

## INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES: PANACEA FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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### **Abstract**

*This study determined Innovative Strategies as a Panacea for Business Education Growth and Development in Enugu State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study while two null hypotheses formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study consists of 31 business education lecturers and instructors in public universities in Enugu state, Nigeria. The instrument for data collection was the researchers developed questionnaire that was face validated by three experts with a 12 item statements titled: Innovative Strategies: Panacea for Business Education Growth and Development Enugu State, Nigeria Questionnaire (ISPBEGDQ). The reliability was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability method with an overall coefficient of .87. Data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean to answer the research questions and the t-test statistic to test the null hypotheses at  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance. Findings revealed that innovative strategies in Business Education will help in the growth and development of the programme in Enugu State, Nigeria among others. The study recommended that Business Educators in Enugu State should be train and re- train on the use and application of innovative strategies and techniques so as to be abreast with the trend, there is need to provide innovative strategies platforms and equipments that will aid teaching and learning of learners. Also, orientation on the need to promote innovative strategies among business educators and stakeholders should be encouraged for efficient and effective service delivery.*

**Keyword:** Innovation, Innovation Strategies, Business Education, Growth and Development

## **Introduction**

Innovation is the strength for growth and security of any society. By it, new technologies, products, services, education and organizations create jobs and rejuvenate industries. To reap the gains of innovation, policy makers need to understand how innovation is changing and what this implies for education and training policies. Innovation involves the entire process, starting from a kernel of an idea continuing through all the steps to reach a marketable product and education processes that changes the economy, Edison, Ali and Torkar (2013). Harnessing the benefits of innovation within the education sector itself is a key challenge. To do so, effective and evidence-based governance mechanisms are needed to encourage, facilitate and help measure innovation in education systems. Atakpa in Emeasoba (2018) viewed innovation as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, unarticulated needs or existing market needs. Innovation also implies that societies, education and training systems must empower people to advance and quickly respond to new skills needs generated by innovative strategies.

Strategies are plans or ways of attaining an aim. Freedman (2013) viewed strategy as a pattern or plan that integrates major goals, policies and actions into a cohesive whole. It is a broad action plan which leads to achieving a goal. Strategy is opined by Wilson (2012) as the creation of a unique and vulnerable position of tradeoffs in competing, involving a set of activities that neatly fit together, consistent, reinforce and ensure optimization of effort. When the planned goal of an individual or institution is achieved, innovative strategy is said to have taken place.

Innovative strategy is seen as the birthing of new idea into reality. In the opinion of Hamel in Okanazu (2018), innovation strategy could be incremental or radical depending on the arena it is used. The need for innovative strategy in business education cannot be overemphasized. Innovation in business education involves the revolution of the teaching and learning process into an active, dynamic, new and inspiring experience that will benefit its recipients. It implies an education that equips and empowers people to innovate and quickly respond to new skill needs generated by innovation. A range of innovation policy instruments are examined to identify how countries do or could foster educational ecosystems that facilitate self sustained improvement and leave room for experimentation and radical innovation. A number of questions are raised to provide incentives and opportunities for innovation strategies in business education;

- Does the rate of innovation increase when business educators are spurred on by competitive incentives?
- How much room does innovation strategies leave central and school-based approaches to curriculum decision making?
- How does policy makers and educators need to develop a systemic approach when adopting technology-based innovations in business education.
- How to best integrate technology into classroom teaching among others.

The ability to measure innovation is essential to an improvement strategy in business education. Knowing whether and how much practices are changing within classrooms and educational organizations, and to what extent change is linked to improvements, strengthens the education knowledge base which informs policy making, Pitan, (2016). New comparative information about innovation in education compared to other sectors. Quality in business education is relevant if growth and development is to be achieved.

Growth is the physical increase in some quantity over time. It includes physical changes in terms of height, weight, body proportions and general physical appearance. According to Bogin, (2010), it involves both structural and physiological change. Growth is seen as change in size, in proportion, disappearance of old features and acquisition of new ones. Growth is one of the parts of the developmental process. Development refers to the qualitative changes in the organism as whole. Development is a continuous process through which physical, emotional and intellectual changes occur. It is a wider and comprehensive term than growth. It is also possible without growth. Development is continuous and gradual process. According to Crews and, Bogin, (2010), development is concerned with growth as well as those changes in behavior which results from environmental situation. Development refers to change through time but not all changes are developmental. Developmental changes are systematic rather than haphazard and successive rather than independent of earlier conditions. Therefore, development is a process of change in growth and capability over time due to function of both maturation and interaction with the environment. Development encapsulates the process of economic, political, educational and social transformation of both the individual and the society Hasna, (2014). Though subject to different interpretations, development is dynamic and changes with situations including education sector.

Education is a light that shows the mankind the right direction to surge. The purpose of education is not just making a student literate but adds rationale

thinking, knowledgeably and self sufficiency, Teo and Wong, (2000). In today's era, information and knowledge stand out as very important and critical input for growth and survival. Rather than looking at education simply as a means of achieving social upliftment, the society must view education also as an engine of advancement in an information era propelled by its wheels of knowledge and research leading to development, OECD (2014). When there is a willingness to change, there is hope for progress in any field. Creativity can be developed and innovation benefits both students and teachers in business education.

Business education is an engine for the growth and progress of any society Mourshed, Farrell, and Barton, (2013). It not only imparts knowledge, skills and inculcates values, but is also responsible for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets technological innovation and economic growth and conflict management, Madu, Okanazu and Anorue (2020). Business education is an institutions' programme that utilize diverse technologies to promote and enhance teaching and learning (Etonyeaku, Onuoha & Kanu (2016). Business courses in tertiary institutions are designed to equipped graduates with necessary skills and knowledge required to meet the dynamic nature of the ever changing nature of the world of work. Business education is viewed by (Ajisafe, 2015) as a form of vocational education that is geared towards developing the learner to become productive entrepreneurs, paid employment, self reliant and even in teaching business. According to Adedeji (2009), business education provides manpower with requisite knowledge, skills and attitude for harnessing other resources for productive purpose which will go a long way to improving or advancing the national economy.

Innovative strategies in business education can help create jobs for individual and the society thereby reducing poverty. It makes access to employment and social opportunities that are more affordable and efficient, Gazier, (2019). The main element of skills for innovation in business education involves; technical skill (know-what and how), behavioral and social skills (self confidence, energy and perseverance, passion, leadership, collaboration and communication), skill in thinking and creativity (critical thinking, observation, curiosity, ability to make connection, imagination etc), Mourshed, Farrell and Barton, (2013). In developing skills for innovation, there is need for innovation strategy in education and training which explores the role of business education and training system and fostering the dispositions and skills that are conducive to innovation. In innovation-driven societies, education and training systems must empower people to innovate and to quickly respond to new skills needs

generated by technological and organizational change, Mevarech and Kramarski, (2014).

A range of innovation strategy policy instruments are necessary to identify how to foster educational ecosystems that facilitate self sustained development and encourages experimentation and radical innovation in business education Foray and Raffo (2012). It will help to see how students demonstrate creative and critical thinking skills. This will help to establish explicit change and developmental standards for tertiary education (Enugu state universities inclusive) in choosing dimensions of creative and critical thinking skills. The problem of this study therefore, determines innovative strategies as panacea for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

This study aimed at determining innovative strategies as panacea for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Identify innovative strategies necessary for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria.
2. Examine how business education can be used to achieve growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the innovative strategies necessary business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria?
2. How can business education be used to achieve growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and instructors on innovative strategies necessary business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and instructors on how business education can be used to achieve growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria

## **Methods**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 31 respondents. This comprised of 23 business education lecturers and instructors from University of Nigeria, Nsukka and 8 business education lecturers and instructors from Enugu state university of science and technology, Enugu. There was no sample due to the manageable number of the population. Data collecting instrument was researchers developed questionnaire titled; 'Innovative Strategies: Panacea for Business Education Growth and Development Questionnaire' (ISPBEGDQ). The questionnaire contained two sections A and B. Section A elicited information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents with two items. Section B provided answer on the two research questions posed for the study. The section was designed on a cluster of two. Each cluster contained six items structured on a four-point rating scale of strongly agree (4-points), agree (3-points), disagree (2-points) and strongly disagree (1-point). The instrument was face validated by three validates, two of them were from business education department and one from science education (measurement and evaluation unit) all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The overall reliability coefficient value of 0.87 was obtained after a trail test using the Cronbach Alpha Method. The choice of this method was informed by Udoh (2014) and (Nworgu, 2015) who noted that it is most appropriate for the determination of the reliability of items in rating scale. Data collected were analyzed using the mean to answer to answer the research questions. The criterion mean of 2.50 was used to accepted an item as mean scores below 2.50 were disagree. The t-test statistic was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. A null hypothesis was considered accepted if the calculated probability value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, but rejected if the calculated probability value is less than 0.05 level of significance.

## **Result**

**Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on innovative strategies necessary for business education growth and development**

S/ N	Item statements	Lecturer s	Remark	Instructo r	Remar k
		n=25		n=6	
		$\bar{x}$		$\bar{x}$	
1.	Revolution of the teaching and learning process through partnership.	2.78	Agree	2.69	Agree
2.	Inculcating skills that equips and empowers people to innovate and quickly respond to new skill needs generated by innovative strategies.	2.55	Agree	2.82	Agree
3.	Application of innovation policy instruments that facilitate self sustained improvement.	2.45	Disagree	2.57	Agree
4.	Provision of forum that encourages experimentation and radical innovative strategies.	2.77	Agree	2.88	Agree
5.	When business educators are spurred on by competitive incentives.	2.37	Disagree	2.64	Agree
6.	Understanding need for a systemic approach when adopting technology-based innovations in business	2.89	Agree	2.41	Disagree

education.			
<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>2.68</b>
<b>Agree</b>			

Table 1 shows the mean scores of agree for lecturers on items 1(2.78), 2(2.55), 4(2.77), and 6(2.89), but disagree items for 3(2.45) and 5(2.37). The table further indicates the mean scores of agree for instructors on items 1(2.69), 2(2.82), 3(2.57), 4(2.88) and 5(2.64) while item 6(2.41) has mean score below the criterion mean of 2.50 as disagree. The cluster Mean of 2.63 for lecturers and 2.68 for instructors is an indication of variety of innovative strategies necessary for growth and development in Enugu state. Revolution of the teaching and learning process through partnership, inculcating skills that equips and empowers people to innovate and quickly respond to new skill needs generated by innovative strategies, Application of innovation policy instruments that facilitate self sustained improvement, Provision of forum that encourages experimentation and radical innovative strategies were some of the necessary strategies.

**Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on how business education can be used to achieve growth and development**

S/ N	Item statements	Lecturers n =25 <hr/> x̄	Remark	Instructo r n =6 <hr/> x̄	Remar k
1.	Diversifying business opportunities through impartation of knowledge, skills and values	2.87	Agree	2.93	Agree
2.	Creation of awareness on business education programmes for the growth and progress of the society.	3.15	Agree	2.67	Agree
3.	Enhancement of business education skill for profit maximization	2.39	Disagree	2.75	Agree



	which breeds innovation and economic growth.				
4.	Provision of functional business education to our teaming youth for growth and survival.	2.79	Agree	3.18	Agree
5.	Building team spirit for wide range growth and development.	2.73	Agree	2.46	Disagree
6.	Provision of business education in-service training for stakeholders.	2.98	Agree	2.45	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 shows the mean scores of agree for lecturers on items 1(2.87), 2(3.15), 4(2.79), 5(2.73) and 6(2.98) but disagree items for 3(2.39). The table further indicates the mean scores of agree for instructors on items 1(2.93), 2(2.67), 3(2.75), 4(3.18) and 6(2.41) while item 5(2.45) has mean score below the criterion mean of 2.50 as disagree. The cluster Mean of 2.84 for lecturers and 2.67 for instructors is an indication of variety of innovative strategies necessary for growth and development in Enugu state. Diversifying business opportunities through impartation of knowledge, skills and values, Creation of awareness on business education programmes for the growth and progress of the society, Provision of functional business education to our teaming youth for growth and survival, Provision of business education in-service training for stakeholders were some of the ways on how business education can be used to achieve growth and development.

**Table 3: t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and instructors on innovative strategies necessary business education growth and development**

Respondents	No of Respondents	X	SD	Df	P <sub>value</sub>	Level of Sig.	Remark
Lecturers	23	2.63	.26				

				366	.39	.05	Acceptable
<b>Instructors</b>	6	2.82	.23				

With  $P_{\text{value}}$  (.39) greater than .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This implies that significant difference was not found in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and instructors on innovative strategies necessary for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria.

**Table 3: t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and instructors on how business education can be used to achieve growth and development**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b><math>P_{\text{value}}</math></b>	<b>Level of Sig.</b>	<b>Remark</b>
<b>Lecturers</b>	23	2.72	.28	366	.73	.05	Acceptable
<b>Instructors</b>	6	2.56	.31				

Table shows that the calculated  $P_{\text{value}}$  (.39) greater than .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This means that significant difference was not found in the mean ratings of business education lecturers and instructors on innovative strategies necessary for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria is upheld.

### Discussion of Results

Findings in research question one showed that there are various innovative strategies necessary for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria. Some of the ways it has achieved this purpose as indicated by respondents were; Revolution of the teaching and learning process through partnership, Inculcating skills that equips and empowers people to innovate and quickly respond to new skill needs generated by innovative strategies, Application of innovation policy instruments that facilitate self sustained improvement, Provision of forum that encourages experimentation and radical

innovative strategies were some of the necessary strategies. This view is supported in the findings of Hamel in Okanazu (2018) who said that innovative strategy could be incremental or radical depending on the arena it is used. The need for innovative strategy in business education cannot be overemphasized. Innovation in business education involves the revolution of the teaching and learning process into an active, dynamic, new and inspiring experience that will benefit its recipients. This view agrees with Mevarech and Kramarski, (2014) who saw business education as innovation-driven, education and training systems that empower people to innovate and to quickly respond to new skills needs generated by technological and organizational change.

Findings in research question two proved that the respondents considered; Diversifying business opportunities through impartation of knowledge, skills and values, Creation of awareness on business education programmes for the growth and progress of the society, Provision of functional business education to our teaming youth for growth and survival, Provision of business education in-service training for stakeholders among others as some of the ways on how business education can be used to achieve growth and development. This finding is in agreement with the view of Atakpa in Emeasoba (2018) who viewed innovation as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, unarticulated needs or existing market needs. Innovation also implies that societies, education and training systems must empower people to innovate and quickly respond to new skills needs generated by innovative strategies. In agreement with Adedeji (2009) who emphasized that business education provides manpower with requisite knowledge, skills and attitude for harnessing other resources for productive purpose which will go a long way to improving or advancing the national economy used to achieve growth and development.

The result of hypothesis one shows that there is significant difference in the responses of the respondents on Revolution of the teaching and learning process through partnership, Inculcating skills that equips and empowers people to innovate and quickly respond to new skill needs generated by innovative strategies, Application of innovation policy instruments that facilitate self sustained improvement, Provision of forum that encourages experimentation and radical innovative strategies were some of the necessary strategies among others. In other words, it is important that quality is attached to business education in all institution of learning as innovative strategies are necessary for business education growth and development in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Result of hypothesis two proved that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the respondents on how business education can be used to achieve growth and development. This is because gaining in business education will help recipients' to be independent, self-reliant and productive citizens of the society which is an important tool for achieving growth and development.

### **Conclusion**

The study has actually established the fact that recent changes in the external environment, such as internalization of education, technological innovations as well as labour market demands for new skills, inevitably lead to a shift in perception about business education and society expectations about institutions. This is because quality in endeavors is not determined by end product but by the process leading to the end product which only innovative strategies in business education that can unravel.

### **Recommendation**

Base on the findings of the study and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

1. The study recommended that Business Educators, Enugu State in particular should be subjected to on the service training and re- training on the use and application of innovative strategies and techniques so as to be abreast with the trend.
2. There is need to provide innovative strategies platforms and equipments that will aid teaching and learning of learners.
3. Orientation on the need to promote innovative strategies among business educators and stakeholders should be encouraged for efficient and effective service delivery.

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