacturing enterprise. 118 respondents (47%) have been in the business between 1-5 years; 60 respondents (23.9%) have been in the business between 6-10 years; 13 respondents (5.2%) have been in business between 11-15 years; 14 respondents (5.6%) have been in business between 16-20 years; and 46 respondents (18.3%) have been in business between 21 and above years. 144 respondents (57.4%) have trained and settled 1-5 apprentices; 69 respondents (27.5%) have trained and settled 6 -10 apprentices; and 38 respondents (15.1%) have trained and settled 11and above apprentices. 128 respondents (51%) are currently training 1-5 apprentices ; 110 respondents (43.8%) are currently training 6-10 apprentices; and 13 respondents (5.2%) are currently training 11 and above apprentices. Also, 112 respondents (44.6%) have 1-5 employees working for them; 88 respondents (35.1%) have 6-10 employees working for them; and 51 respondents (20.3%) have 11 and above employees working for them.

**Table-2.** Shows the Demographic Characteristics of the selected Respondents from Abia State in Nigeria.

Demography	Responses	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	128	51%
Female	123	49.0%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
To 25 years	5	2%
26-35 years	12	4.8%
36-45 years	29	11.5%
46-55 years	44	17.5%
More than 55 years	161	64.1%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Education</b>		
Primary School Certificate	42	16.7%
Secondary School Certificate	53	21.1%
Diploma/ND Certificate	32	12.7%
HND/B.S/B.A etc	65	25.9%
M.Sc and Above	59	23.5%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Type of Enterprise</b>		
Trading	106	42.2%
Service	84	33.5%
Manufacturing	61	24.3%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Years of Enterprise</b>		
1-5 years	118	47%
6-10 years	60	23.9%
11-15 years	13	5.2%
16-20 years	14	5.6%
21 and above years	46	18.3%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Number of apprentices trained and settled</b>		
1-5	144	57.4%
6-10	69	27.5%
11 and above	38	15.1%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Number of apprentices on training</b>		
1-5	128	51%
6-10	110	43.8%
11 and above	13	5.2%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Number of employees</b>		
1-5	112	44.6%
6-10	88	35.1%
11 and above	51	20.3%
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

**Table-3.** Shows the Hypothesis tested to determine whether the ITAS was one of the major factors that helped the Igbos to survive the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War (BiafranWar).

Response	Frequency (F)	Scale/Rating (X)	FX
Strongly Agree	10	5	50
Agree	219	4	480
Undecided	44	3	132
Disagree	120	2	240
Strongly Disagree	48	1	48
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>950</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 3 shows the respondents' data of the hypothesis tested to determine whether the ITAS was one of the major factors that helped the Igbo to survive the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War (Biafran war). 10 respondents strongly agreed with the hypothesis, 219 respondents just agreed while 44 respondents chose to be undecided with the hypothesis. 120 respondents disagreed with the hypothesis while 48 strongly disagreed with the hypothesis.

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{950}{251} = 3.70$$

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

With the data in Table 3, we can make our conclusion, according to the Likert method used to determine whether the ITAS was one of the major factors that helped the Igbos to survive the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War, also known as Biafran War. The mean point of response was 3.70, while the cut-off was 3.05. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean point is above the cut-off point of 3.05, the hypothesis is regarded as effective. So, since the calculated mean point of 3.70 is greater than the cut-off point of 3.05 (mean point > cut-off point), thus we conclude there are enough statistical evidence to infer that ITAS was one of the major factors that helped the Igbos to survive the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War.

Table-4. Shows the Hypothesis tested to ascertain whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in producing wealthy Igbo entrepreneurs (businessmen).

Response	Frequency (F)	Scale/Rating (X)	FX
Strongly Agree	25	5	125
Agree	82	4	328
Undecided	59	3	177
Disagree	55	2	110
Strongly Disagree	30	1	30
Total	251	15	770

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 4 shows the respondents' data of the hypothesis tested to ascertain whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in producing wealthy Igbo entrepreneurs (businessmen). 25 respondents strongly agreed with the hypothesis, 82 respondents just agreed while 59 respondents chose to be undecided with the hypothesis. 55 respondents disagreed with the hypothesis while 30 strongly disagreed with the hypothesis.

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{770}{251} = 3.07$$

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

With the data in Table 4, we can make our conclusion, according to the Likert method used to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in producing wealthy Igbo entrepreneurs. The mean point of response was 3.07, while the cut-off was 3.05. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean point is above the cut-off point of 3.05, the hypothesis is regarded as effective. So, since the calculated mean point of 3.07 is greater than the cut-off point of 3.05 (mean point > cut-off point), thus we conclude there are enough statistical evidence to infer that ITAS had contributed significantly in producing wealthy Igbo entrepreneurs.

**Table-5.** Shows the Hypothesis tested to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in reducing the poverty rate in Igboland and Nigeria at Large.

Response	Frequency (F)	Scale/Rating (X)	FX
Strongly Agree	80	5	400
Agree	42	4	168
Undecided	54	3	162
Disagree	34	2	68
Strongly Disagree	41	1	41
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>839</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 5 shows the respondents' data of the hypothesis tested to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in reducing the poverty rate in Igboland and Nigeria at Large. 80 respondents strongly agreed with the hypothesis, 42 respondents just agreed while 54 respondents chose to be undecided with the hypothesis. 34 respondents disagreed with the hypothesis while 41 strongly disagreed with the hypothesis.

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{839}{251} = 3.30$$

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

With the data in Table 5, we can make our conclusion, according to the Likert method used to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in reducing the poverty rate in Igboland. The mean point of response was 3.30, while the cut-off was 3.05. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean point is above the cut-off point of 3.05, the hypothesis is regarded as effective. So, since the calculated mean point of 3.30 is greater than the cut-off point of 3.05 (mean point > cut-off point), thus we conclude there are enough statistical evidence to infer that ITAS had contributed significantly in reducing the poverty rate in Igboland and Nigeria at large.

**Table-6.** Shows the Hypothesis tested to ascertain whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in helping apprentices to know how to handle cultural and legal problems in my business.

Response	Frequency (F)	Scale/Rating (X)	FX
Strongly Agree	25	5	125
Agree	76	4	304
Undecided	66	3	198
Disagree	56	2	112
Strongly Disagree	28	1	28
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>767</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 6 shows the respondents' data of the hypothesis tested to ascertain whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in helping apprentices to know how to handle cultural and legal problems in my business. 25 respondents strongly agreed with the hypothesis, 76 respondents just agreed while 66 respondents chose to be undecided with the hypothesis. 56 respondents disagreed with the hypothesis while 28 strongly disagreed with the hypothesis.

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{767}{251} = 3.06$$

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

With the data in Table 6, we can make our conclusion, according to the Likert method used to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in helping apprentices to know how to handle cultural and legal problems in their business. The mean point of response was 3.30, while the cut-off was 3.05. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean point is above the cut-off point of 3.05, the hypothesis is regarded as effective. So, since the calculated mean point of 3.30 is greater than the cut-off point of 3.05 (mean point > cut-off point), thus we conclude there are enough statistical evidence to infer that ITAS had contributed significantly in helping apprentices to know how to handle cultural and legal problems in their business. This system develops their cultural intelligence (CQ) in adapting to any environment and culture.

**Table-7.** Shows the Hypothesis tested to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly to apprentices' business bookkeeping (recording of purchases and sales).

Response	Frequency (F)	Scale/Rating (X)	FX
Strongly Agree	56	5	280
Agree	54	4	216
Undecided	64	3	192
Disagree	44	2	88
Strongly Disagree	33	1	33
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>809</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 7 shows the respondents' data of the hypothesis tested to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly to apprentices' business bookkeeping (recording of purchases and sales). 56 respondents strongly agreed with the hypothesis, 54 respondents just agreed while 64 respondents chose to be undecided with the hypothesis. 44 respondents disagreed with the hypothesis while 33 strongly disagreed with the hypothesis.

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{809}{251} = 3.20$$

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

With the data in Table 7, we can make our conclusion, according to the Likert method used to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly to apprentices' business bookkeeping (recording of purchases and sales). The mean point of response was 3.20, while the cut-off was 3.05. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean point is above the cut-off point of 3.05, the hypothesis is regarded as effective. So, since the calculated mean point of 3.20 is greater than the cut-off point of 3.05 (mean point > cut-off point), thus we conclude there are enough statistical evidence to infer that ITAS had contributed significantly to apprentices' business bookkeeping (recording of purchases and sales).

**Table-8.** Shows the Hypothesis tested to ascertain whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in empowering apprentices (Umuboyi) with sufficient funds to start their businesses after their apprenticeship training.

Response	Frequency (F)	Scale/Rating (X)	FX
Strongly Agree	42	5	210
Agree	52	4	208
Undecided	45	3	135
Disagree	60	2	120
Strongly Disagree	52	1	52
Total	<b>251</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>725</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Table 8 shows the respondents' data of the hypothesis tested to ascertain whether the ITAS had contributed significantly in empowering apprentices (Umuboyi) with sufficient funds to start their businesses after their apprenticeship training. 42 respondents strongly agreed with the hypothesis, 52 respondents just agreed while 45 respondents chose to be undecided with the hypothesis. 60 respondents disagreed with the hypothesis while 52 strongly disagreed with the hypothesis.

$$\text{Likert Scale Formula} = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{725}{251} = 2.9$$

$$\text{Mean Point of Scale} = \frac{\sum X}{n} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

$$\text{Cut-off Point} = \text{Mean} + e = 3.00 + 0.05 = 3.05$$

With the data in Table 8, we can make our conclusion, according to the Likert method used to determine whether the ITAS had contributed significantly to empowering apprentices (Umuboyi) with sufficient funds to start their businesses after their apprenticeship training. The mean point of response was 2.9, while the cut-off was 3.05. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean point is above the cut-off point of 3.05, the hypothesis is regarded as effective. So, since the calculated mean point of 2.9 is less than the cut-off point of 3.05 (mean point > cut-off point), thus we failed to conclude that there are enough statistical evidence to infer that the ITAS had contributed significantly to apprentices' empowering apprentices (Umuboyi) with sufficient funds to start their businesses after their apprenticeship training. As most of the apprentices had to loan capital from the bank or depend on seed funding to add to the amount their 'Oga' gave to them during settlement. This is where corporate organizations can come in to collaborate with these Igbo entrepreneurs that have apprentice by supporting the apprentice with capital to start up their businesses after the training.

#### 4.1. Results From Interviews

An interview conducted by Baffour (2013) on Apprenticeship among the Igbo: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly, indicated that apprenticeship has become an acceptable cultural practice among the Igbo people and could explain why the Igbo ethnic group has dominated the country's commerce sector. Here are the views of people about the Igbo Apprenticeship System.

The apprenticeship system has helped a lot of young people to live a meaningful life. Despite being a school administrator, I support this indigenous apprenticeship system. It is the custom of our forefathers, but it is still relevant in today's Nigeria and the world at large. I am saying this because it assures our youths of an independent life after the training. Nowadays, most young people who even attended formal schools are roaming the streets but when you finish from 'igba-boyi' [apprenticeship], you are sure of having an enduring business (Mr. Titus Anyanwu, a School Headmaster).

The apprenticeship system has assisted a lot of Igbo young men to become independent and successful businessmen. He explains that the scheme, particularly allows those who could not afford formal education to learn a trade and still become useful members of the society (Mr. Ugochukwu Ekeleme, the Chairman of the Borga Section of Yaba Central Market).

The apprenticeship system has saved many Igbo youths, men from the pangs of poverty. It is a self-help initiative, which has really assisted the government in reducing the rate of unemployment in the country. The Igbo is used to being independent. The apprenticeship scheme bails over 60 percent of Igbo youths out of joblessness every five years in the eastern part of Nigeria. Government cannot provide all the jobs in a country; the private

sector, whether formal or informal, needs to offer some support with schemes like this (Dr. ChidiIheama, a director at the Centre for Management Development (CMD), Lagos).

There is a compelling need to regulate the traditional apprenticeship scheme because it is prone to abuse. The absence of a formal agreement between the apprentice and his 'Oga' leads to abuses. Some of the bosses abuse their boys, treating them like domestic slaves. Stories also abound where after many years of service, the apprentices were not settled by their bosses because of one flimsy excuse or the other (Mr. Kelvin Ubani, a Legal Practitioner-solicitor with the Legal Aid Council).

In spite of the perceived shortcomings of the Igbo traditional apprenticeship scheme, it should be encouraged while the government should help to check the abuses. However, there is a need to review the time, as some of the apprenticeships, could last up to 10 years, which is too long. The federal and state governments can design some kind of enterprise curriculum for such schemes, where the boys can get certified and legal backing after completing their apprenticeship (Mr. Adekunle Dada, an Educationist).

The trade apprenticeship has over the years, helped in reducing the rate of unemployment in the country. It has also helped in boosting the country's economic development. The Federal Government should improve and standardize the apprenticeship scheme. Different trades in the scheme should be duly registered with cognate trade associations and given adequate operational guidelines to ensure improved efficiency (Mr. Segun Kuti-George, the Chairman, Lagos chapter of Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists (NASSI)).

In fact, Africa richest man's early start-up training could be traced to the Igbo apprenticeship business model because Aliko Dangote served his Uncle Sanusi Dantata, who saw Dangote's passion for business and began developing his business skills and confidence. Dangote later borrowed start-up capital of 500,000 Naira as a loan from his uncle to start-up his own business (Solomon ChukwuemekaUgbaja, a Researcher).

## **5. CONCLUSION**

From the above empirical evidence, it is clear that the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System as a startup incubator is a sustainable model for corporate social responsibility project through social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in Nigeria, Africa. Also corporate organizations can adopt the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a sustainable model of a startup incubator for social entrepreneurship in their corporate social responsibility projects not only in Nigeria, but in other parts of Africa and the world as well. ITAS has already proven to be successful in parts of Nigeria. It has helped the Igbo tribe to survive in the aftermath of the Nigerian-Biafran war. It helped in reducing the rate of poverty in Igboland by producing wealthy Igbo entrepreneurs and businessmen. It helped apprentices in the skill of business bookkeeping (recording of purchases and sales). It helps in providing for employment job seekers. It also helps in providing apprentices with some funds to start their business, and in handling cultural and legal problems in their businesses by developing in them the cultural intelligence (CQ) for adapting in any given environment and culture.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings from this research, the researcher thereby recommends the followings;

- i. Corporate organizations should adopt the Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System (ITAS) as a sustainable model of startup incubator for social entrepreneurship (social change through entrepreneurial approach) in their corporate social responsibility projects especially in Nigeria, other parts of Africa, and the globe.
- ii. Corporate organizations should collaborate with these Igbo entrepreneurs that have apprentices by supporting the apprentice program with startup capital after their training.

- iii. The Nigerian government should support these Igbo traders (entrepreneurs) that have apprentices by providing financial support to them with interest-free loans in order to boost their businesses. Just like the TraderMoni scheme which is a loan programme of the Federal Government, created specifically for petty traders and artisans across Nigeria. A part of the Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) scheme of the Federal Government, being executed by the Bank of Industry. The Igbo Trade Apprenticeship System entrepreneurs are fertile soil for the Federal Government of Nigeria to leverage on in their quest to reduce the rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. This will go a long way in addressing the rate of poverty and unemployment in the country
- iv. The Nigeria Federal Government should improve and standardize the Igbo apprenticeship scheme to address any abuses in the scheme.
- v. The Nigerian government should partner with these Igbo traders (entrepreneurs) that have apprentices by providing startup capital for the apprentices after their training. This will also go a long way in addressing the rate of poverty and unemployment in the country.
- vi. Government policies on Small and medium scale enterprise should be reviewed to enable SMEs to thrive in the country.
- vii. Developing countries that want to achieve social change through entrepreneurship approach should emulate the Igbo entrepreneurship and apprenticeship culture.
- viii. The world should emulate the Igbo apprenticeship system of sharing economy towards achieving a sustainable society.

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