

Summary

Determinants of the growth of innovation potential and management of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Lower Silesian Voivodship

Currently, innovation is one of the main elements determining the development of enterprises. Innovations, through their modernity and uniqueness, constitute a competitive advantage. Companies that want to achieve success on the market should apply innovative solutions. They occur in many forms, as new technologies, services, products, operating systems, management methods. By creating and implementing innovations, companies develop dynamically, which manifests itself in better efficiency and increased value. Companies are animators of innovation, inspiring other participants of the economic process to implement innovative solutions. In an economic situation in which markets are increasingly unpredictable, innovations help companies adapt to customer requirements. Otherwise, they are threatened with stagnation, and thus difficulties in competing with other entities. Therefore, on the grounds of management science, innovation is an important and current area of scientific analysis. This is due to the need to build a knowledge-based economy based on innovative solutions.

Innovative potential and the problems of its construction are the key issues for the process of implementation of innovative solutions. Research on innovative activity has been conducted for many years, and yet it still enjoys great interest because it determines progress and market development. The level of competitiveness of individual markets is increasingly determined by the ability of a given economy to create and commercialize innovations. For the efficient functioning of the economy, and especially its development, it is important to stimulate innovative activity of enterprises. They are the basic cell from which the innovative economy begins. The necessity of introducing innovations in the economy enforces searching for determinants that build innovative potential. These include internal determinants, i.e. functional and resource spheres of enterprises, and external determinants originating from outside the enterprise.

On the other hand, the issues of small and medium-sized enterprises are of great interest in modern markets, since they are the main economic cells. This is because they are the main force creating the GDP of modern countries, they employ the biggest number of workers, and they decide about innovativeness, modernity and position of particular economies. Globalization causes that only modern companies can have a good position not only in the world market, but also in the home market, because companies that do not develop stand at a loss against modern competitors.

Therefore, the enterprises that want to compete effectively on the market have to rely on innovations. Unfortunately, the knowledge on innovativeness among micro, small and medium enterprises is at an insufficient level. Only filling this gap will help to create the concept of SME innovativeness. This will contribute to the development of this sector, which is so important in the economies of individual countries.

One of the basic issues that need to be investigated is the concept of implementation of innovation potential in enterprises. Innovation and theories of innovation formation, innovation models are widely described in the literature, while the issue of innovation potential has so far been insufficiently described in the international literature, especially in the Polish literature. The concept of the construction of innovation potential, its internal and external determinants, and factors conditioning its construction require detailed examination and description. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to fill these gaps.

The main objective of this study is to find an answer to the question what determinants have the greatest influence on the growth of innovation potential in the management of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Lower Silesian Voivodship?

Achieving the objectives of the study required conducting a literature search and evaluation of the research problem. Literature studies were carried out on the basis of domestic and foreign works, while the empirical study, which is the main basis for the implementation of the objectives and verification of research hypotheses, was carried out in 2021 on a sample of 150 enterprises.

The theoretical part of the work includes issues related to the theory of innovation, the SME sector, the concept and division of innovation potential and external and internal determinants of the construction of innovation potential. The empirical part of the paper includes the scheme of the research process and hypotheses, methods of data analysis and description of the research sample. The last subsection presents the results of the research with the evaluation of the growth of innovation potential, the influence of internal and external determinants and proposals for models. Models of innovation potential were also constructed.

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