

ABSTRACT

Innovation, Diffusion and Utilization

A Case Study

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The mechanism of innovation is not just something to be accepted: as it involves the element of deliberate planning it therefore requires analysing and understanding.

In this thesis a Case Study was conducted of an innovating system over a six month period vis-à-vis the following:

- a) the source of change and the type of innovation decision.
- b) the models of innovation diffusion and utilization in evidence.
- c) the users' perception of the innovation in terms of its complexity, compatibility, organizational arrangements and benefits.
- d) the extent to which the students perceive that the objectives of the programme are met.

Data were gathered via the administration of questionnaires to those who were involved in the programme. In addition a structured interview was conducted at the Jamaica

Chamber of Commerce office in Kingston. The researcher also took inventories at observation sessions throughout the life of the programme.

The major findings are:

1. The source of change was a “selective contact change”.
2. The decision to have the programme was a “collective individual decision” on the part of the school system, but “optional individual” on the part of the Liaison Teachers and Company Advisors.
3. The Research Development and Diffusion (RD &D) model of innovation diffusion and utilization was associated with the invention and development stage of the innovation, but both the Problem Solving and Social Interaction paradigms were evidenced during the diffusion and adoption stages.
4. Students perceived the programme complex but indicated weak positive responses in respect of its compatibility with their needs and values, and its organizational arrangements. They were equally divided in their opinion on the overall innovation perception.

5. Liaison Teachers and Company Advisors had positive perceptions of the programme's benefits, but perceived the organizational arrangements negatively.
- 6 The students believe that five of the seven programme objects are met.

From the findings it would seem that the programme has positive implications for economic growth.