

IMPACT OF INNOVATION ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP PERFORMANCE IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of innovation on entrepreneurship performance in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study employ survey design method. The scope of the study covers formal enterprises in Kaduna state with a population of 38908 and sample size of 396 derived from Yamane formula. Primary source of data was gathered through the instrument of questionnaire. The study adopts stratified random sampling technique. Quantitative analysis technique was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that technological innovation, product innovation and process innovation have significant positive effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria while market innovation has a significant negative effect on performance of entrepreneurs' in Kaduna state, Nigeria. The study concludes that innovation enhanced entrepreneurship business performance in the study area. Hence, we recommend that entrepreneurs should invest on new technologies so that they can enhance their competitive edge over their rivals. SMEs should focus on developing new processes or improve the existing ones to enhance efficiency and growth outcomes.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Performance, Technology, Market.

1.0 Introduction

Innovation in entrepreneurship is a key determinant of competitive advantage and long term sustainability. It is not limited to product development but include process improvement, use of modern technology and creative marketing strategies that enhance business performance. Entrepreneurs adopt innovation to improve operational efficiency, reduce waste and expand market reach, thus, enabling them to compete favorably in both local and foreign market. Greater innovation by an entrepreneur may result to higher profitability, customer satisfaction and stronger market penetration.

Innovation contributes to sustainability of entrepreneurship business venture through the adoption of modern production methods, product diversification and market digitalization thus making response to market and environmental changes more effective. Several studies have

revealed positive relation between entrepreneurial activity and growth (Audretsch, 1995; Caves, 1998; Sutton, 1997). Innovation adaptability enhances operational resilience and reduces vulnerabilities associated with reliance on ancient business practices. Innovation support long term business planning, strong social capital and commitment to business success. Entrepreneurs invest on innovation to boost productivity and profitability.

Statement of the problem

Entrepreneurs in Nigeria faces significant challenges that affect their ability to sustain growth and remained competitive due to limited access to modern technology and fluctuating market demand.

Despite effort to adopt innovative practices such as automation of production line and digital marketing, entrepreneurs still encounter operational inefficiencies, inconsistent profitability and constraint in scaling up production to meet market demand. Several innovation practices initiated by entrepreneurs have not yielded the expected result as the key performance indicators such as sales volume profitability, operational efficiency and customer satisfaction remain low. Also, factors such as poor infrastructure, fluctuating input cost and limited access to finance adversely affect innovation adoption by entrepreneurs. This has negative effect on the ability of entrepreneurs to utilize the opportunity in the market thereby limiting their growth potential and reducing their competitive edge. Hence, this study seeks to investigates the influence of innovation on entrepreneurship business performance in Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of innovation on entrepreneurship business performance. Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. Assess the effect of process innovation on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the effect of product innovation on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria.
- iii. Examine the effect of market innovation on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria.
- iv. Evaluate the effect technology of innovation on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: Process innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria.

HO₂: Product innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria.

HO₃: Market innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses.

In Kaduna state, Nigeria.

HO₄: Technology innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses In Kaduna state, Nigeria

Significance of the study

The study will be of great importance to the entrepreneurs in Nigeria as it will provide them with empirical evidence on the influence of innovation on Nigeria entrepreneurs' business performance. This will enable them to strategically put in place plan for adoption of innovation that will enhance firm's performance. Government and policy makers will use the findings to formulate policies that will ensure that entrepreneurs have easy access to innovation that will enhance their performance. Students and academic scholars will benefit from the study as it will enrich their knowledge on field innovative entrepreneurship.

The scope of the study is the SMEs in Kaduna metropolis. The choice of Kaduna metropolis is due to high concentration of SMEs in the metropolis. The period under investigation is 2015 - 2026. This period witnesses a lot of changes in operational and commercial activities of SMEs in Nigeria as most of them resorted to innovation to overcome the economic challenges facing Nigerians.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1.1 Concept of Innovation

Innovation shares similar characteristics with internal behavior of firms such as knowledge sharing, proactive leadership style and entrepreneurial orientation. These characteristic help in boosting firm's performance through products and service improvement and process efficiency. Amabile (1996) see innovation as the fruition in making a creative idea come into existence. Innovation is referred to as the use of nascent ideas on products, services or processes to enhance customer satisfaction. Innovation plays a vital role by ensuring resilience and growth of entrepreneurs' businesses. It enables firms to convert ideas into practical and tangible commercial outcome. Innovation is the generation, acceptance and use of nascent idea for economic and social purposes (Crossan & Apaydin, 2010).

Innovation help firm to effectively respond to market shock, external challenges, customer needs and maintain long term competitiveness. According to Drucker (1985), innovation is the means by which they exploit change as an opportunity. Entrepreneurs that systematically adopt and implement innovative practices position themselves to achieve continuous growth, operational efficiency and competitive advantage. Firm innovation referred to new structures or management

practices that enhances the sustainability of firms. Innovation is the metamorphosis of an invention into a marketable product or service. (Utterback, 1994). Innovation can also be defined as a strategic tool that enables firms to achieve competitive advantage, operational and financial success.

Innovation can take various form which include product, process, marketing and organizational innovation. According to Mathias et al. (2024), Innovation is a multifaceted concept encompassing product, process, market, organizational, technological, and paradigm shifts. The introduction of new products and services or the improvement on existing ones is known as product innovation while the redefining of promotional strategies and customer engagement is known as marketing innovation. Innovation involves turning ideas into practical outcome that deliver value (Tidd & Bessant, 2019). Product innovation can also be defined as the development and introduction of new or improved products/ services that satisfied consumer segment and sales volume. Sales volume is the quantity of product sold or the amount of services rendered to customers within a specific period. Sales volume is one of the indicator of profitability. The higher the sales volume the greater the profit.

Innovation put firms in a better position to increase market penetration (sales volume) and achieve superior financial result (profitability). Process innovation involves the streamlining of processes by firms through the use of technology and automation system to refine workflow so to cut down operational cost and improve efficiency. It involves making significant improvement to the workflows used in producing and delivering of goods and services. Process innovation plays a significant role in cost management, enabling firms to reduce input cost while maintaining or improving output quality.

Marketing innovation is the adoption of new or improved marketing technique to improve customer satisfaction, promote access of product and services to market especially new market. Marketing innovation refer to how a business interact with customers to deliver more personalized experiences which in turn increases customer loyalty, repeat purchases and long term business relationship.

Technology innovation refer to adoption of new digital tools, automation system and information technology for business activities. These new digital tools are used to improve the processes, productivity and competitiveness.

2.1.2 Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurs through their commercialized innovation contribute to the expansion of the economy by introducing new technologies, new products and services. According to Kritikos (2014), only 1–2% of intending entrepreneurs starts new business yearly. Entrepreneurship is the ability of an individual or group of people to detect, recognize opportunities and key into it for economic benefit. It involves the introduction and implementation of new ideas in the face of uncertainty to produce new goods and services (Wennekers & Thurik, 1999). Research has

shown that there two types of entrepreneurship: innovative entrepreneurship and replicative entrepreneurship. Innovative entrepreneurship is concern with the generation of new ideas that will lead to introduction of new processes and new products/services to the market while replicative entrepreneurship involves the process of entering the existing markets with unique selling propositions (Baumol & Schilling,2008). Entrepreneurship lead to intense competition for existing businesses through the establishment of new businesses. The most important personality characteristics for becoming an entrepreneur includes willingness to take risks, open to continuous learning and confidence in one's ability to control his own future and extraversion. According to Valliere and Peterson (2009), great innovations influences economic growth and is key to value-generating contribution to economic progress.

2.1.3 Concept of Performance

Entrepreneurship performance is the result of entrepreneurial activities which can be measured in terms of financial growth, innovation, market expansion, and social impact. It is a reflection of management practices and organizational systems which is influenced by factors such as skill, ability, work environment, motivation, leadership style and so on. Entrepreneurship performance is the capacity to innovate and exploit opportunities for growth (Drucker, 1985).

Performance is the extent of achieving of a stated target or objectives within a given period. It shows how well individuals, groups or firms carry out assigned responsibilities and the resultant outcome. Performance is a reflection of how effective and efficient, the available resources was utilized to produce meaningful result that shows firm's success.

Performance is a context- dependent term because what constitute good performance in a firm or a sector may differ from another. Hitt et al. (2001) held that Performance is the growth, profitability, and competitive advantage achieved through entrepreneurship. Looking at private sector and public sector, private sector firms measure performance using profitability, market share, return on investment and so on while public sector measure performance in terms of service quality, accountability, social impact, responsiveness and so on.

Performance is not limited to only firms result but includes all actions, processes and behavior that led to the result. Thus, it involves what is achieved and how it was achieved. Ireland et al. (2003) opine that performance is the strategic entrepreneurship outcomes combining opportunity-seeking and advantage-seeking behaviors. It is a combination of result and behaviors that are useful in achieving the firms' objectives. True performance requires a balance between doing things right and doing the right things. Employees seem to perform better when they are properly recruited, trained and assigned role that match their capabilities.

Performance can be measured through qualitative indicators such as service quality, creativity, competitiveness, customer satisfaction and employee behavior which cannot be captured in numeric terms. Competitiveness refer to firms' ability to create superior value for its customers while consistently achieving above average returns and dominating its market share. It is not

synonymous with short term win or single period financial out performance but involve the ability to maintain and improve a favorable position over time despite competitive pressure market shift and disruptive forces. It is measured through indicators such as market share, profitability, customer satisfaction and loyalty. Also, quantitative indicators such as productivity, sales volume, profit, output and cost reduction enables performance to be measured in numerical term.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This study discusses Schumpeter's Innovation Theory and Endogenous Growth Model.

2.2.1 Schumpeter Innovation Theory.

The theory was developed by an economist Joseph Schumpeter (1936). Schumpeter revealed that economic development occurs when entrepreneurs introduces innovation that disrupts the existing structure and create new opportunities for growth. Entrepreneur is the central focus of the theory. He sees the entrepreneurs as agents that introduces innovation and implement new combination of resources and technology. Schumpeter argued that through creative destruction, new innovation replaces the old ones. In his view, the introduction of new products or the improvement in the quality of the existing ones, introduction of new production method, new market and new source of raw material and intermediate goods and structural reorganization of firms produces successful outcome.

2.2.2 Endogenous Growth Model

Endogenous growth model held that creativity is more beneficial than natural resources. It explained that innovation and technological advancement responsible for high competitiveness of businesses. The theory assumes that high innovative firms control the market and earn profits from their innovation. It emphasizes that technological progress in an economy depends on the volume of capital investment and the stock of human capital. This theory highlights the importance of innovation and technology over natural resources that does not translate to productive growth performance with improved wellbeing. Indeed, it is creative ideas that rules the world economy.

The study is anchored on Schumpeter theory because, the theory provides theoretical basis for understanding innovative activities among the entrepreneurs enhance performance.

2.3 Empirical Review

Atoko and Makamu (2024) studied the association between innovation and economic growth in

32 African countries from 2006 to 2017 and found a direct relationship between innovation index and growth. Igwe, and Onwumere (2019) investigated entrepreneurship education and economic growth in Nigeria. It was found that entrepreneurship education is vital to the

development of successful businesses and contributes to growth. Ojukwu and Okafor (2019) in a study on entrepreneurship and economic development in Nigeria found that entrepreneurship is critical for promoting economic growth. Kreiterling (2023) investigated digital innovation and entrepreneurship and found that government has significant influence in enhancing firm's digital technology productivity.

The studies of (Kreiterling ,i2023; Atoko and Makamu ,2024) were relevant to this current study as they contributed to the discussion on innovation, however, none of the study link their investigation on innovation to performance. This study intends to minimize this gap by investigating innovation and performance.

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted survey research design. The target population of this study is 38908 estimated to be the population of formal enterprises in Kaduna State (SMEDAN &NBS, 2021). The formal enterprises used for the study are manufacturing, mining & quarrying, agriculture, ICT, transport and storage, education and wholesale/ retail. The study adopted a stratified random sampling technique. The stratified sampling technique was carried out using the principle of probability proportional to size (PPS) to allocate number of respondents according to their concentration in the various formal enterprises to ensure fair and equitable distribution. The justification for using stratified random sampling technique is that it reduces sampling error by exploiting the homogeneity within the strata and heterogeneity between strata, thus producing more inclusive estimates. A sample size of 396 respondents was determined using Yamane formula. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Face validation technique was adopted for the study. Experts were given the initial draft of the instrument for their own input and correction were necessary. The corrections and suggestions of these experts were incorporated into the final instrument which was administered to the respondents.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. In addition, multiple regression analysis was also used. The regression model is:

$$PE = \beta_0 + \beta_1PI + \beta_2PR + \beta_3MI + \beta_4TI + \varepsilon$$

Where

PE is Performance

PI is Process Innovation

PR is Product Innovation

MI is Market Innovation

TI is Technology Innovation

β_0 is the Intercept

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ are the regression parameter or coefficients to be estimated

4.0 Data Analysis and discussion.

Out of 396 questionnaires that was distributed to the respondents, only 354 were properly filled and returned. This represents 89% of the total questionnaire.

4.1 Demographic characteristic of the respondents.

Table 1

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	101	28.5	28.5	28.5
Valid Male	253	71.5	71.5	100.0
Total	354	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Compilation (2026)

Table 1 is the gender distribution of the respondents. Out of 354 participants, 253 (71.5%) are male and 101 (28.5%) are female. It reveals that male folk dominated entrepreneurship of the study are

Table 2

Educational background

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
SSC/ GCE	108	30.5	30.5	30.5
ND/NCE	97	27.4	27.4	57.9
Valid HND/BA/BSc	78	22.0	22.0	79.9
PGD and above	71	20.1	20.1	100.0
Total	354	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Compilation (2026)

Table 2 shows that the largest group of respondents hold SSC/GCE qualifications (30.5%), meaning nearly one-third of the sample has only secondary-level education. The second largest group are those with ND/NCE (27.4%), showing a strong representation of diploma-level qualifications. Respondents with higher education degrees (HND/BA/BSc) make up 22%, while those with postgraduate qualifications (PGD and above) represent 20.1%. This shows that respondents are literate enough to contribute to the study.

Table 3

Years of business operation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 -5	94	26.6	26.6	26.6
6 -10	106	29.9	29.9	56.5
Valid 11 =15	84	23.7	23.7	80.2
16 and above	70	19.8	19.8	100.0
Total	354	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Compilation (2026)

Table 3 reveals that the largest group of businesses have been operating for 6–10 years (29.9%), showing that many respondents are in the growth stage of their enterprises. The second largest group are relatively new businesses (1–5 years), making up 26.6% of the sample. Businesses with 11–15 years of operation account for 23.7%, while the longest-running businesses (16+ years) represent 19.8%.

Table 4

Age of respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
21 -30	79	22.3	22.3	22.3
31 -40	90	25.4	25.4	47.7
41 -50	98	27.7	27.7	75.4
51 -60	62	17.5	17.5	92.9
61 and above	25	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	354	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Compilation (2026)

Table 4 reveals that the largest age group is 41–50 years (27.7%), followed closely by 31–40 years (25.4%). The youngest group (21–30 years) makes up about 22.3%, while the oldest group (61+) is the smallest at 7.1%. Together, respondents aged 31–50 years' account for more than half (53.1%) of the sample, showing that the study population is middle-aged dominated.

Table 5

Industry sector

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Manufacturing	58	16.4	16.4	16.4
mining & quarrying	40	11.3	11.3	27.7
Agriculture	70	19.8	19.8	47.5
ICT	30	8.5	8.5	55.9
Transport and storage	38	10.7	10.7	66.7
Education	35	9.9	9.9	76.6
Wholesale/Retail	83	23.4	23.4	100.0
Total	354	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Compilation (2026)

Table 5 reveals that the largest sector represented is Wholesale/Retail (23.4%), showing that nearly one-quarter of respondents operate in trade-related businesses. The second largest sector is Agriculture (19.8%), indicating strong participation from farming and agribusiness. Manufacturing (16.4%) also has a notable share, reflecting industrial activity among respondents. Smaller but still significant sectors include Mining & Quarrying (11.3%), Transport & Storage (10.7%), and Education (9.9%). The least represented sector is ICT (8.5%), suggesting fewer respondents are engaged in technology-related enterprises.

4.2 Regression Analysis Result

Table 6

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.961 ^a	.923	.922	.28156

a. Predictors: (Constant), PR, TI, PI, MI

The model summary shows that R is .961 and this indicate strong correlation between predictors (Process, Technological, Product, and Market Innovations) and the dependent variable Performance (PE). R^2 is .923 indicating that about 92.3% of the variance in PE is explained by PR, TI, PI, and MI combined. R^2 is .923 indicating that adjusted for the number of predictors; still extremely strong, meaning the model is not over fitted. Std. Error of Estimate is .28156. The average prediction error is small, indicating precise predictions.

Table 7

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	330.254	4	82.563	1041.480	.000 ^b
	Residual	27.667	349	.079		
	Total	357.921	353			

a. Dependent Variable: PE

b. Predictors: (Constant), PR, TI, PI, MI

The ANOVA TABLE 7 reveals that the variance in performance (PE) explained by the predictors (Process, Technological, Product, Market Innovations) Regression SS stood at 330.254. Residual SS which indicate the variance not explained by the predictors is 27.667. Total SS which indicate the overall variance in PE stood at 357.921. F stood at 1041.480 indicating that the model explains far more variance than is left unexplained. The p-value is less than 0.001, meaning the regression model is statistically significant. The predictors collectively have a strong effect on performance.

Table 8

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.435	.061		7.096	.000
PI	.288	.059	.336	4.885	.000
TI	.563	.065	.556	8.673	.000
MI	-.190	.066	-.210	-2.879	.004
PR	.280	.048	.297	5.794	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PE

Table 8 revealed that the constant (intercept) is 0.435. This is the baseline performance (PE) when all predictors are zero. The coefficient for the predictor variable Technological Innovations (TI) is 0.563. This means that for every one-unit increase in the predictor variable (TI), the expected value of the dependent variable (PE) increases by 0.563units. The Beta (standardized coefficient) for TI is 0.556. This suggests that TI has a strong positive effect on PE. The t-values for both the constant and TI are quite large, and the associated p-values are 0.000, indicating that both coefficients are statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis which says that Technology innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore rejected and the alternate which says that Technology innovation has significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is accepted.

Also, the coefficient for the predictor variable Product Innovations (PI) is 0.288. This means that for every one-unit increase in the predictor variable (PI), the expected value of the dependent variable (PE) increases by 0.288 units. The Beta (standardized coefficient) for PI is 0.336. This

suggests that PI has a strong positive effect on PE. The t-values for PI is quite large, and the associated p-value is 0.000, indicating that the coefficient is statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis which says that product innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore rejected and the alternate which says that product innovation has a significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore accepted.

The coefficient for the predictor variable Process Innovations (PR) is 0.280. This means that for every one-unit increase in the predictor variable (PR), the expected value of the dependent variable (PE) increases by 0.280 units. The Beta (standardized coefficient) for PR is 0.297. This suggests that PR has a positive effect on PE. The t-values for PR is large, and the associated p-value is 0.000, indicating that the coefficient is statistically significant. Thus the null hypothesis which says that process innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore rejected and the alternate which says that process innovation has a significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore accepted.

The coefficient for the predictor variable Market Innovations (MI) is - 0.190. This means that for every one-unit increase in the predictor variable (MI), the expected value of the dependent variable (PE) decreases by 0.190 units. The Beta (standardized coefficient) for MI is -0.210. This suggests that MI has a negative effect on PE. The t-values for MI is negative, and the associated p-value is 0.004, indicating that the coefficient is statistically significant. Thus the null hypothesis which says that Market innovation has no significant effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore rejected and the alternate which says that Market innovation has a significant negative effect on performance of entrepreneurs' businesses in Kaduna state, Nigeria is therefore accepted.

Table 9

Residuals Statistics^a

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	1.3764	5.1406	3.6073	.96725	354
Residual	-.65784	.88541	.00000	.27996	354
Std. Predicted Value	-2.306	1.585	.000	1.000	354
Std. Residual	-2.336	3.145	.000	.994	354

a. Dependent Variable: PE

In table 9, the Predicted Value Statistics and Residual Statistics provide insights into the distribution and variability of both the predicted values and residuals. The Predicted Value Statistics shows Range from 1.38 to 5.14, with a mean of 3.61. This shows the model predicts performance (PE) across a fairly wide range. Mean which is the average predicted value is 3.6073. The standard deviation of the predicted values is 0.96725. The low mean of the residuals and the relatively small standard deviation suggest that, on average, the model did a good job in predicting the dependent variable. The residual statistics which include minimum (the difference between the observed and predicted values) is -0.65784 and maximum is 0.88541. Mean which is the average residual is approximately 0, indicating that, on average, the model has correctly predicted the dependent variable PE.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation.

The result revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the predictor variables (Process, Technological, Product, and Market Innovations) and the dependent variable Performance (PE). The high t-values and low p-values indicate that the coefficients are reliable and significantly different from zero. It was also found that Technological innovations drive performance most strongly, product and process innovations also help, but market innovations show a negative effect on performance.

Thus, we recommend as follows:

1. Entrepreneurs should invest on new technologies so that they can enhance their competitive edge over their rivals.
2. SMEs should focus on developing new processes or improve the existing ones to enhance efficiency and growth outcomes.
3. Entrepreneurs should invest on new products development and improve the existing ones as it will enhance performance outcomes.
4. Government should provide the enabling environment through policies that support and encourages innovation.

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