



MANAGEMENT INNOVATION AND GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Management innovation remains the driving force and the major strategy for firms' growth and survival in the present-day competitive business environment. To achieve this end, SMEs operators adopt product, process, market, and technological innovative strategies. However, due to poor creative and innovative skills by SMEs in Nigeria especially in Awka Anambra State, firms are not fully predisposed to learning continuously and therefore find it very hard to detect and fill gaps between what the market desires and what the firm currently offers. This study, therefore, investigated the extent to which management innovation affects the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State. The population of the study was eleven (11) SME firms with total staff strength of one hundred and sixty-nine (169). Yamane's (1967) formula was employed to elucidate the 119 respondents used for the study. T-Test statistic was applied to test the stated hypotheses of the study at a 0.05% level of significance. The study found product, process, and market innovations to be positively and strongly related to the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State, and concluded that Management innovation is a catalyst for SMEs growth in Awka Anambra State. The study recommended among others that SME operators should consistently and persistently introduce novel products to penetrate new and existing markets to withstand the storm of sturdy business competition that is prevalent in that sector of the economy.

Keywords: Management, innovation, growth, SMEs, Awka.

Introduction

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are widely recognized as the foundation of any nation's industrial growth. The government and development specialists have completely acknowledged small and medium-sized businesses as the primary driver of economic growth and a key element in fostering the growth and partnership of the private sector (Anoke, Onu & Agagbo, 2022). Therefore, the growth of small and medium-sized businesses is a crucial component of most economies' growth strategies. It is also noteworthy that the performance and efficacy of small and medium-sized businesses as a tool for economic growth and progress in Nigeria has long been under investigation, especially in Anambra State.

This close examination has taken place in the context of the poor performance and inefficiency that characterized small and medium-sized businesses, particularly when measuring their contribution to economic growth and development. Kiveu, Namusonge, and Muathe (2019) noted that Small and medium-sized businesses haven't performed up to expectations despite government institutional, managerial,

and policy support for improving their capability. This has generated serious concern about whether SMEs can bring about economic growth and national development in Nigeria. The concern is even more disturbing when comparing SMEs in Nigeria with other countries particularly where SME has become a catalyst for economic growth and development.

Anoke (2019) argued that despite the shortfalls in Nigerian Small and medium-sized businesses, the sector globally has long been acknowledged as a tool for fostering economic growth and development. As a result of this rising recognition, managers and innovative experts have committed to making the SME sector a key component of its developmental strategy.

Considering the critical role the SMEs play in the economic growth and sustainability of any nation and for Nigeria to be noticed in the global economic map through SMEs, management innovation is necessary and should be regarded as the invisible hand behind the wheels of SMEs' progress. For managers and business owners to start, grow and sustain their businesses, innovative management has to be factored in.

Innovation, therefore, can be referred to as the use of imagination, initiative, and creativity to create long-term value and regular cash flow streams to maximize profits and minimize risk. In a business context, innovation is the ability to conceive, develop, deliver, and scale new products, services, processes, and business models for customers. This developmental life cycle can be effectively and efficiently done if there is no managerial gap.

Management thus, refers to businesses organizing and directing workflow, operations, and employees to meet company goals. Innovative Management however, can be defined as a marked departure from the traditional management principles, processes, and practices or a departure from customary organizational forms that significantly alters the way the work of management is performed (Mallinguh, Wasike, & Zoltan 2020). Put simply, management innovation changes how managers do what they do for the good of the business or firm.

Management innovations could be done in many ways, which according to Afriyie, Jianguo, and Abdul-Aziz (2019) could be product, process, market, and or organizational innovations.

Olughor, (2015) argued that due to managerial lapses, in competencies, poor creative and innovative skills, and low extent of innovation practice by owners-managers of SMEs in Nigeria especially in Awka Anambra State, several SME owners and entrepreneurs in this region are lagging behind their competitors. Firms are not fully predisposed to learning continuously and therefore find it very hard to detect and fill gaps between what the market desires and what the firm currently offers. Because these firms are unable to adapt to management innovation culture such as

technological changes, dynamism in customer preferences and demand, and changes in market requirements, their competitive edge and sustained revenues are continually threatened.

As a result of the established problem, investigating management innovation and growth of SMEs in Awka Anambra State becomes necessary

The broad objective of this study is to determine the extent to which management innovation affects the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State. Specifically to:

1. Determine the extent to which product innovation enhances the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State.
2. Ascertain the extent to which process innovation contributes to the growth of SMEs in Anambra State.
3. Examine the degree to which market innovation influences the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State.

Research Hypotheses

In line with the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

H01: Product innovation does not significantly enhance SMEs growth in Awka Anambra State

H02: Process innovation does not significantly contribute to the SMEs growth in Awka Anambra State

H03: Market innovation has no significant influence on SMEs' growth in Awka Anambra State.

Conceptual Clarifications

Concept of Management Innovation

Innovation is paramount to the survival and growth of any business. This has altered how organizations conduct their operations and respond to customer wants. Management innovation in SMEs is essential because it occurs across many functional areas of an organization (Quamunga, 2018). Innovation can be defined as the revitalization and expansion of a product or market portfolio, as well as new methods of developing, producing, and distributing items, as well as the adoption of adjustments to work processes and labor force competencies. This definition acknowledges innovation in organizations, Products, processes, markets, and technologies. Innovation is a purposeful, dynamic process whose result is positive change aimed at enhancing company transformation and better meeting customer needs. As a result of its diversity, innovation is a complicated notion. Changes in many various business areas, from outwardly visible modifications to adjustments that have an impact on working standards in the organization, could be included in the degree of innovative newness (radical or incremental). Innovation is important and generic. It addresses a variety of difficulties required to deliver value to

customers and produce a positive return for the company (Tang, Kwangtae, Anurag, & Feng, 2020).

Management innovation entails the process and techniques used to identify the predisposition of firms towards learning continuously. Management innovation is paramount to the survival and growth of small and medium-scale enterprises. It has changed the way firms conduct businesses and the way both customers and clients acquire goods and services (Hui, Juliana, Clement, Solomon & Elvis, 2021). Management innovation remains the driving force and the major strategy for firms' growth and survival in the present-day competitive business environment.

A broader conceptualization of management innovation was given by Schumpeter (1934) as cited by Kiveu, Namusonge, and Muathe (2019) that management innovation connotes the introduction of a product that is new to consumers or with higher quality than existing products, new methods of production, the opening of new markets, the use of new sources of supply and new forms of competition, that lead to the restructuring of an industry or firm. It is any act or approach that generates and implements new or improved processes, products/services, or production methods that are geared toward increasing the competitiveness of a firm (Tang, Kwangtae, Anurag & Feng, 2020).

Product Innovation

The process by which firms introduce novel products to penetrate the markets to meet the preference of existing markets is referred to as product innovation. Several SMEs have not been able to withstand the storm of strong competition because of their inability to embrace product innovative strategy (Anoke and Okpanaki, 2022).

In a clearer view, product innovation essentially entails the act of bringing into existence a good or service that is new or significantly improved (Mallinguh, Wasike & Zoltan, 2020). Firms utilize product innovation in the creation of a new product from new materials or in the alteration of existing products to meet customer demand and satisfaction.

Product innovation is one of the vital tools used by SME owners as a competitive edge over their rivalry. It enhances the quality of products, which in turn contributes to firm performance and ultimately sustained growth in the sector. Product innovation potentially protects a firm from market threats and competitors (Mohammed, AlBatainey 2018).

Process Innovation

This is the implementation of a new or significantly improved production or delivery method. This includes significant changes in techniques, equipment, and or software. Ukpabio, Oyebisi, and Siyanbola, (2017) opined that process innovation refers to the introduction of a new method of production that has not yet been tested in the industry. In process innovation, major activities such as reengineering and enhancing

the internal operation and capabilities of the business processes are carried out. The business processes range from the firm's technical design, research and development, manufacturing, management, and commercial activities. Process innovation is deployed when creating or improving the techniques and the development of the procedure or system are involved (Tang, Kwangtae, Anurag& Feng, 2020). In other words, process innovation is new or improved techniques, devices, tools, and knowledge in making a product. Process innovation encompasses the implementation of a new or enhanced distribution or manufacturing process or a new course of social service. The knowledge that is discovered through process innovation is often not effectively applied by some small and medium-scale enterprises (Umar, Siti, & Noor, 2020).

This lack of effective application has been blamed for the inability of small and medium-scale enterprises to create new or improved products and services using better and enhanced processes that could significantly meet market demands and expectations and thereby guarantee the growth of the firm.

Market Innovation

One of the most common issues faced by small-medium enterprises in Nigeria, especially in Awka Anambra State is a poor marketing strategy. The absence of an effective marketing plan, resources, and strategies have been reported to be among the weakness of small and medium businesses worldwide (Anoke, 2019). From a marketing point of view, marketing innovation is not only the incorporation of new technology but also the implementation of new effective ideas. Innovation is essential since it helps improve SMEs' products or services. With this innovation, a firm can reach new markets, and increase sales and revenue through market diversification (Anoke, Nzewi, Eze, and Igwebuiké, 2022).

Marketing innovation means the implementation of a new marketing method that involves significant changes in product design or packaging, product placement, product promotion, or pricing. It involves the marketing mix and market offerings that are made to satisfy customers' needs. On the other hand, an marketing innovative strategy is the systematic identification of unmet customers' needs in a given market. To achieve this, owner-managers businesses are expected to incorporate new marketing methods and techniques that differ from the previous ones and involve significant changes in product promotion, design, packaging, and placement into the system (Nowotarski, & Paslawski, 2017). This will help to improve a product or service and reach a wider audience. Innovation can be presented in different forms and influence various areas of a business. When firms integrate modern marketing technologies or ideas into practice, the company will stand out from its competitors. Innovative marketing strategies and campaigns enable a firm to find the right approach to its target audience and win their attention thereby growing the business and sustaining its components (Anoke, Nzewi, Agagb& Onu, 2021).

Firm Growth

An important sign of an enterprise's success remains the ability of such a firm to grow. Numerous elements influence an enterprise's growth and differentiate it from the non-growing firm. Such factors that influence SMEs' growth are entrepreneurs' traits, firms' innovative and creative capacity, proper marketing strategic decisions, and availability of resources like capital and people among others (Njogu, 2014). It is a reality that an entrepreneur's decision on how to expand internally or externally and where to grow on the home market or the global market determines whether the company grows or not.

Firm growth entails the ability of a firm to add more value to corporate worth by satisfying its employees, gaining a competitive advantage, retaining employees, boosting productivity, and minimizing costs (Tang, Kwangtae, Anurag & Feng, 2020). Kiveu, Namusonge, and Muathe (2019) argued that firm growth is usually evaluated by estimating the values of qualitative and quantitative performance such as profit, number of clients, and costs.

It is, therefore, apparent that firm growth entails organizational input, efficiency, and effectiveness (Akinwale, Adeyemi, & Olomu, 2017). In a similar view, Mohammed, Aliyu, and Abimiku (2015) opined that firm growth is measured by the corporate performance of firms using non-financial or financial indicators such as profitability, return on investment (ROI), return on equity (ROE), growth of net assets, capital structure or leverage, and export sales.

Management Innovation and SMEs Growth in Nigeria

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are acknowledged as the engine of economic growth and job creation in both developed and developing countries like Nigeria. SMEs have been found to make a substantial contribution to innovations that enable the globalization of economies. Innovation is said to be essential in determining productivity and long-term growth in any nation. The ability to coordinate the processes to create new products, methods, supply sources, markets, and organizational structures for business activities is referred to as management innovation (Afriyie, Jianguo, & Abdul-Aziz 2019). This ability has severely transformed the growth of SMEs and entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

It is also believed that entrepreneur uses management innovation as a tool to develop resources that can generate income grow and sustain their business in a saturated business environment like Nigeria. In other words, innovation is a force for transformation. It is the fusion of marketable and creative ideas that leads to desired outcomes in an organization and society at large. Due to its multidimensional nature, innovation is a complex strategic tool required by modern and contemporary entrepreneurs for success and growth in their businesses. Innovation is important and generic in business (Anh, Huong, Bien, & Tuyen, 2019). It addresses a variety of difficulties required to deliver value to customers and produces positive returns for the commercial operation which will ultimately be growth driven. Anoke, Nzewi,

and Tukura (2022) maintained that the transformational role of SMEs in industrializing both developed and developing economies across the globe is linked to management innovation. This no doubt has significantly contributed toward advancing organizational products and processes.

Theoretical Framework

In literature, many theories of innovation in small and medium-scale enterprises had been discussed with varied results. However, this study is anchored on innovation diffusion theory.

This theory was propounded by Rogers (1985) who defined innovation diffusion as the process by which an invention is being used by members of a particular social system. The theory is essentially a basic explanation of the how, why and at what rate new technology and ideas spread through different cultures and nations to drive business profitably. The basic future of this theory is that the acceptance and implementation of management and technological innovations take some stages before they are widely deployed across organizations, units, cultures, or nations.

Rosli, and Sidek, (1991) popularized innovation diffusion theory by establishing a powerful model which has been vastly used to determine factors influencing the different types of management innovation including product, market, technological, and process innovations which bring about firms' competitive advantage and progressive growth.

This study is anchored on this theory because it encapsulates all management and growth indices (process, technology, product market, and social system).

Empirical Review

Because management innovation and business growth of SMEs in Nigeria are topical and trending, several scholars researched the subject matter with different and diverse results.

This current study is poised in bridging that gap.

Nwankwo and Ezeibe (2021) evaluated the influence of innovation on the financial performance of small and medium-scale enterprises in Aba, Abia State Nigeria. Relevant conceptual, theoretical and empirical literatures were reviewed. Product innovation, process innovation, market innovation, and administrative innovation were employed as the independent variable while financial performance was employed as the dependent variable. A survey research design was employed and a structured questionnaire was employed as the instrument of data collection. The data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The study found that product innovation, process innovation, market innovation, and administrative innovation have a significant influence on the financial performance of small and medium-scale enterprises in Aba and concluded that innovation has a

significant influence on the financial performance of small and medium-scale enterprises.

The study of Nwankwo and Ezeibe (2021) did not state the population, sample size, or sampling technique of the study. The findings, conclusion, and recommendation are hanging on nothing.

Hui, Juliana, Clement, Solomon, and Elvis (2021) investigated the relationship between creativity and innovation in entrepreneurship development. A survey design was adopted for the study. A sample of 257 respondents was obtained using Yamane's (1964) sample size determination formula. The research employed the Ordinary Least Square method and ANOVA test for data analysis. It was found that technological advancement influences entrepreneurship development.

This study did not state the population from which the sample of 257 respondents used in the study was drawn.

Ansho, Ozah, and Mzughulga (2021) investigated the impact of technological innovations on SMEs' performance in Taraba State. The study adopted a survey research design to study a sample of 100 SMEs in the Wukari Metropolis. The primary data used for the study was a structured questionnaire which was structured in a (5) five-Likert scale format. Data collected from the study were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple percentage was the descriptive statistic used while ordinary least square (OLS) multiple regression was the inferential statistic used. The study revealed that communication innovation, mobile transfer innovation, and computing system innovation have a significant effect on SMEs' performance in the Wukari metropolis. The study concluded that ICT is the major tool for SMEs' transformation. The study of Ansho, Ozah, and Mzughulga (2021) focused on one innovative variable (technology) while neglecting other important variables like product, process, and market. This current study will bridge this gap.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research method of study. This design helped the researchers to answer the question of who, what, where, when, or how much in determining the extent to which management innovation can influence the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State.

The population of the study comprised all the registered SME operators in Awka who have paid their business tax as of July 2022. Anambra was chosen because it is one of the commercial nerve center of the South East geopolitical zone in Nigeria and Awka is the seat of power of Anambra State. According to Anambra State Internal Revenue Service, only eleven (11) SME firms with total staff strength of one hundred and sixty-nine (169) met this condition. There are stated in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Population of the Study

Name of SBUs	Location/Address	Staff Strength
1. Jocar Nigeria Limited	Km 45 Onitsha-Enugu Expressway, Opposite Revenue House, Beside Juhel Filling Station, Awka	23
2. Electrihut Nigeria	186 Ziks Avenue Awka	13
3. Feraco Print Media	2a Majuo Street, off Zik Avenue Awka Anambra State	11
4. Joydims Investment Limited	246, Aroma Junction, Awka metropolis	15
5. Fedora Concept & Event Management	2b Majuo Street Ziks Avenue Awka	12
6. XMAC Communications	213 Ziks Avenue, Awka	12
7. ZontalFobis Limited	257, Zik Avenue, Awka metropolis	24
8. Infinity Tech-World	87 Ziks Avenue Awka Opp. Dike Park, Awka	15
9. Encodeup Tech Hub	Shop 28 2nd floor Tonimas plaza Ifite Awka, Awka	12
10. Beeman Integrated Services	261 Nnamdi Azikwe Avenue, Awka	18
11. Holy Family Table Water	24 Holy Family Avenue, Awka-Amansea	14
Total		169

Source: *Field Survey (2023)*

From a population size of 169, the researchers employed Yamane's (1967) formula to obtain a sample size of 119 used for the study. 199 respondents were drawn conveniently from the population in Table 1.

To assign the sample size of 119 to the sampled firms, the researchers employed Bourley's proportional allocation formula. The bridged result is as follows: Jocar Nigeria Limited=16, Electrihut Nigeria=10, Feraco Print Media=8, Joydims Investment Limited=10, Fedora Concept & Event Management=9, XMAC Communications=8, ZontalFobis Limited=17, Infinity Tech-World=10, Encodeup Tech Hub=8, Beeman Integrated Services=13 and Holy Family Table Water=10. Total 119 Staff. Source: Researchers' Computation, (2023).

Details are attached as Appendix 1.

The questionnaire which was primarily sourced was coded into a Likert 5-Point Scale of 5 = Very Much, 4 = Much, 3 = Neutral, 2 = little, and 1 = Very little which helped the researchers to test the formulated hypotheses.

Validity of the research instrument was achieved through the help of experts in management and innovative studies, at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Business School Awka. Their opinions and suggestions were used to modify the final copy. The research instrument equally recorded Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of above 7.85 which is greater than the recommended benchmark of 0.7 (Zikmund, 2013).

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

T-Test statistic was applied to test the stated hypotheses of the study at a 0.05% level of significance.

H₀₁: Product innovation does not significantly enhance SMEs growth in Awka Anambra State.

Table 2 Group Statistics for Hypothesis I

	Product Innovation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Growth of Small Business Unit	Product Innovation enhances business growth	59	95.7753	6.96379	.73816
	Product Innovation does not enhance business growth	34	90.6957	8.59934	1.79309

Source: Researchers’ Computation 2023

Table 3 Independent Sample Test Result for Hypothesis I

Growth of Small Business Unit by Product Innovation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	90.05 Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Product Innovation enhances business growth - Product Innovation does not enhance business growth	2.967	91	.004	5.07963	1.71227	1.68631	8.47295

Source: Researchers’ Computation 2023

Tables 2 and 3 show the test of the hypothesis of the difference in the response of the respondents on whether product innovation significantly enhances the growth of SMEs in Awka at a 0.05% level of significance. In Table 2, it was recorded that product innovation enhances growth with a mean value of 95.76% while the mean response that product innovation does not enhance the growth of SMEs is 90.70%. Thus, the alternate and null hypotheses recorded a difference of 5.06%. This shows that the difference in the responses is statistically significant (t = 2.967, p-value = 0.004). This implies that product innovation significantly contributes to the growth of small business units in the Awka metropolis, Anambra State.

Decision Rule

Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, and concluded that product innovation significantly enhances the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State ($t = 2.967$, $p\text{-value} = 0.004$). This study is in tandem with the findings of Nwankwo and Ezeibe (2021) who found that product innovation, process innovation, market innovation, and administrative innovation have a significant influence on the financial performance of small and medium-scale enterprises in Abia Abia State.

H₀₂: Process innovation does not significantly contribute to the SMEs growth in Awka, Anambra State.

Table 4 Group Statistics for Hypothesis II

	Process Innovation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Growth of Small Business Units	Process Innovation contributes to Business Growth	61	95.9875	6.78698	.75881
	Process Innovation Does not contribute to Business Growth	32	91.5938	8.58678	1.51794

Source: Researchers' Computation 2023

Table 5 Independent Samples Test Result for Hypothesis II

Growth of Small Business Unit by Process Innovation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	90.05 Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Process Innovation contributes to Business Growth - Process Innovation Does not contribute to Business Growth	2.862	91	.005	4.39375	1.53506	1.35162	7.43588

Source: Researchers' Computation 2023

Interpretation of Result

Interpretation of Result

Tables 4 and 5 show the test of the hypothesis of the difference in the response of the respondents on whether process innovation significantly contributes to the growth of SMEs in Awka at a 0.05 % level of significance. The mean value of the difference in the alternate and null hypotheses in Table 4 is 4.40 % in favour of the alternate value. This, therefore, implies that the difference is statistically significant ($t = 2.862$, $p\text{-value} = 0.005$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05%, the null hypothesis was rejected, and concluded that process innovation significantly contributes to the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State. This study is in agreement with the study of Hui, Juliana, Clement, Solomon, and Elvis (2021) who found that technological advancement is crucial for entrepreneurship development.

H₀₃: Market innovation has no significant influence on the growth of SMES in Awka, Anambra State.

Table 6 Group Statistics for Hypothesis III

	Market Innovation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Growth of Small Business Unit	Market Innovation Influences Business Growth	55	96.5676	6.92639	.80518
	Market Innovation Does not Influence Business Growth	38	91.1579	7.58564	1.23055

Source: Researchers’ Computation 2023

Table 7 Independent Samples Test Result for Hypothesis III

Growth of Small Business Unit by Market Innovation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	90.05 Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Market Innovation Influences Business Growth - Market Innovation Does not Influence Business Growth	3.788	91	.000	5.40967	1.42793	2.57986	8.23949

Source: Researchers Computation 2023

Interpretation of Result

Tables 6 and 7 show the test of hypothesis 3 (H₀₃) at a 0.05 % level of significance. The difference in the response of alternate and null hypotheses was recorded and stood at 5.41% in favor of the alternate hypothesis, which is statistically significant (t = 3.788, p-value = 0.000). This implies that market innovation significantly influences the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that Market innovation significantly contributes to the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State. This study is in contrast with the study of Ansho, Ozah, and Mzughulga (2021) who found that ICT is the major tool for SMEs transformation.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the extent of the relationship between management innovation and the growth of SMEs in Awka Anambra State. The innovation here was decomposed into product, process, and market innovations.

In chapter two, pertinent literature on the study from both theoretical and empirical issues was reviewed and an attempt to link it to the current study was made. The empirical review brought to the fore that concept of managerial orientation and growth of SMEs in Nigeria especially in Awka Anambra State is not yet settled. This present study, therefore, bridged that gap. The review of the literature indicated that

the argument abounds on whether managerial innovation helps in the growth of SMEs in Nigeria; the relationship is still controversial and inconclusive. It is along this line of inconclusive argument that this study investigated the extent of the relationship that exists between management innovation and the growth of SMEs in Awka Anambra State.

In chapter three, to achieve the stated objectives of the study, the researcher adopted the descriptive survey design. In addition, the chapter focused on the systematic approach to solving the research problem in the study and highlighted the instruments and techniques used to seek solutions to the research problem. It consists of research design, population, sample, sample frame, sample size administration, sample technique, research instrument, validity and reliability of the research instrument, and methods of data analysis.

Chapter four involves the presentation and analysis of data which was gotten from a questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents. The result from the analysis revealed that all the elements of SMEs growth have a positive and significant relationship with managerial innovation

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was set to determine the extent to which management innovation affects the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State by employing samples from sampled SME operators in the study area. Additionally, the researchers examined the extent to which product, process, and market innovations enhance the growth of SMEs in Awka, Anambra State.

Based on the findings, Product, process, and market innovations were found to have a positive and significant relationship with SME management innovation in Awka Anambra State. The study concluded that management innovation is a catalyst for SME growth in Awka Anambra State. This implies that the acquisition and improvement in the management of innovative skills can positively aid SMEs' growth in Nigeria, especially in Awka Anambra State.

Recommendations

SME operators should consistently and persistently introduce novel products to penetrate new and existing markets to withstand the storm of sturdy business competition that is prevalent in that sector of the economy.

SMEs should cultivate the habit of reengineering and enhancing their internal operations and capabilities through technical design, research, and development to develop, build, grow, and sustain their businesses.

SMEs are advised to integrate modern marketing technologies or ideas into their system and practice as that will enable them to remain afloat in a competitive business

world. Innovative marketing strategies and campaigns enable a firm to find the right approach to its target audience and win their attention thereby growing their businesses and sustaining its components.

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Appendix 1

To assign the sample size of 119 to the sampled firms, the researcher employed the Bourley's proportional allocation formula as follows:

$$nh = \frac{nNh}{N}$$

where, nh = Number allocated to each firm

n = total sample size

N = Total Population

Applying the formula, we have:

Table 2 Sample Size Composition of the Study

Name of SBUs	Population	Sample
1. Jocar Nigeria Limited	23	$\frac{119 \times 23}{169} = 16$
2. Electrihut Nigeria	13	$\frac{119 \times 13}{169} = 10$
3. Feraco Print Media	11	$\frac{119 \times 11}{169} = 8$
4. Joydima Investment Limited	15	$\frac{119 \times 15}{169} = 10$
5. Fedora Concept & Event Management	12	$\frac{119 \times 12}{169} = 9$
6. XMAC Communications	12	$\frac{119 \times 12}{169} = 8$
7. ZontalFobis Limited	24	$\frac{119 \times 24}{169} = 17$
8. Infinity Tech-World	15	$\frac{119 \times 15}{169} = 10$
9. Encodeup Tech Hub	12	$\frac{119 \times 12}{169} = 8$
10. Beeman Integrated Services	18	$\frac{119 \times 18}{169} = 13$
11. Holy Family Table Water	14	$\frac{119 \times 14}{169} = 10$
Total	169	119

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2023