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## THE IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTERPRISES

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Innovation determines change in the functioning of the enterprise. It is initiative, which can contribute not only to survival, but also to achievement of an organisation's competitive advantage, which should then translate into market success. The indicated effects are related to the phenomenon of organisational development, which is characterised by a huge complexity of manifestations. Both innovation (experiment) and development (quality changes) are associated with change, transformation, and a new way of functioning. Therefore, it is important to identify and explain the relationship between these states in the organisation. The aim of the study was to analyse the importance of innovation in business development (based on expert opinion). The following research methods were used at the data collection stage: desk research and focus group interviews. However, elements of descriptive statistics, cross-sectoral correlation coefficient (to assess the agreement of expert opinion) and Spearman's rho correlation coefficient were used to analyse the research results. The research was conducted in May and June 2023. The research group consisted of 32 experts. On the basis of the research carried out, it can be indicated that the development of enterprises (perceived as a qualitative change in activity and improvement of image), was the most important reason for the implementation of innovation in enterprises (with the highest average of the experts' evaluations: 4.13, and the highest share (53.13%) of the highest ratings in the structure of responses). Furthermore, referring to the effects of the innovation introduced in the organisations, development of the company was also characterised by the highest ratings – both in the case of the average rating, 4.19, as well as the largest share (40.63%) of the highest ratings in the opinion of experts. In connection with the above, it can be concluded that, on the one hand, the desire to develop an enterprise is a motive for implementing innovation, while on the other hand, development is the result of innovative activity in the organisation. A statistically significant consistency of the expert's assessments was obtained for the whole group

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of subjects. At the same time, innovation is perceived by the experts as a key element of an organisation's development, allowing it to increase its competitiveness, improve quality, reduce costs and enable adaptation to market changes. The presented research results enrich the knowledge about potential innovation in the context of enterprise development. Establishing a cause-and-effect relationship makes it possible to stimulate the development of the organisation more effectively, while placing emphasis on innovative activity in a broader context will contribute to an increase in the innovativeness of Polish enterprises.

**Keywords:** innovations, innovation management, entrepreneurship, development, competitiveness

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Today's businesses are faced with an increasingly complex and turbulent environment, which necessitates changes in their business operations. Whether they are new and innovative entities or well-established businesses, companies need to adapt their operating strategies to emerging opportunities and threats. The changes introduced are mainly the result of pressure from external environmental factors. They often manifest themselves through the introduction of new products, the use of new technologies or the modification of existing organisational processes. However, there are also changes resulting from the initiative of the company's internal management. All these changes are important and necessary, and those related to the implementation of novelties are of particular value – they are innovative. It is innovation that guarantees progress and effectively reduces the risk of losing a competitive advantage. Therefore, the search for and implementation of innovative changes, which are synonymous with innovation, is an integral part of a modern approach to running an effective business.

In the current market conditions, the implementation of innovation is one of the main strategic objectives of a company, as it determines the maintenance of a sustainable competitive advantage, protecting the company from losing its competitive position in the market as well as guaranteeing market success (Wolf, 2021). Contemporary enterprises strive to obtain the status of innovative organisations, ready to introduce changes, and their survival depends in particular on their openness to the implementation of the new. This is because avoiding innovation will lead to a deterioration in their competitiveness and, consequently, to market failure (Wysocki, 2009).

In order to function in the market, an organisation strives for development, which means coordinated changes to the company's systems, adapting them to the constantly changing environment. These adjustments are effective if they ensure the achievement and maintenance of a significant competitive position. The company's development processes do not run automatically, they must be initiated. In addition,



they are rarely confined to the individual – on the contrary, they require coordinated, joint actions, both internal and external. An important role is also played by the management system, organisational skills and relations with the environment.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the concepts of innovation and development are closely linked. As Lemańska-Majdzik (2016) states, an increase in the level of entrepreneurship and innovativeness of enterprises leads to a competitive advantage in the market. This then influences the company's ability to achieve better results from their activities. Showing better economic results can lead to the development of the organisation and its success, but it should be emphasised that the level of innovation has a great impact here.

The above considerations suggest that the concepts of innovation and development are closely related. As Lemańska-Majdzik (2016) points out, an increase in the level of entrepreneurship and innovativeness of enterprises leads to a competitive advantage in the market. This then influences the company's ability to achieve better results from its operations. Demonstrating better economic results creates the potential for the development of the organisation, because with excess resources, risks can be taken with new solutions – implementing risky, pioneering projects.

The way in which innovation emerges is still considered to be one of the less recognised phenomena within management sciences. For this reason, it is important to identify the actions that need to be taken in order to create an environment conducive to the emergence and diffusion of new innovative ideas. Despite the existence of many scientific studies on the indicated topic, there is a knowledge gap regarding the essence of the relationship between innovation and organisational development.

At the same time, it is worth mentioning that, nowadays, in conditions of intense competition, market changes, environmental uncertainty, and increasing customer expectations regarding personalisation or product parameters, innovation is the path to organisational success. This is particularly true if we take into account common trends such as the knowledge-based economy, intensive digitalisation, and the assumptions of industry 4.0 or 5.0 and sustainable development. It is innovation in modern technologies (e.g. the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence or data analysis) that allows organisations to adapt to dynamically changing market conditions, maintain competitiveness, individualise their offer, create organisational agility and improve efficiency.

The aim of the study was to analyse the interactions between innovation and enterprise development. With the help of expert focus interviews, an attempt was made to examine the relationship between the development and innovativeness of enterprises, seeking answers to the following research questions:

- What are the reasons for implementing innovation in enterprises (based on expert opinion)?
- What are the effects of implementing innovation in enterprises (based on expert opinion)?
- What is the relationship between innovation and development (based on expert opinion)?



This paper consists of an introduction, a literature analysis of the subject (which explains the concepts of innovation, enterprise development and the relationship between these phenomena), a description of the methodological assumptions, an analysis of the research results, a discussion (comparing the authors' research results with the analyses of other researchers), conclusions and a description of the limitations of the research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Importance and types of innovation in organisations

The contemporary dynamics of the economy and the pace of economic development require enterprises to constantly introduce new or improved products, and technological, organisational or marketing solutions in order to compete effectively on the market (Kozłowska, 2016; Ivanova, Rogaczewski and Lutsenko, 2022). The phenomenon of innovation is inextricably linked to change, novelty, reform or an idea perceived as novelty, since there is no innovation without changing the status quo and introducing novelty (Stawasz, 1999; Ahmad et. al., 2021).

Based on a review of the definitions of innovation in the literature, it is noticeable that there is ambiguity and sometimes difficulty in making comparisons from a variety of approaches. However, it is possible to identify a factual and process-based way of creating the concept of innovation (Zych, 2013):

- material, treating innovation as the final result or outcome of a process,
- narrow material, referring to the application of a particular idea or concept to the innovative activity of enterprises,
- narrow process, including only the phase of putting an innovative idea into practice,
- broad process, including, in addition to the implementation of the innovation, the phase of setting up and generating the idea.

At the same time, despite the discrepancies, it is possible to establish some common features in the researchers' understanding of the concept of innovation. Dworczyk and Szalsa (2001) divide the characteristics of innovation into:

- primary, i.e.: costs (both measurable and psychological ones, e.g. employees' fear of introducing changes), easiness and appropriateness, i.e. compliance between the customer's requirements and their previous experiences, which makes it possible to determine to what extent the innovation is useful in practice,
- secondary, i.e.: the risk accompanying the introduction of an innovation, complexity, i.e. the multiplicity of activities making up an innovation, reversibility, i.e. the possibility of returning to the initial state, timeliness (exceeding specified deadlines in the implementation of an innovation may entail over-planned costs),



modifiability, i.e. the possibility of making changes during the implementation of an innovation.

When considering the issues of definition and scope of innovation, it is useful to refer to the Oslo Manual, which contains the requirements of the European Commission and supports the idea of experiments aimed at improving and expanding the scope of innovation data (GUS, 2018). The latest study is already the fourth edition. In contrast, the first edition of the Oslo Manual was published in 1992 and dealt with innovation in manufacturing (OECD, 1992). The word 'Oslo' in the handbook's title is a reference to the city in which the recommendations were first endorsed by the OECD's (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) NESTI (National Experts on Science and Technology Indicators) Working Group. It is worth mentioning that in the 1992 edition, the Community Innovation Survey (CIS) and comparable surveys carried out in Australia and Canada were used to study innovation. Importantly, these studies showed that it is possible to develop and collect data on complex and diverse innovation phenomena (GUS, 2018).

In the case of the definition of innovation in the Oslo Manual, it is stated that the term can be used in different contexts and refer to both process and outcome. According to the nomenclature presented in this work, the term 'innovation activities' (from 'innovation') refers to processes, while the term 'innovation' (from 'innovation') refers to outcomes only. Innovation activities include all developmental, financial and commercial activities undertaken by a company to bring about innovation for the company. It can lead to an innovation, be ongoing, postponed or abandoned (GUS, 2018).

The organisation of innovation activities itself varies greatly from company to company. Some organisations manage this type of process through well-defined innovation projects or programmes with dedicated budgets, for which the innovation is an intermediate or final stage. Other companies integrate their innovation activities primarily into their regular business activities and work on the continuous improvement of their products and business processes, while other companies engage in innovation activities mainly on an ad hoc basis (GUS, 2018).

A business innovation is a new or improved product or business process (or a combination of the two) that differs significantly from the enterprise's previous products or business processes and has been introduced to the market or put into use by the enterprise. It should be clarified that business processes include all the core activities of the enterprise relating to the production of products and all activities of an ancillary and supporting nature (GUS, 2018).

Innovation causes the characteristics of one or more products or business processes to change. According to the Oslo Manual, there are two main types of innovation by object: product (product innovations) and those leading to a change in a company's business processes (business process innovations). A single innovation can consist of a combination of types of product innovation and business process innovation (CSO, 2020).



In today's global market conditions, adopting an innovative approach is not only essential, but also a critical component of entrepreneurship in achieving success in a modern organisation (Janjić, Radjenovic, 2019). Business innovation is essential to every company in order to survive in the current and future generation (Dagan et. al., 2021).

In an ever-changing and highly competitive market environment, businesses are compelled to embrace innovation. Therefore, it becomes imperative for business owners to prioritise innovation to remain aligned with market trends. Moreover, innovation warrants attention because it not only facilitates business growth, but also enhances profitability and cost-effectiveness. Additionally, fostering innovation is essential for establishing a distinct identity in a competitive market. Given the continuous influx of both existing and new entrants into the marketplace, it is crucial to contemplate the unique attributes that set each business apart. Furthermore, innovation serves as a catalyst for economic growth and is widely recognised as a cornerstone of a country's economic development, making it a primary focus for businesses (Alharbi et. al., 2019).

Innovation plays a pivotal role in entrepreneurship and is a key element in the long-term sustainability of businesses. Entrepreneurs, as economic innovators, actively seek and develop solutions not only for internal challenges, but also to address global issues. Moreover, innovation related to the business model empowers organisations to capitalise on shifting consumer demands and evolving expectations. This type of innovation enables businesses to adapt their operational models to match consumer preferences and the prevailing market conditions, ensuring they remain competitive and resilient against both existing and emerging competitors in the industry (Razavi, Attarnezhad, 2013; Haned, Mothe Nguyen-Thi, 2014; Machikita, Ueki, 2017).

It should be noted that in the literature on the subject there are many definitions and approaches to innovation, reflecting the diverse perspectives of stakeholders within organisations. Hence, the comprehensive definition of organisational innovation encompasses several dimensions. It encompasses innovation as either the creation, adoption, integration or utilisation of any value-added novelty in both social and economic domains. This includes rejuvenating or expanding services, products, or market presence, facilitating alternative production techniques, and ultimately implementing emerging management systems. This definition underscores the notion that innovation can simultaneously represent both a process and an outcome. In essence, it signifies that innovation encompasses various aspects, such as market enhancement, the evolution of ideas, behaviours, and other elements that contribute to the organisation's advancement (Tohidi, Jabbari, 2012; Noruzy et. al., 2012; Le Bas, Mothe and Ngujen-Thi, 2015; Tavassoli, Karlsoon, 2016; Tidd, Bessant, 2018; Alharbi et. al., 2019).

In the context of the various transformations and transitions in the company, one can also point to another phenomenon concerning qualitative change, in every possible dimension of the organisation's functioning – these issues are described in the following subsection.



## 2.2. The specifics of enterprise development

The development of a company is undoubtedly one of the most complex processes that it goes through during its existence. At the same time, the stakeholders of a business not only expect it to happen, but also assume that it will be conducted in a purposeful and organised manner. It is the highest level of an organisation's aspiration (the highest order goal) (Matejun, 2015).

Development should be regarded as a holistic and long-term process with a strategic foundation within the organisation, the essence of which is change. They are primarily concerned with the individual elements of the organisational system and the way individual management functions are implemented (Szplit, et. al., 2002).

A similar interpretation is indicated by Stabryła (2008), who defines development as the occurrence of qualitative changes, assessed positively from the point of view of the objective to which they relate. Both change and development should be seen in the following dimensions:

- economic (resource efficiency),
- organisational (tasks, processes, organisational structure and personnel changes),
- personal (creation of desired behaviours, improvement of team organisation and staff development),
- informational (improving processes of identification, diagnosis and preparation of decision-making information, and improving communication),
- technical-production (diffusion of innovations, redefinition of the scope of activity in terms of assortment, specialisation and improvement of planning and control processes).

Tchórzewski (1992) defines development as a long-term process of directed change, in which one can distinguish the correctly consecutive stages of change (phases of development) of a given object and showing differentiation of this object in a specific respect. Moreover, Schumpeter (as cited by Mikosik, 1993) shows change as the foundation of development, pointing out that it materialises primarily in new combinations of production factors, i.e. innovation leading to the creative destruction of the existing organisational equilibrium.

Enterprise development is a concept that has a rich literature both in Poland and abroad. However, it is not an unambiguous, simple, strict and precisely defined concept. The variety of definitions indicates the diverse number of considerations through which enterprise development should be interpreted (Brzeziński, Cyplik and Wyrwicka, 2020).

As Matejun (2015) points out, discussion of the concept of enterprise development is determined mainly by two different conceptual streams. According to the first, the authors treat enterprise development exclusively as a phenomenon of a qualitative nature, juxtaposing or complementing it with a separate category of growth (identified as changes of a quantitative nature). This approach – referred to as qualitative – stems from the belief that not every enterprise needs to grow. However,



every enterprise should grow, if only to adapt to the volatility and complexity of its environment.

The second strand derives from praxeology, where development is understood as the complementary occurrence of quantitative (organisational growth) and qualitative changes (Pszczółowski, 1978). In this view, development means not only quantitative phenomena, relating to the expansion and enlargement of the enterprise, but also qualitative phenomena, which include such dimensions as elevation, differentiation, structural changes, mastery of speed and organisational balance (Jakubow, 2000). Crucially, there are interrelationships between these two dimensions of change. This approach – known as integrated – corresponds largely to business practice (Matejun, 2015).

The diversity of definitional approaches also applies to the foreign literature on the subject, where the concepts of development and growth are used either interchangeably or separately by authors, leading to the distinction of two main theoretical streams: growth theories and organisational development (OD) theories (Matejun, 2015). At the same time, the concept of OD is related to development conditioning (Wyrwicka, 2003).

It is worth citing the results of Egan's analysis (2007), based on 27 definitions of organisational development. This researcher indicates that the concept is linked in particular to issues such as:

- advanced organisational renewal,
- changes to the company's organisational culture,
- improving the profitability, efficiency and competitiveness of the business,
- ensuring the success and well-being of employees and other stakeholders in the organization,
- facilitating information and learning for the organization,
- problem-solving support,
- planning and implementing organisational change,
- strengthening the system and improving company processes.

It is worth emphasising that the concept of enterprise development is extremely comprehensive and broad. In an organisational sense, it is necessary to recognise trends in the environment, show readiness for changes related to the development of the organisation, identify the growth phase, define development strategies and manage projects (Wyrwicka, 2003).

The characteristic element that can trigger a qualitative transformation in an organisation is change, which can include essentially any process, activity, technology, business model, diversification of activities and modification of a product or service. As a rule, it is creative, innovative in nature, and therefore linked to innovation. Therefore, it is important to consider the relationship between these two phenomena in an enterprise. This issue is addressed in the next subchapter.



### 2.3. Relationship between innovation and enterprise development

Innovation can be viewed universally as the ability to generate and implement improved or novel solutions relating to scientific and research, technical, production, economic and organisational endeavours (Dolińska, 2010; Jasiński, 2014). In addition, the concept of innovation itself can be understood in a valued way – on the basis of the results achieved and future potential. It is also possible to consider the aspect of innovation outcome, which is based on four types: product, process, marketing and organisational (Strabyła, 2014).

As Strabyła (2014) states, the result-based understanding of development capability is broader and extends to the entirety of a company's material and intellectual potential and positively evaluated results. Such outcomes include economic, social, ergonomic, utilitarian (material-technical), intellectual-research and managerial (planning, decision-making, organisational, control and others). Therefore, a statement concerning innovation as a context for the development capability of a company should be interpreted as follows:

- as a set of factors that coexist with the productive potential (material and intellectual), providing a reference for the development activity of the enterprise,
- as a mechanism which generates an increase in the value of the company and a positive qualitative dynamism in its various functions.

Innovation, therefore, belongs to the specific forms of development capability of an organisation and is realised through the effective use of material resources, knowledge and skills. One of the attributes of innovation is the comprehensive stimulation of development capability. This aspect can be analysed based on the following criteria: new products and services, intellectual capital, processes and enterprise (Strabyła, 2014). A description of the indicators for assessing the development capability of an organisation is presented in Table 1.

Enterprises generate jobs and have an impact on the development of entrepreneurship and innovation in any country. However, both the development of enterprises and the improvement of their economic performance in the modern economy, as Taranko (2011) emphasises, depend on innovation processes. Basically, any innovative change can be initiated by the internal sources of the enterprise or the external sources of innovation (Jelonek, 2014). Ferraresi et al. (2012) assert that the creation of new value for an organisation is possible precisely through the use of innovation, which they define as the process of transforming knowledge into value by applying new or improved products, processes and systems.



Table 1. Criteria for assessing a company's development capacity

Criteria	Description
New products and services	Value of production and sales, share of new products in the value of operations, profit from sales, market share, number of patents and new industrial designs, quality of products (services), modernity of products and efficiency of investments in innovation class.
Intellectual capital	Educational potential, creativity, work enrichment, diversification of working methods, performance and professional development of personnel, interpersonal relations (social competence), social job satisfaction and networking.
Processes	Production capacity, reliability, level of technological readiness, level of quality of technological processes, degree of automation, productivity rate, completeness and consistency of legal and organisational regulations (concerning the general course of action and application of working procedures), degree of compliance with management process standards, labour intensity, cost intensity, as well as efficiency and functionality of the administrative and managerial work methods used.
Company	Enterprise value (property and income), organisational value, competitive ability, competitive position, learning ability and key competence assessment index.

Source: Strabyła, 2014.

The most important stimulator of a company's innovation processes is the market, which is the harshest verifier of new products. In addition to the market, conditions arising from the company's environment have a strong impact on the innovative activities of the enterprise. These incorporate two planes: the macro-environment – the further environment (the general environment) and the micro-environment – the closer environment (the operational environment) (Moczała, 2005).

Innovation is directly related to the creation of additional value for the company, which has a positive impact on its functioning and may result in development (Lee, Olson and Trimi, 2012). Innovative activity and the ability to quickly and effectively implement innovation are important attributes of a company that is focused on growth and continuously strengthening its position in the market (Jelonek, 2014). Indeed, Wolanski (2009) emphasises the fact that one of the main sources of enterprise competitiveness is a high degree of innovativeness, which is possible due to the proper processing and use of knowledge. A company's innovation orientation enables strategic positioning regarding existing and potential competitors, which gives the organisation an advantage in the market (Drakulevski, Nakov, 2014).

Therefore, it can be concluded that innovation may be an important element in stimulating or managing the development of an enterprise. Therefore, it seems reasonable to undertake analyses that are aimed at identifying and describing the relationship between innovation and the development of an organisation, which was the



subject of the research described below. The methodological assumptions of the authors' research in this regard are described in the next chapter.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study was to analyse the interactions between innovation and enterprise development.

The main research problem is contained in the question: what is the importance of innovation for the development of a company (based on expert opinion)?

The main research problem was divided into the following detailed questions:

- RQ1: What are the reasons for implementing innovation in enterprises (based on expert opinion)?
- RQ2: What are the effects of implementing innovation in enterprises (based on expert opinion)?
- RQ3: What is the relationship between innovation and development (based on expert opinion)?

The study was carried out in three stages (preparation, implementation and results development). In each of these phases, specific research methods were used.

#### Preparation phase

Desk research is a method that constitutes an analysis of the records of available data sources, including their compilation, mutual verification and processing. Such an analysis is the basis for drawing conclusions about the researched problem (Bednarowska, 2015).

#### Research implementation phase

The focus group interview (FGI) is a special type of methodological research as it draws on the knowledge and ingenuity of people who are experts in a given field. It consists of obtaining data by asking questions on the basis of a specially prepared questionnaire - the interviewer obtaining answers from respondents selected on the basis of appropriately selected research samples (Magruk, 2005). It is worth pointing out that the focus group interview is currently, in many countries around the world, one of the most popular methods of collecting data in social sciences. Expert methods allow you to use the knowledge and experience of experts to solve complex problems, make decisions and analyse situations. The essence of expert methods is to use the knowledge of specialists in a given field or topic to obtain qualitative results compared to standard methods or algorithms. Expert methods involve identifying, collecting, analysing and using the knowledge and experience of experts in



a specific field. This is crucial because human expertise is often irreplaceable in solving complex problems (Lisek-Michalska, 2013).

It is assumed that respondents with extensive professional achievements and professional knowledge on a given subject can present interesting analytical proposals. Thanks to their professional knowledge and “imagination rooted in reality”, they can also create valuable (realistic) forecasts of the development of the situation in a given fragment of economic and social reality (Churchill, 2002). The presented research was conducted in May and June 2023. The technique of the deliberate selection of experts was used. The selection criteria for the study were significant practical experience in the development and implementation of innovation and development strategies in the company.

The interview questionnaire consisted of two parts:

- metrics (defining the profile of the experts),
- fundamental (types and functional areas of innovation implemented in the organisation, reasons for implementing innovation, results of the innovation implemented and analysis of the relationship between innovation and enterprise development).

### **Research results development phase**

The development of the research results was based on the use of elements of descriptive statistics, such as the arithmetic mean, minimum value, maximum value and range (Ręklewski, 2020).

In addition, the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC), a descriptive statistic used to quantify entities organised into groups, was applied. It is used when a test variable is measured by several experts. It measures the credibility of experts, i.e. the degree of agreement between their assessments. The classic threshold of  $\alpha = 0.05$  was set as the significance level.

In addition, Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was used, which describes the correlation strength of both quantitative and qualitative features when it is possible to sort their variants (Ręklewski, 2020). Here, a similar significance level referred to the threshold of  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27.

## **4. RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **4.1. Expert profile analysis**

A total of 32 deliberately selected experts took part in the study. The criterion for selecting the experts was at least several years of practical experience in the development, implementation and management of innovation in enterprises, as well as the



management of organisational development. The majority of the experts were men (62.5%), and the remaining 37.5% were women. Most (71.88%) were employed in large enterprises (employing more than 249 employees), while 18.75% were employed in medium-sized commercial organisations (employing from 50 to 249 employees), 6.25% in commercial micro-organisations (employing less than 10 employees) and the remaining 3.13% in small entities (employing from 10 to 49 employees) (see Figure 1).

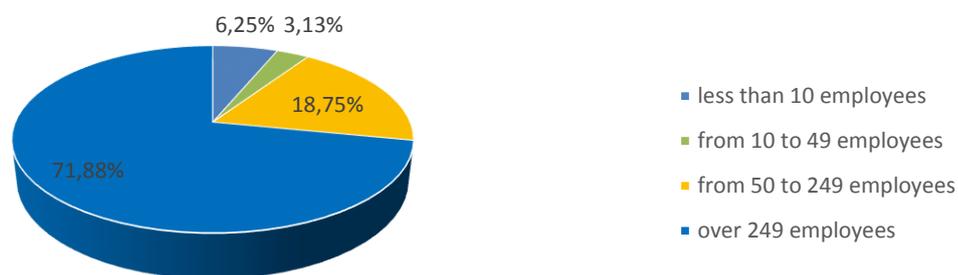


Fig. 1. The size of the company employing the expert (authors' own elaboration)

Most of the experts (53.13%) were employed as specialists, one fourth as managers, 9.38% held the positions of manager or director and 3.13% were owners of the enterprise (Figure 2).

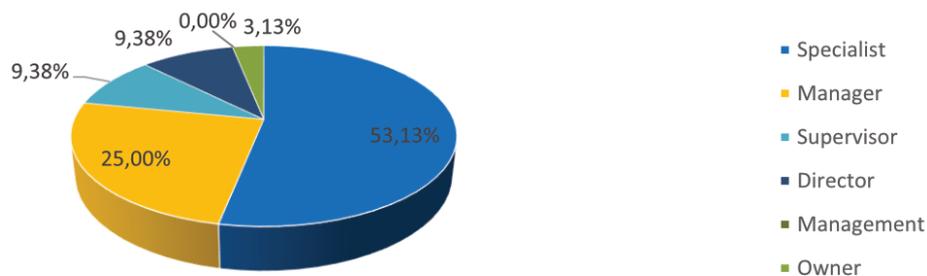


Fig. 2. Expert workplace (authors' own elaboration)

Referring to the professional experience of the experts in their current position, the majority (59.38%) had been employed for 1 to 3 years, 31.35% for more than 5 years and 9.38% for 3 to 5 years (Figure 3).

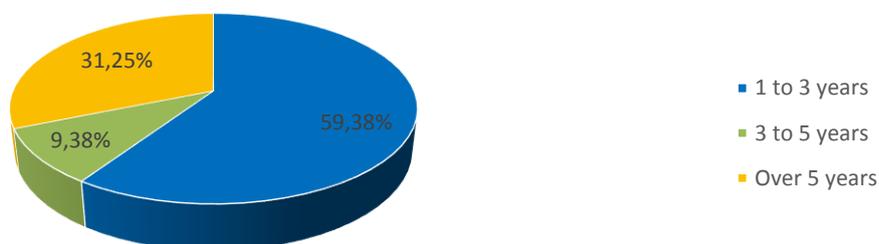


Fig. 3. Professional experience in the current position, in years (authors' own elaboration)

The experts also assessed their own knowledge and experience on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 meant a low level of knowledge and experience, and 5 corresponded with a high level of both knowledge and experience). Most experts (59.38%) assessed themselves at level 4, 21.88% at level 3, 12.50% at level 5, and the remaining 6.25% at level 2. No one assessed their knowledge and experience at level 1. The average assessed level was 3.78 and the median was 4 (Figure 4).

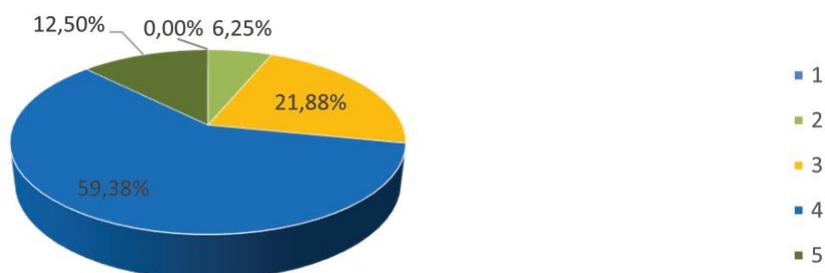


Fig. 4. Self-assessment of expert knowledge and experience (authors' own elaboration)

It is worth noting that in the case of the vast majority (87.50%) of the commercial organisations represented by the experts, innovation had been implemented in the previous year. Only in the case of 6.25% of the commercial organisations had this type of activity not been undertaken (Figure 5).

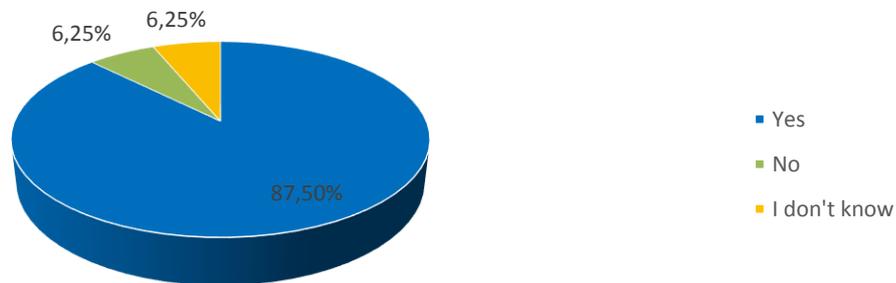


Fig. 5. Implementation of innovation over the previous year in commercial organisations (authors' own elaboration)

It should be noted that there was significant variation in the type of innovation introduced over the previous year. The largest percentage, 28.77%, concerned organisational innovation (e.g. cooperation with the environment), as well as process innovation (relating to production and logistics). Moreover, 24.66% was product innovation (such as a new product or service). The remaining 17.81% covered marketing innovation (such as market research) (see Figure 6).

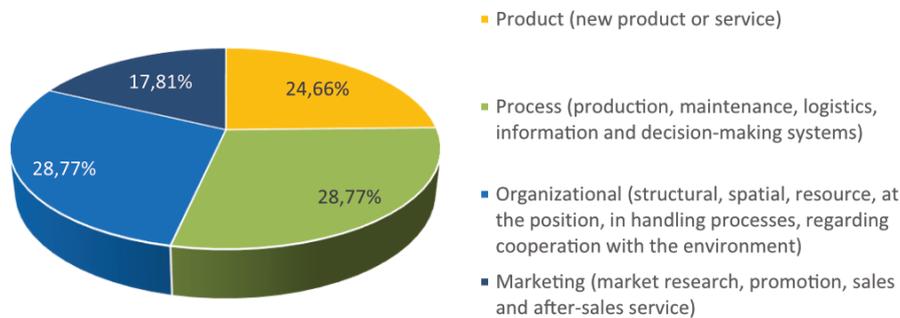


Fig. 6. Type of innovation introduced in commercial organisations during the previous year (multiple answers possible) (authors' own elaboration)

By dividing the innovations implemented and planned for the coming year into functional areas. With regard to the innovation implemented in the last year, the largest share concerned work organisation (12.30%), logistics (10.70%) and the sales system (10.16%). However, in the case of planned investment in the following year, this was most often related to marketing (10.34%), market communication policy (9.48%) and the management of production/technological processes (8.62%) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Functional areas of innovation (implemented over the previous year) and planned innovation (to be implemented over the following year) – experts could indicate more than one answer [N – number of answers]

Functional areas	Implemented	Planned
Finance	8	9
Marketing	11	12
Logistics	20	9
Product management	15	8
Organisation of work	23	5
Pricing policy	11	9
Relations with contractors/customers	15	8
Sales system	19	7
Management of production/technological processes	10	10
Human resources	15	8
Communication policy with the market	8	11
Quality management	17	6
Management of knowledge	13	10
No innovation introduced / No plans to introduce innovation	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>116</b>

Source: authors' own elaboration.

Therefore, there is a noticeable change in the emphasis on future innovation in commercial organisations, in particular in the areas of marketing, communication and production and technological process management.

#### 4.2. Influence of motives for implementing innovation on the development of enterprises

In the analysis of the importance of individual reasons for implementing innovation in enterprises, a scale from 1 to 5 was used (where 1 meant of very little importance and 5 meant of very great importance). The experts could indicate more than one answer, and failure to select a given factor meant it had no impact. Among the most important reasons was the company's development (average score 4.13, median 5 and the highest share of the highest scores at 53.13%), focus on increasing the efficiency of processes / resources (average 4.13, median 4.5 and 50% of the highest scores in the structure of responses), as well as the opportunity to stand out



in the market thanks to innovation (average 3.88, median 4 and 43.75% of the highest scores) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Reasons for implementing innovation (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means of very little importance and 5 means of very great importance)

Reasons for implementing innovation	Average	Median
Development of the enterprise – qualitative change in activity, improvement of company image	4.13	5
Pressure / expectations from customers / contractors / business partners	3.19	3
Focus on increasing the efficiency of processes/resources	4.13	4.5
Opportunity to stand out in the market through innovation	3.88	4
Including innovative activity in the company's strategy	3.56	4
The greater number of competitors	2.53	3
Implementation of the company's strategy	3.50	3
Emerging technological and organisational opportunities	3.56	4
Minimisation of operating costs	3.63	4
Creating the image of a modern company that participates in technological and economic development	3.56	4
Barriers limiting revenues	2.69	2.5
Globalisation and mixing of consumer cultures	2.25	2
Focus on rationalisation of management in the organisation	2.56	3
Increasing competition in terms of the selection on offer	2.84	3
Changes in the sphere of consumption (e.g. changing consumption patterns)	2.69	3
Diversification of products or markets	2.53	3
Low level of consumer loyalty	2.25	2
Low market transparency, low consumer awareness of products	2.22	2

Source: authors' own elaboration.

In order to check whether the experts coherently answered the questions concerning the importance of motivational factors when introducing innovation for the development of the enterprise, an analysis of intra-class correlations was performed. The calculations were carried out both on the general group of respondents and by position (specialists – management staff) and by self-assessment of knowledge of and experience in the subject of the study (people assessing their knowledge and experience as medium or low, and assessing their knowledge and experience as good or very good). The results are presented in Table 4.



Table 4. Compatibility of assessments regarding the importance of motivational factors to the introduction of innovation for the development of the enterprise

		<i>r<sub>ICC</sub></i>	95% <i>CL</i>		<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i>
			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>				
Position	Specialist	0.92	0.83	0.97	13.45	12;204	< <b>0.001</b>	13
	Management	0.78	0.58	0.92	6.17	12;204	< <b>0.001</b>	13
Assessment of own knowledge and experience in the field of innovation for the development of the company	Low or medium	0.89	0.75	0.97	10.16	7;119	< <b>0.001</b>	8
	Good or very good	0.86	0.75	0.94	9.95	17;289	< <b>0.001</b>	18
All experts		0.87	0.79	0.93	9.80	25;245	< <b>0.001</b>	26

*Annotation.* *r<sub>ICC</sub>* – intraclass correlation; 95%*CL* – 95% confidence interval; *F* – *F* stat; *df* – degrees of freedom; *p* – statistical significance; *n* – number of people.

Source: authors' own elaboration.

Both in the subgroups and the entire group of subjects, a statistically significant agreement in the expert assessments was obtained ( $p < 0.05$ ). A high degree of agreement among the experts was obtained ( $0.7 < r_{ICC} < 0.9$ ) both among the total number of subjects and in the calculations performed on the subgroups. After division by position, it was noticed that, among the specialists, the highest degree of agreement was obtained, within the very high agreement ( $0.9 < r_{ICC}$ ). On the other hand, for the management staff, although it was still within the limits of high agreement, it had a lower value than the other examined intra-class correlations. In addition, its lower limit, which was the only one to reach the average level ( $0.5 < r_{ICC} < 0.7$ ). In the analyses conducted according to the assessment of one's own knowledge and experience in the field of innovation for the company's development, both intra-class correlations reached the same level (correlations with a high consistency).

The next step was conducting an analysis of the Spearman's rho test in order to check whether there was a relationship between the assessment of one's own knowledge and experience relating to innovation in the company and the importance of the motivational factors for introducing such innovation. The results are shown in Table 5.

The analysis showed only a statistically significant correlation between the assessment of one's own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the company and the motivation to introduce innovation due to a minimisation of operating costs. The correlation was at a moderate level and had a positive direction. The higher the respondents assessed their own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the company, the more important it was for them to minimise operating costs when introducing innovation. For the remaining types of motivation, no statistically significant correlation was observed.



Table 5. The relationship between the breadth of one's own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the enterprise and the importance of individual reasons for implementing innovation

Variable	Assessment of own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the company	
	<i>rho</i> Spearman's	<i>p</i>
Development of the enterprise – qualitative change of activity, improvement of the image	0.31	0.082
Pressure / expectations from customers / contractors / business partners	-0.12	0.528
Focus on increasing the efficiency of processes/resources	0.26	0.151
Opportunity to stand out in the market through innovation	0.08	0.677
Including innovative activity in the company's strategy	0.06	0.737
The greater number of competitors	0.05	0.797
Implementation of the company's strategy	0.27	0.131
Emerging technological and organisational opportunities	0.23	0.211
Minimisation of operating costs	0.39	<b>0.035</b>
Creating the image of a modern company that participates in technological and economic development	0.09	0.634
Barriers limiting revenues	0.05	0.774
Globalisation and mixing of consumer cultures	-0.24	0.228
Focus on rationalisation of management in the organisation	0.24	0.203
Increasing competition in terms of the selection on offer	-0.16	0.413
Changes in the sphere of consumption (e.g. changing consumption patterns)	0.02	0.916
Diversification of products or markets	-0.02	0.920
Low level of consumer loyalty	-0.27	0.160
Low market transparency, low consumer awareness of products	-0.07	0.703

Source: authors' own elaboration.

### 4.3. Impact of the effects of innovation implementation on the development of enterprises

In contrast, in the analysis of the importance of the individual effects of implementing innovation in enterprises, a similar scale was used: from 1 to 5 (where 1 meant a limited impact and 5 a significant impact). The experts could indicate more than one answer, and failure to select a given factor meant that it had no impact. The most



important effects of implementing innovation included development of the enterprise (average 4.19, median 4 and 40.63% of the highest scores in the structure of responses), then improving the quality of products and services (average 3.78, median 4 and 31.35% of the highest scores), as well as improving the quality of customer service (average 3.75, median 4 and 28.13% of the highest scores) (see Table 6).

Table 6. Effects of innovation introduced in the company (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means a limited impact and 5 means a significant impact)

Effects of innovation introduced in the company	Average	Median
Improving the quality of customer service	3.75	4.00
Improvement of organisation and working conditions	3.44	4.00
Better adaptation to customer requirements	3.53	4.00
Enterprise development	4.19	4.00
Increasing work efficiency	3.66	4.00
Increasing the quality of products and services	3.78	4.00
Employment growth	2.28	2.50
Decrease in employment	2.38	3.00
Increase in market share/improvement of position	3.53	4.00
Increase in sales	3.50	4.00
Reduction of costs in the enterprise	3.28	3.50

Source: authors' own elaboration.

Table 7. Compatibility of expert assessments regarding the effects of introducing innovation in the enterprises

		<i>r<sub>icc</sub></i>	95% <i>CL</i>		<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i>
			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>				
Position	Specialist	0.86	0.72	0.95	8.37	13;130	< <b>0.001</b>	14
	Management	0.28	-0.32	0.73	1.47	11;110	0.152	12
Assessment of own knowledge and experience in the field of innovation for the development of the company	Low and medium	0.87	0.68	0.97	9.73	7;70	< <b>0.001</b>	8
	Good and very good	0.64	0.36	0.84	3.08	17;170	< <b>0.001</b>	18
All experts		0.79	0.64	0.89	5.55	25;250	< <b>0.001</b>	26

Annotation. *r<sub>ICC</sub>* – intraclass correlation; 95%*CL* – 95% confidence interval; *F* – *F* stat; *df* – degrees of freedom; *p* – statistical significance; *n* – number of people.

Source: authors' own elaboration.



Next the intraclass correlations were calculated for the assessments concerning the effect of the introduced innovation on the functioning of the enterprise. Again, the analysis was performed both for all the respondents and broken down by their position, as well as an assessment of their own knowledge of and experience in the field of innovation in enterprises. The results are presented in Table 7.

In the analysis performed for all experts, a large, statistically significant agreement was obtained in the assessment of the effects of the introduced innovation. However, its lower limit was at a medium level. Among the specialists, the experts' agreement was at the level of high agreement, and the upper limit of the confidence interval exceeded the value of very high agreement. On the other hand, among the management staff, no statistically significant consistency was noticed among the respondents' assessments, which was confirmed by the very low strength of the intraclass correlation and the confidence interval exceeding the value of 0. After the division into the assessment of own knowledge and experience in the field of innovation for the development of the company, statistically significant intra-class correlations were obtained. Among those with medium and low scores, there was a high agreement with the confidence interval between average agreement (lower bound) and very high agreement (upper bound). On the other hand, people who assessed that they had good or very good knowledge and experience obtained agreement at the medium level, and despite high agreement at the upper limit of the confidence interval, a disturbingly low lower limit of weak strength was obtained.

Table 8. The relationship between the breadth of one's own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the commercial organisation and the strength of the impact of the introduced innovation on the functioning of the enterprise

Variable	Assessment of own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the company	
	<i>rho</i> Spearman's	<i>p</i>
Improving the quality of customer service	-0.05	0.809
Improvement of organisation and working conditions	-0.21	0.266
Better adaptation to customer requirements	-0.07	0.702
Enterprise development	0.08	0.669
Increasing work efficiency	0.01	0.975
Increasing the quality of products and services	0.09	0.607
Employment growth	0.18	0.347
Decrease in employment	0.04	0.827
Increase in market share/improvement of position	0.28	0.116
Increase in sales	0.00	0.990
Reduction of costs in the enterprise	0.24	0.204

Source: authors' own elaboration.



In the next stage, an analysis was performed using Spearman's rho test in order to check whether there was a relationship between the assessment of one's own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the company and assessment of the impact of the introduced innovation on specific areas of the company's operations. The results are presented in Table 8.

There was no statistically significant correlation between the assessment of one's own knowledge and experience regarding innovation in the company and assessment of the impact of such innovation on the functioning of the enterprise. This result concerned all the examined areas of the company's operations.

#### **4.4. The relationship between innovation and enterprise development**

The experts were also asked about the relationship between the phenomena of innovation and development in the commercial organisation. An analysis was carried out and a summary of the collected opinions on the indicated issues was prepared, as follows:

- Innovation is a key element of a commercial organisation's development. The implementation of innovative solutions enables an increase in competitiveness, an improvement in the quality of services/products, a reduction in costs and a strengthening of position in the market.
- Innovation makes it possible to maintain a competitive position in the market and to create the company's identity.
- Introducing innovation results in an increase in operational efficiency, adaptation to market changes, as well as stimulation of employees' creativity and commitment. An innovation culture and a strategy based on innovation are essential for the long-term development of a commercial organisation. In turn, a lack of innovation may lead to a weakening of the company's position in the market.
- Investments in innovation contribute to the development of a commercial organisation, but the current geopolitical situation and a decline in consumption may affect the effectiveness of any investments made.
- Process and product innovation has a significant impact on the company's profitability and financial results. The redistribution of profits for development through innovation can contribute to further development of a commercial organisation.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

Referring to the cyclical research by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) entitled Monitoring the innovativeness of Polish enterprises. The latest publication presents the results from 2022 on the state of innovation in Polish enter-



prises and the factors shaping it. This quantitative study was conducted on a nationwide representative sample of 1,787 commercial organisations. It should be noted that from the point of view of the analysed issues, the effects of innovative activity on enterprises are of particular importance. In the cited study, the most frequently indicated result of innovation was the general development of the enterprise (answers given as 'rather yes' and 'definitely yes' accounted for 90.8%) (PARP, 2022).

Another study by Lemańska-Majdzik (2016), conducted in 2016 on a group of 250 enterprises (which was not a representative sample), aimed to assess development on the basis of specific measures and the level of innovation in enterprises in the SME sector operating in southern Poland (Silesian Voivodeship). This also revealed there had been significant innovation to stimulate development. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that in the case of 80% of enterprises in the SME sector, there was development after the introduction of innovation (including 50% of commercial organisations that developed significantly in the last 3 years of operation) (Lemańska-Majdzik, 2016).

In turn, Nowacki (2010) conducted research relating to the impact of the use of innovative solutions in selected areas of management on the competitiveness of the enterprise (carried out at the University of Finance and Management in Warsaw). The research sample consisted of 608 enterprises operating in Poland, representing the production, service and trade industries, of various sizes, scales of operation and location. The study was conducted in 2009. It was shown that the development of the enterprise became an important stimulator of increasing interest in innovation in over 37% of the enterprises. It was of particular importance in large commercial organisations with an international scale of operations covering many foreign markets (Nowacki, 2010).

However, as pointed out by Yachmeneva and Vol's'ka (2014), the innovativeness of enterprises is complex and reflects their ability to update through the development and implementation of new ideas, as well as the transfer of ideas from the outside. It is also the innovative potential itself, which is broadly understood as a combination of scientific, technical, technological, infrastructural, financial, legal, cultural and other possibilities ensuring the implementation of innovation. In this approach, innovation becomes a mandatory element of business activity for enterprises and is the basic driving force and condition for their development.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

In the knowledge-based economy, the competitiveness of enterprises depends on the innovation they introduce, which is the result of the impact of many factors both within the commercial organisation and in its environment. These factors include the development of science, the implementation of research and development works, the use of new techniques and technologies, the commercialisation of new products,



as well as the restructuring and improvement of management and production processes. Innovation should not be perceived as an end in itself, but as a comprehensive set of measures aimed at increasing the efficiency of management, building a strong competitive position and achieving economic benefits, and thus stimulating the development of the commercial organisation.

Providing answers to formulated research problems. With respect to RQ1: What are the reasons for implementing innovation in enterprises (based on expert opinion)?, it can be seen that the most important reasons for implementing innovation in enterprises, according to the experts, include company development, a focus on increasing process/resource efficiency, and the opportunity to stand out in the market through innovation.

Referring to the next question, RQ2: What are the effects of implementing innovation in enterprises (based on expert opinion)?, the research results indicated that the significant effects of implementing innovation in enterprises, as identified by the experts, include the development of the enterprise itself, improvement of product and service quality, and enhanced customer service quality.

For the last question, RQ3: What is the relationship between innovation and development (based on expert opinion)?, the experts agreed that innovation is a key driver of development in commercial organisations. They enhance competitiveness, improve services/products, reduce costs, and strengthen market position. Innovation culture and strategy are crucial for long-term development, and a lack of innovation can weaken a company's market position. Investments in innovation contribute to development, but external factors such as geopolitics and consumption patterns can influence their effectiveness. Process and product innovation has a significant impact on profitability and financial results, contributing to further development.

Based on the research conducted, the role of innovation in a commercial organisation can be described in the following relationships:

1. The development of an enterprise is considered to be one of the most important reasons for implementing innovation (the experts assessed its importance at an average value of 4.13, with the largest share of the highest ratings – at a level of 53.13%). The analysis of intra-class correlations showed the consistency of the experts' answers to questions about the importance of motivational factors. Both in the general group of respondents, as well as in the breakdown by position and one's own assessment of knowledge and experience, a statistically significant consistency of the experts' assessments was obtained.
2. A statistically significant correlation was also determined between the assessment of the experts' own knowledge and experience and the importance of the motivational factor consisting of minimising operating costs. This means that people evaluating their knowledge and experience at a higher level appreciate the importance of minimising costs as a motivation for introducing innovation.
3. Enterprise development was recognized as the most important effect of implementing innovation. The experts assessed its impact at an average value of 4.19 (with the largest share of the highest ratings), which indicates the importance of



this factor. The analysis of intra-class correlations showed an agreement of expert assessments regarding the effects of the innovation introduced.

4. Spearman's rho test analysis did not show a statistically significant correlation between the assessment of the experts' own knowledge and experience and assessment of the impact of the introduced innovation on various areas of the company's operations.

As a result, the role of innovation in creating enterprise development is extremely complex. On the one hand, innovation is part of this phenomenon, but on the other hand, it is the result of this development. This confirms its key importance not only for the survival and continuation of the business, but also for achieving success in the market.

Referring to the limitations of the research, it should be noted that it was conducted on the basis of focus group interviews, which are characterised by the high quality of the results obtained and relate to the involvement of experts who have knowledge and experience in a specific field of knowledge. However, for a more complete picture and broader possibilities of generalising the results, it would be worth conducting a study on a representative sample, or at least a larger research sample, which is related to a particular industry or size of commercial organisation. It would then be possible to model the results obtained. In the future, the authors plan to carry out research on a larger sample of experts, which will enable verification of the current results, as well as further expand the scope of scientific knowledge and describing the economic reality and creating development recommendations for commercial organisations.

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## ZNACZENIE INNOWACJI W ROZWOJU PRZEDSIĘBIORSTW

### Streszczenie

Innowacje stanowią o zmianach funkcjonowania przedsiębiorstwa. Są inicjatywą, która może przyczynić się nie tylko do przetrwania, ale osiągnięcia przez organizację przewagi konkurencyjnej, która przełoży się na sukces rynkowy. Wskazane efekty są powiązane ze zjawiskiem rozwoju organizacji, który charakteryzuje się ogromną złożonością przejawów. Zarówno innowacja (eksperyment), jak i rozwój (zmiany jakościowe) są powiązane ze zmianą, transformacją, nowym sposobem funkcjonowania. Dlatego też istotne jest identyfikowanie i wyjaśnianie relacji pomiędzy tymi stanami w organizacji. Celem badania była analiza znaczenia innowacji w rozwoju przedsiębiorstw. Na etapie gromadzenia danych wykorzystano następujące metody badawcze: *desk research* i wywiady eksperckie focusowe. Natomiast do analizy wyników badań wykorzystano elementy statystyki opisowej, współczynnik korelacji międzysektorowej (do oceny zgodności opinii ekspertów) oraz współczynnik korelacji rho Spearmana. Badanie zostało przeprowadzone w maju i czerwcu 2023 r. Grupę badawczą stanowiło 32 ekspertów. Na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań można wskazać, że rozwój przedsiębiorstw (postrzegany jako zmiana jakościowa działalności, poprawa wizerunku) stanowił najważniejszą przyczynę wdrażania innowacji w przedsiębiorstwach. W całej grupie badanych uzyskano istotną statystycznie zgodność ocen sędziowskich. Jednocześnie to innowacje są postrzegane przez ekspertów jako kluczowy element rozwoju organizacji, pozwalający zwiększyć konkurencyjność, poprawić jakość, obniżyć koszty i umożliwić adaptację do zmian rynkowych. Prezentowane wyniki badań wzbogacają wiedzę o potencjalne innowacji w kontekście rozwoju przedsiębiorstwa. Ustalenie przyczynowo-skutkowej relacji może pozwalać na skuteczniejsze pobudzanie rozwoju organizacji poprzez położenie nacisku na działalność innowacyjną, co w szerszym kontekście będzie przyczyniać się do zwiększenia innowacyjności polskich przedsiębiorstw.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rozwój przedsiębiorstw, innowacyjność przedsiębiorstw, przyczyny wdrażania innowacji, efekty innowacji w organizacji

