

BUSINESS RE-ENGINEERING STRATEGIES FOR SMES' GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

Business re-engineering has emerged as a strategic approach for improving organizational efficiency and competitiveness in modern business environments. However, the adoption and effective implementation of business re-engineering strategies among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Imo State, Nigeria remain limited. This study examines the influence of business re-engineering strategies on the growth and sustainability of SMEs, with specific focus on process optimization and technological integration. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from 232 respondents comprising SME owners, managers, and operational staff in Owerri, Imo State using a structured questionnaire titled Business Re-Engineering Strategies and SME Growth Questionnaire (BRESGQ), validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.91. Data were analyzed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that process optimization has a strong positive and significant relationship with SME growth, while technological integration also significantly enhances business performance, profitability, and market competitiveness. The study concludes that effective implementation of business re-engineering strategies is a critical driver of SME growth and sustainability in Imo State. It is recommended that SMEs prioritize continuous process improvement and invest in relevant digital technologies to strengthen operational efficiency and long-term competitiveness.

Keywords: Business re-engineering, process optimization, technological integration, sme growth, organizational efficiency

Introduction

In today's highly competitive business environment, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a critical role in driving economic growth, job creation, and innovation. However, many SMEs struggle with inefficiencies, outdated processes, and limited competitiveness, which constrain their growth potential. Business re-engineering, often referred to as Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR), has emerged as a strategic approach aimed at radically redesigning organizational processes to achieve significant improvements in performance, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. According to Hammer and Champy (1993), business re-engineering involves the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign

of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical performance measures such as cost, quality, service, and speed. Similarly, Davenport (2019) defines business re-engineering as the process of analyzing and redesigning workflows and processes within an organization to optimize operations, reduce inefficiencies, and create value for stakeholders.

Business re-engineering strategies typically include process optimization, technological integration, human resource realignment, and performance monitoring (Adewale, 2020). These strategies aim to enhance operational efficiency, improve service delivery, and strengthen organizational competitiveness. In the context of SMEs, the implementation of re-engineering strategies can facilitate better resource utilization, quicker response to market changes, and improved profitability (Oladele & Akinbode, 2021).

Despite the potential benefits, many SMEs in Nigeria face challenges in implementing business re-engineering strategies effectively. These challenges include limited financial and technological resources, inadequate managerial capacity, and resistance to organizational change (Okeke & Nwachukwu, 2022). In Imo State, SMEs form a significant part of the local economy, yet many are hindered by inefficient processes, outdated technology, and poor strategic planning. Understanding the role of business re-engineering in promoting SMEs' growth is therefore crucial for policymakers, business owners, and development agencies seeking to enhance SME performance and sustainability. This study seeks to examine the impact of business re-engineering strategies on the growth of SMEs in Imo State, focusing on practical approaches that can optimize operations, enhance competitiveness, and drive sustainable growth.

Statement of the Problem

Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria face numerous operational and strategic challenges that limit their growth and long-term sustainability. Inefficient processes, outdated technologies, limited managerial skills, and lack of structured business strategies often result in high operational costs, poor customer service, and weak competitive positioning. In Imo State, while some SMEs attempt to adopt modern management practices, their growth remains constrained by inadequate understanding and implementation of business re-engineering strategies (Oladele & Akinbode, 2021). A major concern is that SMEs may not fully leverage business re-engineering principles to streamline operations, integrate technology, or align human resources effectively with organizational goals. Resistance to change, inadequate financing, and poor strategic planning exacerbate this problem, preventing SMEs from achieving operational efficiency and competitive advantage (Okeke & Nwachukwu, 2022). This gap raises critical questions: To what extent do business re-engineering strategies influence SMEs' growth in Imo State? Which specific re-engineering practices are most effective in improving operational performance, profitability, and market competitiveness? Without empirical evidence, SME owners and policymakers may continue to struggle in implementing effective growth strategies, limiting the contribution of SMEs to local economic development.

Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this study is to investigate the influence of business re-engineering strategies on the growth of SMEs in Imo State. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the effect of process optimization on the growth of SMEs in Imo State.
2. Determine the impact of technological integration on the growth of SMEs in Imo State.

Research Questions

1. What is the effect of process optimization on the growth of SMEs in Imo State?
2. How does technological integration influence the growth of SMEs in Imo State?

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The study is anchored on the Contingency Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory.

Contingency Theory

Contingency Theory, developed by Fiedler (1964), posits that there is no one best way to organize or manage a business; instead, the optimal course of action depends on the internal and external conditions facing the organization. The theory emphasizes that organizational effectiveness is contingent upon the alignment between organizational structure, processes, leadership style, and environmental demands.

This theory is relevant to the present study because it explains how SMEs' growth can be influenced by the degree to which business re-engineering strategies, such as process optimization and technological integration, are tailored to their specific operational context. In Imo State, SMEs operate under varying resource constraints, market dynamics, and competitive pressures. Contingency Theory highlights that SMEs are more likely to achieve growth when re-engineering strategies are adapted to fit their unique circumstances, rather than applying generic process models that may not align with their capacities or goals.

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory, proposed by Barney (1991), suggests that the resources and capabilities possessed by a firm are the primary determinants of sustainable competitive advantage. According to RBV, resources must be valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) to provide long-term benefits. These resources include tangible assets, human capital, organizational processes, and technological capabilities.

RBV is particularly applicable to this study because business re-engineering strategies rely on effectively leveraging internal resources to achieve growth. For SMEs in Imo State, optimizing processes, integrating technology, and realigning human resources are forms of strategic capabilities that can enhance operational efficiency, responsiveness to market demands, and overall competitiveness. By focusing on developing and deploying unique capabilities through BPR initiatives, SMEs can

differentiate themselves in the market and achieve sustainable growth, despite constraints in financial or infrastructural resources.

Collectively, Contingency Theory and RBV provide a strong theoretical foundation for examining the impact of business re-engineering strategies on SME growth. Contingency Theory emphasizes the importance of aligning BPR strategies with the specific operational and environmental conditions of SMEs, while RBV underscores the strategic utilization of internal resources to achieve competitive advantage. These frameworks support the investigation of key re-engineering practices process optimization and technological integration and their role in enhancing profitability, efficiency, and market positioning among SMEs in Imo State. By combining these perspectives, the study can evaluate not only the effectiveness of specific strategies but also the conditions and resources that facilitate their successful implementation.

Concept of Business Re-Engineering

Business re-engineering, also known as business process re-engineering (BPR), is a strategic approach that involves fundamentally redesigning organizational processes to achieve dramatic improvements in performance, efficiency, and service delivery. Rather than emphasizing incremental change, BPR advocates for radical transformation of core business processes to align operations with strategic objectives and competitive demands. According to Aljazzi, Ullah, and Shah (2022), business re-engineering requires organizations to critically evaluate existing workflows, eliminate non-value-adding activities, and establish new process configurations that enhance value creation and reduce operational waste. Business re-engineering provides a framework for shifting from traditional, function-based approaches to integrated, process-oriented operations, enabling organizations to optimize work sequences, improve coordination across departments, and improve responsiveness to customer needs (Aljazzi et al., 2022). This shift necessitates not only procedural changes, but also cultural and structural adjustments within the organization. As such, successful re-engineering depends on effective leadership, organizational commitment to change, and a clear understanding of how redesigned processes contribute to strategic objectives (Gangat, 2021).

A central component of business re-engineering is the strategic use of technology to support redesigned processes. Modern enterprise systems, automation tools, and digital communication platforms can significantly enhance information flow, reduce process cycle times, and support real-time decision-making. Research indicates that technological integration is a critical enabler of re-engineering outcomes, particularly in environments where manual processes hinder performance and competitiveness (Kasongo & Balunywa, 2021). By integrating digital tools with redesigned workflows, organizations are able to improve accuracy, speed, and flexibility in operations.

In the context of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), business re-engineering plays a pivotal role in enhancing growth and sustainability. SMEs often operate in conditions of resource constraints, market volatility, and intense competition, making efficiency and adaptability important determinants of survival and expansion. According to Tekka (2021), SMEs that adopt re-engineering strategies are better

positioned to optimize resource utilization, reduce operational costs, and improve service quality. This is particularly relevant in developing economies where limited access to capital and infrastructure challenges make operational efficiency a key competitive advantage. Business re-engineering also promotes organizational agility by enabling SMEs to respond quickly to changes in market trends, customer preferences, and technological advancements. When processes are redesigned to be leaner and more flexible, SMEs can reduce delays, eliminate redundancies, and align their operations with emerging opportunities. This enhances overall performance and supports long-term competitiveness.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are widely recognized as key drivers of economic growth, job creation, and innovation, particularly in developing economies. The definition of SMEs varies across countries and often depends on criteria such as the number of employees, total assets, annual turnover, and investment levels (Ghanem & Hamid, 2020). SMEs are generally independently owned and operated businesses that are not dominant in their field, with management and decision-making often concentrated in the hands of a few individuals (International Federation of Accountants, 2010; United States Small Business Administration, 2017). In Nigeria, definitions have evolved to reflect changing economic priorities. For example, the Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME, 2021) defines small enterprises as businesses with capital investment (excluding land) between ten million and one hundred million naira, employing 31 to 70 full-time workers, and/or generating annual turnover up to ten million naira. Medium enterprises are larger, often employing up to 199 workers (SMEDAN, 2009; McMahon, 2020).

SMEs are considered vital for indigenous industrial development, as they leverage local enterprise culture and resources to drive self-sustaining growth (Udechukwu, 2019). They serve as the backbone of economic restructuring programs aimed at employment generation, poverty alleviation, food security, rapid industrialization, and mitigating rural-urban migration. Globally, SMEs account for approximately 60 percent of employment in the business sector (Jeremiah, Haliso, & Chima, 2021), highlighting their strategic importance to both national and local economies. Different regulatory bodies such as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Nigeria Bank for Commerce and Industries (NBCI), and the Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) have set varying thresholds for small and medium enterprises based on capital, turnover, and workforce size (Onwumere, 2016).

Currently, the Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME, 2021) defines small enterprises as businesses with capital investment (excluding land) between ten million and one hundred million naira, employing 31 to 70 full-time workers, and/or generating an annual turnover of up to ten million naira. In the manufacturing sector, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2009) considers businesses employing fewer than 100 workers as small, while medium enterprises employ between 100 and 199 employees (McMahon, 2020).

Beyond numerical classifications, SMEs are considered vital vehicles for indigenous industrial development, particularly in developing countries. Udechukwu (2019) emphasizes that SMEs possess

significant potential to foster self-sustaining industrial growth through the utilization of local enterprise culture and resources. They serve as a cornerstone for economic restructuring programs aimed at employment generation, poverty alleviation, food security, rapid industrialization, and mitigating rural-urban migration. In this sense, SMEs are not only business entities but also instruments of socio-economic transformation. SMEs contribute substantially to employment and economic activity worldwide. According to Jeremiah, Haliso, and Chima (2021), SMEs account for approximately 60 percent of employment in the business sector globally. Their growth is often driven by effective marketing strategies, efficient management of assets, and expansion of market share (Ishaq, 2019). To remain competitive, SMEs must continually adapt to market demands, adopt innovative business practices, and focus on customer satisfaction to sustain growth and profitability.

Concept of SME Growth

Growth refers to positive changes in size, magnitude, or development over time. It can be physical, such as increased revenue, profit, or workforce, or abstract, such as organizational maturity, complexity, or knowledge enhancement. In business, growth often represents the expansion of operations, market share, or financial capacity while maintaining sustainability and profitability (Neil, 2007).

Small and Medium Enterprises are business organizations that operate on a relatively smaller scale in terms of capital investment, workforce, and output compared to large corporations. They are characterized by limited market reach, simple organizational structures, and management practices that are often owner-driven. Abor and Quartey (2010) describe SMEs as enterprises whose operations, assets, and employee numbers fall below certain thresholds defined by national policies. They are typically independent, profit-oriented, and flexible, capable of adapting quickly to market changes, and they contribute significantly to economic development through industrialization, competition, and entrepreneurship. Business growth is achieved through increased sales, market penetration, diversification of products or services, adoption of innovative practices, and investment in technology. For SMEs, growth determines the ability to sustain operations, remain competitive, and contribute to broader economic development. Growth indicators for SMEs include higher profitability, operational efficiency, expanded workforce, and enhanced market reach, all of which improve organizational value and long-term sustainability.

The growth of SMEs is often measured in terms of increased profitability, market share, operational efficiency, and sustainability. Business re-engineering strategies contribute to growth by eliminating inefficiencies, reducing operational costs, and improving service delivery (Okeke & Nwachukwu, 2022). Process optimization ensures resources are used effectively, technological integration enhances operational capability, and continuous monitoring enables timely adjustments to improve performance.

Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the capacity of a system, organization, or process to endure over the long term by effectively managing resources, maintaining balance, and meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It emphasizes resilience, responsible use

of resources, and the integration of economic, social, and environmental considerations (Lozano, 2015). Sustainability in business refers to the ability of an organization to operate in a way that ensures long-term viability, resilience, and continuous value creation for stakeholders while balancing economic, social, and environmental considerations (Smith & Thompson, 2018). It includes not only financial stability but also the capacity to adapt to changing market dynamics, regulations, technology, and societal expectations (Johnson & Lee, 2019).

For SMEs, sustainability involves adopting practices such as efficient resource management, technological integration, process optimization, workforce development, and ethical business conduct (Ahmed & Wang, 2020). It is measured through indicators such as profitability, operational efficiency, employee satisfaction, customer loyalty, and social and environmental impact (Ogunleye & Adebayo, 2021).

Sustainable SMEs are better equipped to withstand market fluctuations, remain competitive, and foster long-term growth. Achieving sustainability requires strategic planning, innovation, and continuous monitoring to adjust operations and optimize resources in response to emerging challenges and opportunities (Kumar & Singh, 2022; Mensah & Adjei, 2023).

Concept of Process Optimization

Process optimization refers to the systematic examination and improvement of organizational workflows, procedures, and activities with the aim of enhancing efficiency, reducing operational costs, eliminating waste, and improving the overall quality of outputs. It involves conducting a detailed assessment of current processes, identifying bottlenecks and inefficiencies, and redesigning workflows to ensure that resources are used in the most effective manner. According to Raziq, Kaifi, and Khan (2022), process optimization requires a continuous evaluation of business activities to eliminate redundancies, minimize delays, and improve operational flow. In practice, process optimization often adopts tools such as process mapping, workflow analysis, time-motion studies, and performance metrics to diagnose inefficiencies and prescribe corrective actions. These tools help managers visualize complex operations, understand interdependencies among activities, and implement changes that improve throughput. Beyond cost reduction, optimized processes also contribute to improved quality control, greater consistency in outputs, and the ability to deliver products and services in a timely manner (Raziq et al., 2022).

For small and medium enterprises (SMEs), optimized business processes are particularly important because these firms often operate with limited financial, human, and technological resources. Efficient processes enable SMEs to reduce operational waste, shorten turnaround times, and allocate resources toward value-adding activities that enhance competitiveness. When processes are well-structured and aligned with organizational objectives, SMEs are better positioned to respond to customer needs, adapt to market changes, and sustain profitability (Mugisha & Basheka, 2021). Furthermore, process optimization supports innovation by establishing a culture of continuous improvement in which employees at all levels contribute ideas for enhancing performance. This culture not only improves operational outcomes but also fosters employee engagement, accountability, and strategic focus. As a

result, SMEs that prioritize process optimization are more likely to build resilient operations capable of achieving long-term growth and success in dynamic business environments.

Concept of Technological Integration

Technological integration refers to the deliberate adoption and incorporation of digital technologies, information systems, and automation into organizational processes to support business activities and improve operational performance. This concept encompasses a wide range of technological tools, including enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, customer relationship management (CRM) software, cloud computing platforms, mobile applications, digital marketing technologies, and automation tools for finance, production, and communication (Osei & Frempong, 2022).

According to Asogwa and Okoro (2023), technological integration goes beyond mere possession of digital tools; it requires effective alignment between technology, organizational processes, and strategic objectives. When technology is thoughtfully integrated, it enhances the flow of information, strengthens coordination across departments, and supports real-time decision-making. For instance, ERP systems centralize business data, enabling managers to access accurate information on inventory, sales, and financial performance, which in turn improves planning and responsiveness (Asogwa & Okoro, 2023). In SMEs, the adoption of technology can yield significant advantages despite resource constraints. Digital technologies facilitate automation of routine tasks, reduce manual errors, and streamline communication with customers and suppliers. Customer relationship management systems, for example, enable SMEs to track customer preferences, manage leads, and personalize marketing communications, which enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. Digital marketing platforms extend market reach beyond geographical limitations and help entrepreneurs engage with broader audiences at relatively low costs (Osei & Frempong, 2022).

Technological integration also enables SMEs to adapt more effectively to rapid shifts in the business environment. In an era where digital transformation is redefining industry standards, organizations that fail to integrate technology risk falling behind competitors. Conversely, SMEs that embrace digital tools gain improved flexibility, scalability, and access to global markets. Furthermore, technology adoption fosters innovation by creating opportunities for new business models, improved service delivery, and data-driven insights that inform strategic decisions (Asogwa & Okoro, 2023). We therefore propose the following hypotheses,

Ho1: Process optimization has no significant effect on the growth of SMEs in Imo State.

Ho2: Technological integration does not significantly influence the growth of SMEs in Imo State.

Empirical Studies

Azubuike, Sule, Adepoju, Ikwuanusi, and Odionu (2025) investigated the role of digital transformation and process optimization in enhancing the growth and sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The study conducted a review of existing literature and practical case examples,

focusing on how the integration of digital tools with optimized business processes influences efficiency, customer satisfaction, and organizational growth. Results indicated that SMEs that adopted digital technologies alongside structured process improvements experienced significant gains in operational efficiency, market responsiveness, and overall profitability. The study is relevant to the present research as it highlights the synergistic effect of combining digital transformation with process optimization, offering practical strategies that SMEs in Imo State can leverage to achieve sustained growth.

Okeke and Nwachukwu (2022) examined the challenges and outcomes of implementing business re-engineering strategies in SMEs across Southeast Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach, including interviews and questionnaires from 180 SME managers, the study identified major barriers such as resistance to change, inadequate financing, and limited managerial capacity. Despite these challenges, SMEs that effectively applied process optimization and digital technologies reported enhanced operational efficiency and better market positioning. The study is pertinent to the present research as it underscores the practical obstacles SMEs face in adopting BPR strategies while demonstrating potential growth benefits.

Oladele and Akinbode (2021) investigated the impact of business process improvements on the performance of SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. Using survey data from 250 SME owners, the study employed regression analysis to examine the effect of process optimization and technological integration on operational efficiency and profitability. Results revealed that SMEs implementing structured process improvements and integrating modern technologies experienced significant increases in productivity, reduced operational costs, and higher profitability. This study is relevant to the present research as it highlights the importance of process optimization and technological integration in driving SME growth in a Nigerian context.

Tekka (2021) studied the effect of business re-engineering adoption on the financial performance of SMEs in Northern Nigeria. Employing a survey design with 220 SME owners, the research applied regression and correlation analyses to assess the influence of re-engineered processes and technological adoption on profitability. Results revealed that SMEs embracing BPR practices experienced reduced operational delays, lower costs, and increased revenue generation. This study is relevant to the current research because it provides empirical evidence linking business re-engineering strategies to improved financial outcomes among SMEs in a developing country context.

Mugisha and Basheka (2021) investigated the role of process optimization in enhancing competitiveness and growth among SMEs in Uganda. Using a sample of 150 SMEs, data were analyzed through structural equation modeling to determine the relationship between process improvements, resource utilization, and organizational performance. Findings indicated that SMEs implementing continuous process optimization were better able to respond to market demands, innovate, and sustain profitability. The study is significant to the present research as it demonstrates that systematic process improvements are critical to SME growth, supporting the rationale for exploring these strategies in Imo State.

Adewale (2020) explored how strategic alignment of human resources and technology with business processes influences competitiveness among SMEs in Southwestern Nigeria. Data were collected from 200 SMEs using structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings indicated that SMEs that aligned workforce capabilities and technology with streamlined business processes achieved higher responsiveness to market changes and improved customer satisfaction. This study supports the current research by emphasizing the role of coordinated resource utilization in facilitating SME growth through business re-engineering strategies.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of business re-engineering strategies on the growth of SMEs in Owerri, Imo State. The target population comprised owners, managers, and key operational staff of SMEs across various sectors within Owerri, Imo State. This population was considered appropriate because these groups are directly involved in implementing or experiencing the outcomes of business re-engineering strategies, including process optimization and technological integration. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select 250 respondents, ensuring representation across different commercial areas and market hubs in Owerri. The choice of purposive sampling was informed by the need to reach individuals with firsthand knowledge and experience regarding SME operations and re-engineering initiatives.

The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Business Re-Engineering Strategies and SME Growth Questionnaire (BRESGQ). The instrument was designed on a four-point Likert scale with response options: To a Very Great Extent (VGE) = 4, To a Great Extent (GE) = 3, To a Low Extent (LE) = 2, and To No Extent (NE) = 1. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: demographic information, business re-engineering strategies, and SME growth indicators. To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by three experts in business management, SME development, and organizational strategy. Its reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.91, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Out of the 250 questionnaire items distributed, 232 were duly completed and returned, representing a 92.8% response rate. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, to address the research questions. The research hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (r) with the aid of SPSS Version 25 at a 0.05 level of significance. This analysis determined the extent to which process optimization and technological integration influence the growth and sustainability of SMEs in Owerri, Imo State.

Data Analysis and Results

This section presents the results of data analysis based on the research hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient at a 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: Process optimization has no significant effect on the growth of SMEs in Imo State.

Table 1: Relationship Between Process Optimization and SME Growth

Variables	N	r	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Process Optimization and SME Growth	232	0.736**	0.000	Rejected

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researchers' Data, 2026.

Table 1 shows that the correlation coefficient (r) between process optimization and SME growth is 0.736, indicating a strong positive relationship. The significance value of 0.000 is less than the critical value of 0.05. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that process optimization has a significant positive effect on the growth of SMEs in Imo State. SMEs that adopt efficient workflow systems, eliminate operational waste, and improve service delivery tend to experience improved performance, profitability, and sustainability.

H_{02} : Technological integration does not significantly influence the growth of SMEs in Imo State.

Table 2: Relationship Between Technological Integration and SME Growth

Variables	N	r	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Technological Integration and SME Growth	232	0.781**	0.000	Rejected

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researchers' Data, 2026.

Table 2 indicates that the correlation coefficient (r) between technological integration and SME growth is 0.781, showing a strong positive relationship. The significance level of 0.000 is lower than the alpha value of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This finding suggests that technological integration significantly enhances the growth of SMEs in Imo State. The adoption of digital tools, automation systems, and information technologies improves operational efficiency, market reach, and managerial decision-making.

Discussion of Findings

The test of hypotheses revealed that business re-engineering strategies significantly influence the growth of SMEs in Imo State. Specifically, the findings indicated that process optimization has a strong positive effect on SME growth. SMEs that streamline workflows, eliminate inefficiencies, and improve service delivery tend to experience higher productivity, reduced operational costs, and increased profitability. These results align with Oladele and Akinbode (2021), who reported that SMEs implementing structured process improvements in Lagos State experienced significant increases in operational efficiency and profitability. Similarly, Mugisha and Basheka (2021) emphasized that continuous process optimization enables SMEs to respond effectively to market demands, foster innovation, and sustain business growth.

Furthermore, the results showed that technological integration significantly enhances the growth of SMEs in Imo State. The adoption of digital tools, automation systems, and enterprise technologies

improves operational efficiency, supports real-time decision-making, and expands market reach. This finding is consistent with the studies of Azubuike, Sule, Adepoju, Ikwuanusi, and Odionu (2025), who demonstrated that combining digital technologies with optimized business processes results in improved efficiency, customer satisfaction, and overall profitability. Adewale (2020) also highlighted that aligning human resources and technology with streamlined business processes enhances responsiveness to market changes and strengthens competitiveness.

In addition, the findings corroborate the observations of Okeke and Nwachukwu (2022) and Tekka (2021), who found that SMEs adopting business re-engineering practices, including process optimization and technological adoption, experience reduced operational delays, lower costs, and higher revenue generation. Collectively, these findings underscore the strategic importance of business re-engineering for SMEs, particularly in developing economies like Nigeria, where resource constraints, market volatility, and competitive pressures make efficiency and adaptability critical to business growth. Overall, the study demonstrates that SMEs that effectively implement process optimization and technological integration are better positioned to enhance operational performance, increase profitability, and achieve long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

This study was on business re-engineering strategies on the growth of SMEs in Imo State. The findings revealed that both process optimization and technological integration have significant positive effects on SME growth. SMEs that streamline processes, eliminate inefficiencies, and integrate modern technologies experience improved operational efficiency, profitability, and market competitiveness. The study concludes that business re-engineering strategies are essential tools for promoting SME development, enabling businesses to overcome operational challenges, adapt to market changes, and sustain long-term growth.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made by the researchers:

1. SMEs in Imo State should prioritize process optimization by regularly reviewing and redesigning their workflows. The adoption of tools such as process mapping, time-motion studies, and performance metrics will enhance operational efficiency, reduce waste, and improve overall business performance.
2. SMEs should adopt relevant digital technologies including enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, customer relationship management (CRM) software, and automation tools. Technological integration will improve accuracy, enable real-time decision-making, and expand market reach.

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