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THE ESSENCE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE SME SECTOR IN POLAND

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Abstract. The main objective of the article is an attempt to identify/identify the elements of entrepreneurial management, which are the most important for SME sector enterprises in Poland. The author will also try to indicate the key dimensions of entrepreneurial management in the surveyed entities and the dominant behaviors related to the concept of entrepreneurship among the owners of the surveyed companies. In addition to the literature analysis, as another research method, the author chose a survey in the form of a structured interview with business owners - the survey was conducted in 2020 in 200 purposively selected enterprises of the SME sector, which are based in Poland. After analyzing the literature on the subject and the results of the conducted survey, bearing in mind, of course, its pilot character, the author specified 4 dimensions of entrepreneurial management: competencies of decision-makers (management), entrepreneurial management practices, entrepreneurial culture in a given enterprise and innovation orientation/direction. According to the author, they form a construct of entrepreneurial management and allow to assess the level of enterprise development (direction and pace of changes) depending on selected factors of local and institutional environment, internal factors, level of achieved financial results, sources of financing.

Keywords: entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial attitudes; entrepreneurial management; entrepreneurial orientation

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1. Introduction

Rapid changes in the economic environment of modern businesses, which are compounded by unique and large-scale technological advances, ubiquitous globalization, or global crises such as the global COVID 19 pandemic, are causing massive shifts in economic markets. In the 21st century, in the face of ever new challenges, the development of entrepreneurship has become an essential condition for the sustainable development of any country. So, who has the chance to succeed? Which enterprises will survive, and which will disappear from the economic map?

According to the author of the article, much depends on people - from owners to the staff of enterprises - on their attitudes. Active people are characterized by initiative, i.e., ability to initiate actions, come up with ideas. These people are also creative - capable of thinking creatively, breaking through stereotypes, and finding solutions that were previously unknown or applied in other situations.

In an environment where companies must constantly seek out opportunities, it is therefore important for them to have an entrepreneurial orientation, defined as the degree to which an organization is entrepreneurial with respect to strategy and resources. It is also one of its few characteristics that can account for competitive advantage (Semrau and all, 2016).

However, for the purpose of this article, the entrepreneurship that the author will be showing should be limited to the statement that business owners and their employees must apply in the process of launching and operating their organization, only such skills and knowledge that guarantee high growth of the potential of a given enterprise. This means that the contemporary view of entrepreneurial management differs from traditional operational management in the area of five key management issues: strategic orientation, resource commitment, resource control, management structure and growth opportunities (Hisrich and all, 2019; Snieska and all, 2020).

Hence, the aim of the study is to identify/identify the elements of entrepreneurial management that are most relevant to SME companies in Poland. The realization of the adopted objective will be achieved through a literature review presenting the results of research work on the nature of the relationship between entrepreneurial management and the development of a given enterprise and its ability to build competitive advantage. However, the most important element of the research work was to conduct a survey, (in 2020) in 200 purposively selected SME enterprises that are based in Poland.

2. Theoretical background

In a group of people, we can easily observe that to a given situation each person reacts in his/her own way. Usually, this type of reaction is repeated - we call it an attitude. In psychological terms, by attitude we mean certain specific, constantly repeated patterns according to which an individual feels, thinks, and acts. From this we conclude that attitudes consist of emotions, thoughts, and predispositions to act. Attitudes can change - for example, when influenced by someone in authority or trusted by those around them. A change in attitudes can also occur because of a long-term educational process, as well as the influence of the media.

In contacts with other people, if you want to achieve your goals, you can neither be overly submissive nor aggressive. Success is ensured by an indirect attitude, called assertive. Professional work, the implementation of ambitious projects, require the display of initiative and creativity. To be in accordance with one's conscience and prevailing norms, an entrepreneurial person should demonstrate responsibility and honesty. One of the conditions of assertive behavior is also self-acceptance, which causes that a person (Semrau and all, 2016):

- likes and respects himself - approves of his appearance, his tribe and nationality, takes care of his health;
- believes in his/her own abilities - values his/her knowledge and skills;
- consistently fulfills assigned tasks;
- is aware of his/her faults and works on them;
- wants to develop and improve.

Self-acceptance helps to feel more confident. Assertive people are able to defend their rights in a decisive manner, without violating the rights of others. Assertiveness is an attitude being a compromise between excessive submission and aggression. An assertive person does not feel ashamed when he/she does not know or understand something, but asks appropriate questions without hesitation. They are willing to help others, but can refuse to do favors when they cannot do them.

On the other hand, it is very important to be active - active people are characterized by initiative, that is, the ability to initiate action, come up with ideas. These people are also creative - able to think creatively, break stereotypes, and find solutions that have not been known before or applied in other situations. Initiative and creativity are associated with mastery of skills such as (De Clercq and all, 2009):

- the ability to define a problem and the ability to set goals and objectives;
- ability to find as many solutions to a problem as possible;
- ability to choose the best ideas;
- consistency in completing tasks.

To sum up, for all of us who would like to be perceived as entrepreneurial people, equally important is the readiness to take risks closely connected with responsibility and honesty. We know very well how big negative social consequences are caused by omnipresent corruption, which is, next to tax fraud and unfair competition, one of the most dangerous phenomena related to business activity on the market. And yet corruption is practically a manifestation of the lack of ethics of both the person who accepts benefits and the one who offers them. Responsibility and honesty should therefore characterize every person, and even more so an entrepreneur who cares about the welfare of his or her business.

Recent economic changes, which are intensified by progressive globalization, confirmed by the labour market research and the analysis of expectations of most employers, indicate new skills and attitudes, which are becoming more and more desirable in the XXI century, and which are usually appropriate for a few employees - knowledge workers.

However, this is not a very up-to-date issue, as new expectations concerning human resources were noticed by Polish employers already in the early 90s, at the beginning of the Polish transformation.

A. Maciejczyk (2018), former representative of the Confederation of Polish Employers, pointed out that in the face of the increasing participation of employees in management processes, they are expected to have creative thinking expressed in the ability to plan, analyze and evaluate the results of their own work, responsibility, independence and the ability to draw conclusions from their own successes and failures, as well as continuous learning. He also stressed the importance of entrepreneurship, both of employees and business owners.

In research on the labor market, when asked about the characteristics of the ideal candidate for a job, increasing their attractiveness regardless of the job position, employers most often indicated (Jobs for People, 2019):

- communicativeness and ability to work in a group;
- activity and initiative;
- independence and ability to organize their own work;
- involvement in their work, manifested among others by the compatibility of the performed tasks with their passion, or appropriate adjustment of their predispositions and experience to the position;
- flexibility, i.e. ability to adapt to changes and readiness to continuous learning and improvement.

Based on the study by B. Minkiewicz and P. Bielecki (2017) we can rank the most important skills along with knowledge desired in employees in the modern labor market:

- problem-solving skills;
- cognitive skills and theoretical knowledge;
- communication skills;
- teamwork skills;
- professional - practical knowledge.

Interpersonal skills and personality predispositions necessary for a job candidate were also identified, namely (Dietl & Sapijaszka, 2019):

- communication and teamwork skills;
- creativity and openness to experience;
- independence in making decisions in the area of competence resulting from the scope of responsibilities;
- analytical skills;
- willingness to learn;
- availability
- motivation and enthusiasm
- resourcefulness
- honesty;
- regularity.

In turn, G. Drydon and J. Vos (2003) believe that in the modern world, where everyone has the opportunity and should be able to manage their own life, the set of necessary skills should include: creative problem solving, critical thinking, leadership skills, ability to see the big picture, self-confidence. They allow one to take full part in deciding the future of the whole even society and to plan one's own life in times of great changes. In turn, W. Rabczuk (2018) points out that the basic requirements of the modern world of work are: competence, creativity, adaptability, love of contacts and work in teams, transfer of skills, independence and the ability to cope with unpredictable conditions.

This type of image of a modern employee is also reflected in job offers formulated by employers. A typical set of characteristics appearing in job advertisements for various positions is commitment, initiative and creativity.

In summary, we can say that the knowledge related to the above-mentioned competences concerns mainly the identification of available opportunities for personal and professional activities, and the recognition of broadly understood issues constituting the context of work and life. The necessary skills relate mainly to the proactive management of various undertakings (projects), the ability to work, both individually and in groups, and to identify and assess one's own strengths and weaknesses. An entrepreneurial attitude is characterized by initiative, activity, independence and innovation both in personal and social life and in the workplace.

Shaping entrepreneurial attitudes of students is one of the proven educational strategies in Western Europe and the U.S. that foster good preparation of students to meet the challenges of the modern world. It should be implemented basically from the beginning of the education process. Shaping of entrepreneurial attitudes is not isolated in the form of one or several subjects. It refers to integrated action of teachers and the school as a whole, regardless of subjects or the level of education. Entrepreneurial education is not directly aimed at preparing entrepreneurs - owners and managers of companies. Its main objective is to stimulate the development of entrepreneurial thinking and acting skills as well as to shape attitudes conducive to taking such actions. Such actions, on the other hand, may be reflected in a certain level of involvement in the work situation, in rationalization ideas, improvements, initiative and innovativeness. A person demonstrating an entrepreneurial attitude goes beyond the scheme of his or her own job and is able to recognize the interdependencies between his or her tasks and other jobs and has a reflective attitude (Zajac and all, 2010).

Therefore, an entrepreneurial person can be defined as a person who (Gibb, 2016):

1. Is a pioneer, taking on new and non-routine activities.
2. Likes adventure and acting under uncertainty.
3. Thinks and acts independently, is courageous and optimistic.
4. Attaches importance to own development.
5. Is self-confident, aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses.

6. Is ambitious, shows initiative in action.
7. Is responsible in work and activities performed.
8. Is creative and persuasive.

People who possess the above-mentioned characteristics are often referred to in the literature as intrapersonal entrepreneurs - this means that they manifest the entrepreneurial activity developed in salaried employees in companies. This is characterized by their demonstration of commitment, creativity and innovation beyond the standard requirements for the job.

In addition, it is worth noting that entrepreneurial education assumes that each student has a certain innate level of entrepreneurship that can be raised in the educational process. However, the level of entrepreneurial behavior in individuals varies. Some are more creative while others are more analytical. Some are more self-confident and open-minded, and cope better with unknown situations and uncertainty than others. However, it is possible to stimulate the development of entrepreneurial thinking and action by taking appropriate educational measures aimed at developing the skills and qualities inherent in an entrepreneurial person (Cotton, 2016).

Thus, moving to the essence of entrepreneurial management, it is worth starting with the concept of entrepreneurial orientation of the organization. The most adequate definition of the organization's orientation in the context of this study can be taken as the opinion on this subject by P. Won, Y. Ho and E. Autio (2005), who argue that it is a set of particularly important criteria that serve decision-making at all levels of management, as well as principles that guide the conduct of employees in their operational activities.

However, despite the intensity of scientific inquiry and the many studies carried out, the term entrepreneurial orientation has not yet lived to see a uniform definition, there are many in the literature. Let us start with the 1970s when H. Mintzberg (1973) stated that entrepreneurial strategy making is determined by the active search for new opportunities and dramatic leaps forward in the face of uncertainty. In the 1980s, a trend emerged, led by D. Miller and P.H. Friesen, (1982) who believed that entrepreneurial firms are those that boldly and regularly innovate while taking significant risks in their market and product strategies. In the nineties G.R. Merz and M.H. Sauber (1995) began to treat the entrepreneurial orientation as a degree of proactivity (aggressiveness) of the company in a selected market segment and the willingness to innovate and create new offers. At the beginning of the 21st century, the opinion emerged that entrepreneurial orientation is the ability of a company to take risks, be innovative, proactive, autonomous and aggressive towards competitors, which leads to changes in the organization or market position (Voss and all, 2005). Nowadays, the concept of entrepreneurial orientation is considered to encompass a set of distinct but related behaviors that have characteristics of innovation, proactivity, competitive aggressiveness, risk-taking, and autonomy (Pearce and all, 2015).

Analyzing the above-mentioned definitions, we can see that five dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation are most often mentioned: risk-taking, innovation, proactiveness, aggressive competitiveness and autonomy. According to the author, it is also worth noting that the multidimensionality of this orientation of the organization is closely related to the interdependencies between the various dimensions - its internal construction. And, as J. Karpacz (2016) claims, in the conceptualizations and operationalizations of the orientation there are two main methodological approaches clocking the entrepreneurial orientation as a one-dimensional or multidimensional construct, both of which assume that although there may be more than one dimension, they differ in their assumptions about the interdependencies between the distinguished dimensions.

However, there remains the issue of defining the term entrepreneurial management, which also raises many controversies. At the beginning of this road, we must note that traditional research on organizational entrepreneurship has focused mainly on the problem of launching new enterprises. After all, for a newly

established company the biggest barrier is precisely the lack of experience, that is: the lack of established rules, procedures and organizational culture, in which the employees are able to find goals and ways to achieve it.

On the other hand, for a company that has been operating on the market for many years, the problem is directly proportional - the obstacle to development is the practice established for decades. And here the key word is "entrepreneurship", when on the other side, in a company without seniority, this word is "management". However, regardless of whether we are talking about a large company with many years of experience, which can boast of its achievements for years, or about a small, family business, which is just taking its first steps in the market, the main determinant of its success is precisely entrepreneurship.

Consequently, we can assume that two premises are responsible for the emergence and spread of the concept of entrepreneurial management:

- social aspects related to the motivation of employees who strive for independence, self-realization - they want to satisfy these needs, to have more decision-making freedom and responsibility in the organization;
- the search by managers for sources of competitive advantage in new managerial and organizational methods and techniques - the constant detection, reaction, and sometimes the formation of new opportunities and the implementation of appropriate changes.

Thus, entrepreneurial management can be considered a set of opportunity-based management practices that can help an organization maintain or gain a key position and contribute to the creation of value for it as well as for society (Stevenson, 1983). In turn, D.L. Day (2002) described this concept as the totality of management activities that are based on making decisions on the development of innovations on the basis of new or differently configured already possessed resources in different organizational spheres.

To sum up, according to the author of the article, entrepreneurial management in the XXI century is, first of all, the ability to flexibly adapt to changing conditions of the environment - counteracting threats and, more importantly, using emerging opportunities and chances to become more and more competitive. It is also a constant readiness to solve emerging problems in a creative way and to take key decisions for the company at an adapted pace to changing economic determinants. And, of course, developing such behaviors among the entire staff of the company in order to jointly create what is most important for each company - a unique value proposition for customers, which will perfectly respond to their needs.

3. Research Methodology and data

The main basis for the conclusions briefly described in the chapter (described in detail by the author of the article below) was a study involving the assessment of elements of entrepreneurial management in the sector of micro, small and medium enterprises - based on the opinions of entrepreneurs and analysis of actions taken. The main objective of the survey was an attempt to recognize/identify elements of entrepreneurial management, which are the most important for enterprises in the SME sector in Poland. The author has also tried to indicate the key dimensions of entrepreneurial management in the surveyed entities and the dominant behaviours related to the concept of entrepreneurship among the owners of the surveyed enterprises. Author had to apply the following set of research methods:

1. Analysis of the literature on the subject - to systematize the language of concepts related to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial introduction and entrepreneurial management.
2. Questionnaire in the form of a structured interview with business owners - the main element of research work. The author conducted research in 2020 in 200 intentionally selected enterprises from the SME sector, which are based in Poland and were established in the last 5 years (Table 1). The information and opinions obtained in this way referred to the current situation of the enterprise.

Unfortunately, due to financial and organisational limitations, the collected sample does not have the characteristics of the entire population (it should be 72 thousand entities). Therefore, the presented research results are not a complete set - they are the basis for extending the research process in the future - it is a pilot study for now. The author created the questionnaire himself. He chose entrepreneurs as respondents, because they have the greatest knowledge about their companies. The author used the evaluation method to determine the elements of entrepreneurial management and actions taken in this area to build a competitive position on the market, in the face of new economic challenges. The author used the evaluation method to determine the determinants of entrepreneurship development and actions taken in this area, in the face of new economic challenges. Of course, the author agrees with the opinion that evaluation is always in some way a subjective method. However, it is difficult to find a more objective research tool that would be simple enough to induce respondents to participate in the survey. In turn, the author used Statistica version 12. and a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to carry out statistical calculations.

Table 1. Description of the group of respondents

companies					
200					
size					
micro		small		average	
56		53		91	
kind of					
business activities		ltd.		partnership	
98		80		32	
life span					
up to 1 year		2 to 4 years		4 to 5 years	
63		97		40	
industry					
maritime	food	construction	transport	commercial	advisory
30	25	39	36	39	30
entrepreneur					
200					
sex					
women			Men		
89			111		
Age					
up to 30		from 31 to 50		over 51	
25		113		62	
Education					
professional		average		higher	
21		61		188	

Source: own study

4. Results

In the first part of the research, based on the result of in-depth analysis of available literature that deals with entrepreneurial management, the author extracted and identified 9, in his opinion, key dimensions - they are described in detail in table 2.

Table 2. Key dimensions of entrepreneurial management in polish enterprises

No	Entrepreneurial management dimension	Description of dimension of entrepreneurial management
1	Performance orientation-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learning organisation - open organization - perpetual striving for efficiency improvement - the most important are effects, not rules and principles - treating a company as an innovator
2	Resource orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - efficient use of resources - resource redundancy - diversification of resources - searching for new resources - combining existing resources - aligning resources with innovative activities - minimising resources - optimising the use of resources - easy access to key resources, which are not in possession of the company - lack of problems with using resources dispersed in the organization - maintaining balance between tangible and intangible resources
3	Strategic orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - taking advantage of opportunities - building a market position on the basis of exploiting opportunities rather than the possessed resources - having and implementing a vision and mission
4	Orientation to innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of anxiety while introducing changes/ open treatment of changes/ change is an opportunity and not a threat - openness and receptiveness to innovations - investment in innovation
5	Orientation to opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more focus on action than on plan - quick implementation of needed changes - focus on action - taking advantage of opportunities, regardless of the level of resources - involvement of employees at all levels (not only at managerial level) in the process of seeking and exploiting opportunities
6	Growth orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rapid growth is the main goal of the company - readiness to take risks in development activities - failure to seize development opportunities is a missed opportunity
7	Entrepreneurial culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the employee is an intrapartner - delegate authority and responsibility to employees - create an entrepreneurial climate - encourage creative activities - partnership system - no barriers between the employee and the manager - open communication - management through conflict
8	Remuneration philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reward for performance - a bonus system proportional to participation in the creation of added value of the company - rewarding creativity and entrepreneurship - use of innovative incentive and bonus methods

9	Management structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flat organisational structure - no hierarchical levels too extensive - activities based on informal relationships - small working groups - combining them into project teams - decentralisation of authority - flexibility in action - different management styles - strong emphasis on employees' self-responsibility and self-control - education replaces training - quick response to changes in the environment - sensitivity to customers' needs - high autonomy of employees
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Source: own study

As we can see, already after the first analysis, identified key dimensions of entrepreneurial management are primarily relevant to large companies, which have complex organizational structures and cover most of the market. Their specifics are completely different from those of smaller organizations, which have much smaller resources at their disposal, and thus build their competitive advantage on the market in a completely different way. The author of the article focused on clarifying this issue in the second part of the research.

In this part of the study, the author, attempted to find out from the group of respondents what is important to them when running their own business. In this way, the author attempted to detail the key dimensions of entrepreneurship for the SME sector from the previously identified dimensions for the entire group of businesses. The prepared questions were developed based on the analysis of the descriptions of entrepreneurship management dimensions described in Table 2.

The first analysis of the incidence of entrepreneurial management dimensions focused on organizational culture and compensation philosophy (Table 3). Respondents were asked questions about, among other things, remuneration and motivation systems and about the human relations prevailing in their organizations.

Table 3. Elements of entrepreneurial culture and compensation philosophy identified by respondents

THE DIMENSION OF MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY			
Principles of evaluation and remuneration of employees			
	not important	important	very important
for work input	12%	41%	47%
for activity and effectiveness	9%	31%	60%
for creativity	8%	20%	72%
Motivation system used in the company			
coercive tools	23%	47%	30%
tools of encouragement	11%	31%	58%
persuasion tools	42%	32%	26%
Instruments of motivation			
base salary	8%	13%	79%
bonuses and allowances	13%	16%	71%
punishments, reprimands	82%	16%	2%
strict supervision	79%	14%	7%
additional benefits	5%	21%	74%
training	34%	37%	29%
team-building trips	67%	24%	19%

opportunity for promotion	82%	13%	5%
flexible working hours	30%	29%	41%
participation in management	2%	39%	59%
Entrepreneurial culture dimension			
responsibility of employees for achieving company objectives	78%	14%	8%
managers' trust in employees	9%	39%	52%
correct communication within the company	1%	21%	78%
encouraging employees to have an entrepreneurial attitude	2%	22%	76%
intensity of contacts between employees and their superiors	small	medium	high
	14%	69%	17%
nature of workers' contacts with their superiors	free	formal	very formalized
	87%	9%	4%

Source: own study

As we can see, the dimension of remuneration philosophy is practically insignificant in small enterprises, which focus strongly on creating an entrepreneurial culture. Remuneration is treated as "payment for work", which depends, for example, on seniority or on the position held, and not on the employee's contribution to the creation of value for the enterprise. The dimension of remuneration philosophy is practically absent - it is covered by the dimension of entrepreneurial culture, which manifests itself in the promotion of employees' creativity, because without it a company in the 21st century cannot compete in the market.

A similar situation occurred in the case of verification of entrepreneurial management dimensions of productivity orientation and growth orientation, which practically did not occur in the surveyed entities (Table 4). But the author of the article drew attention here to the importance attached by the respondents to the person of the manager, to his competence and skills. We can see that in each case the compliance of answers was close to 100%. This prompted the author to isolate a separate dimension of entrepreneurial management, only for the SME sector - competencies of decision-makers.

Table 4. Elements of performance orientation and culture growth indicated by respondents

PERFORMANCE ORIENTATION DIMENSION			
Forms of employee control			
	not important	important	very important
formalised	82%	5%	13%
partnership	13%	9%	78%
ongoing	10%	14%	76%
final	75%	15%	10%
Growth orientation dimension			
evaluation of the company's business model	82%	9%	9%
knowledge sharing among employees	64%	16%	18%
knowledge sharing among managers	5%	8%	87%
performance orientation	33%	34%	33%
managers helping their employees	4%	10%	86%
Growth orientation dimension			
interaction with other companies.	76%	4%	20%
cooperation with business support institutions	73%	7%	20%

Source: own study

The opinion of respondents to the management structure dimension did not change either, the components of which were mostly not indicated by respondents, except for issues related to management style (Table 5). Therefore, the author of the study decided to create a new dimension - dedicated to the SME sector - and call it entrepreneurial management practices. This is due to the fact that the owners of the enterprises that participated in the study strongly emphasized the necessity of partnership relations on the line manager - employee. They believed that only such an approach can ensure success on the market.

Table 5. Elements of the management structure dimension indicated by respondents

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE DIMENSION			
The way objectives are set within the company			
imposed by management	11%		
consulted with employees	34%		
jointly determined	55%		
Type of organizational structure			
matrix structure	15%		
linear structure	3%		
functional structure	1%		
no formalized structure	81%		
Management style (respondents could mark more than one answer)			
intuitive management	45%		
democratic style	77%		
autocratic style	12%		
technocratic style	69%		
management by delegation	82%		
leading by exception	83%		
entrepreneurial leadership	85%		
	not important	important	very important
Degree of formalization of plans	91%	6%	3%
Participation of subordinates in the decision-making process	9%	21%	70%
Employee training	43%	39%	18%

Source: own study

The situation related to the innovation orientation was quite different, as this dimension fits this type of enterprises like no other (Table 6). It shows that SME owners are aware of the importance of this type of activities in building competitive advantage and they strive to create more and more new solutions.

Table 6. Elements of innovation orientation indicated by respondents

INNOVATION ORIENTATION DIMENSION			
Approach to implementing innovations			
Based on current procedures	6%		
Top-down - management reports	45%		
Bottom-up - employee initiatives	49%		
Degree of assessment of the difficulty of implementing innovations			
very easy	1%		
easy	3%		
difficult	79%		
very difficult	16%		
not possible	1%		
	not important	important	very important
Necessity of increasing innovativeness of a company	9%	15%	76%
Impact of innovations on the financial result achieved	8%	19%	73%

Source: own study

While discussing this dimension, we must necessarily point out that out of 200 enterprises, only 5 indicated that they have not implemented and do not plan to implement any innovations in their structures. This information should be very encouraging for us, because it shows that companies from this sector know that in the XXI century only constant development guarantees success on the market.

The biggest surprise for the author of the article, was the fact that the dimensions: resource orientation, strategic orientation (this area was particularly neglected) and opportunity orientation are practically absent in this type of companies. In this case, the author asked questions such as:

- the company's orientation toward vision, mission, and strategic goals;
- planning horizon;
- the use of external sources of financing;
- the plan for the use of available resources;
- the company's attitude towards risk and change;
- knowledge storage and sharing.

In this situation, the author decided to omit these dimensions - he did not even try to create any additional one (affirmative answers oscillated in the area of 1-5%). This is probably the result of the fact that people managing smaller companies need to focus on what is now and what is important/strategic for their point of view.

On the other hand in the third part of the research the author decided to check which of the four key dimensions of entrepreneurial management for companies in the SME sector have the greatest influence on building a sustainable advantage in the market of this group of companies.

In their attempt to assess the possibilities of development of their own company, the respondents strongly emphasized three main areas of their activity: the level of sales, the portfolio of products/services and the sales market. What is important in their forecasts, they looked positively into the future - more than 70% of the respondents believed that they would increase their sales thanks to the extended portfolio (71%), and 69% of them were sure to increase their current sales market (Figure 1).

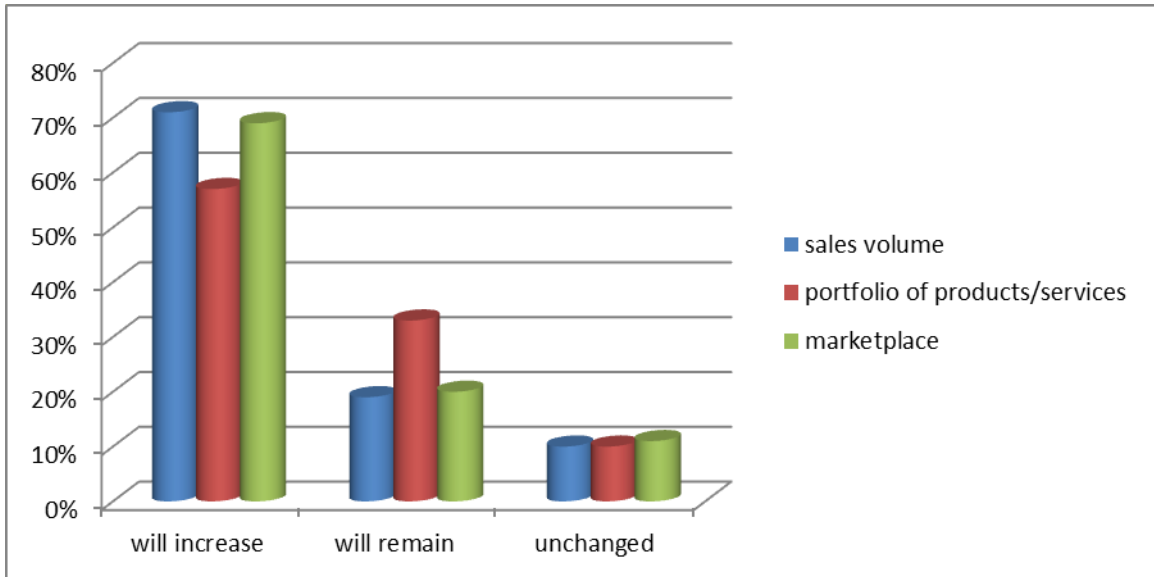


Figure 1 Assessment of the respondents' own business development opportunities

Source: own study

Such plans of the respondents are, of course, associated with the need for their companies to gain an advantage over their main competitors. They were to be helped by the advantages described in Figure 2. They put good atmosphere at work, employee loyalty, interpersonal relations and level of business experience in the first place. They considered the level of financial resources or creativity to be less important, but this cannot come as a surprise after previous data analysis.

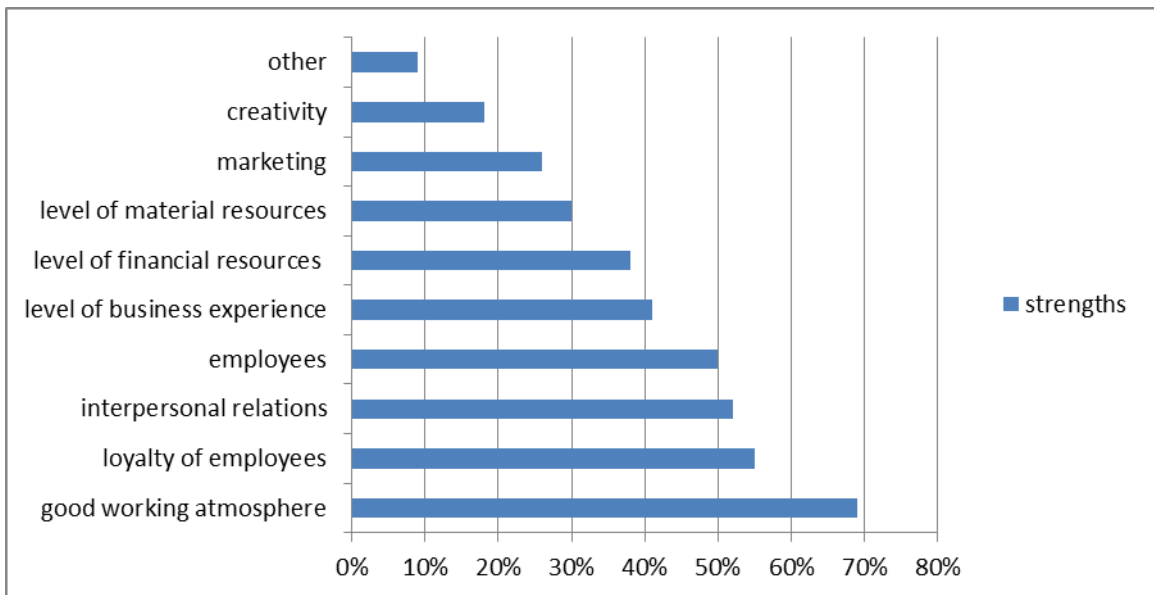


Figure 2. Strengths in building competitive position of the surveyed companies

Source: own study

In this part of the analysis of research results, the author decided to focus on the internal conditions of enterprise development, i.e. determinants related to the characteristics of enterprises, their management systems and actions taken by entrepreneurs. The obtained data and conclusions are certainly consistent with modern business models of enterprises, which in the era of knowledge-based economy, attach great importance to human capital, business cooperation and intense competitive competition. Taking into account the functioning of the surveyed enterprises in terms of the number of employees, served clients, the value of equity capital, the size of revenues, the author noted that the vast majority of respondents stated an improvement in the situation in their enterprises. Most people referred to the increase in the value of net revenues - for 72% of entities and to the improvement in the competitive position of entrepreneurs - 66% of entities.

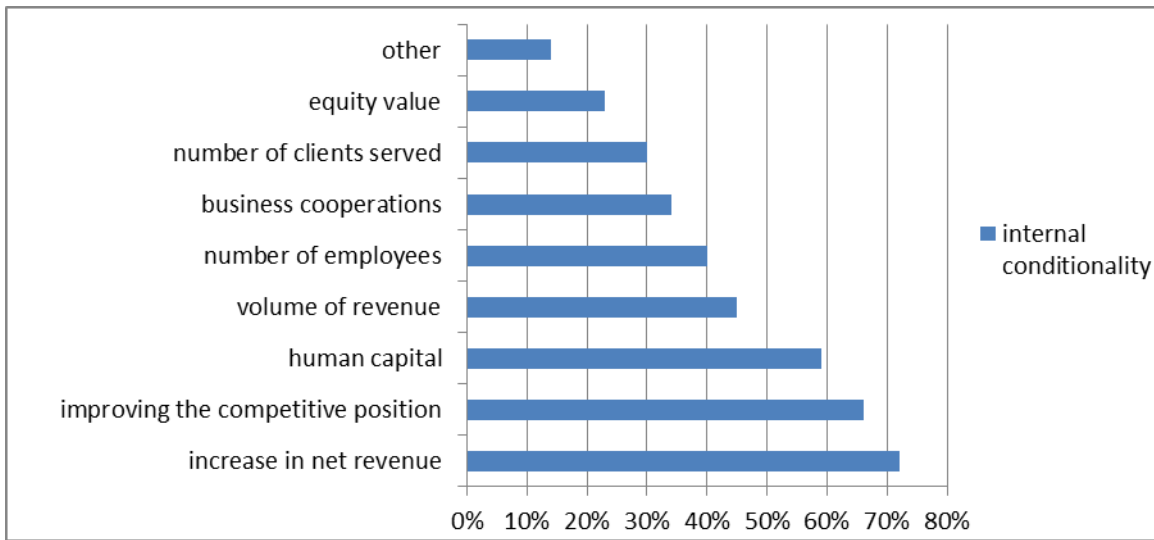


Figure 3. Conditions for internal development of enterprises

Source: own study

To sum up, if we want to evaluate the dimensions of entrepreneurial management in SME companies, first of all it is cooperation that bypasses existing structures and divisions. In many companies a very big problem is the separate functioning of people responsible for business and separately for technology. This effectively makes it difficult to take advantage of the opportunities presented by economic change. Of course, it is also necessary to have clear leadership that does not run away from difficult decisions and treats subordinates as partners. And most importantly, you need to identify your opportunities and develop strategies so you don't fall behind. After all, the key dimension of entrepreneurial management is not the technology itself, but the people who can use it effectively. But on the other hand, why is it so difficult for small businesses to grow? Are their owners/decision makers unable to use the potential of people as a weapon in the fight against new challenges? But are we forgetting the need for systemic solutions (as big companies do) - starting with changes in organizational structures and culture? These questions are undoubtedly the starting point for a full identification of the elements of entrepreneurial management, which should indicate the direction of development in the new, very difficult, economic conditions.

5. Discussion

In the XXI century, companies to gain a lasting competitive advantage must quickly respond to very intensive and unprecedented changes that occur in their environment. Entrepreneurial management, which as the author of the article wrote is a very broad, multifaceted, and interdisciplinary issue, is supposed to help them in this.

In scientific literature we can find many definitions of entrepreneurial management and entrepreneurial orientation, and we can also notice some evolution of views, which emphasize different aspects of them. In the case of entrepreneurial orientation, in the dimension of behavior, it is identified with the tendency to make strategic decisions that favor actions with uncertain consequences (Anderson and all, 2015). On the other hand, entrepreneurial management, in the behavioral dimension, means the constant willingness and ability to undertake creative and innovative solutions to a variety of problems, the ability to take advantage of opportunities and opportunities that arise, as well as flexible adaptation to changing operating conditions, creating value for customers and developing this type of behavior among staff (Mieszajkina, 2018). The author also assumed, due to one part of empirical research, that the development of the enterprise is an aggregate of its growth, development, competitive position, development intentions and the current balance of the enterprise, both in the material and social sense.

However, returning to the entrepreneurial management, which today is responsible not only to give the right hints in the development process, to stimulate knowledge transfer and diffusion. It is simultaneously supposed to support organizational learning and, as a consequence, lead to the development of dynamic capabilities. After all, nowadays, in building competitive advantage it is not only the bundle of resources that matters, but also the capabilities. In view of this, the mechanisms by which organizations can develop these capabilities and then reconfigure resources are important. This also confirms that dynamic capabilities, which are built on knowledge and linked to an entrepreneurial orientation, underpin the generation of new products, processes or services.

Currently, there is no fixed list of entrepreneurial management dimensions for enterprises - even less so for those in the SME sector. Their variability is due to the fact that different studies usually establish new factors that significantly determine their development and growth processes. An example of such a factor is the so-called entrepreneurial orientation, which is an aggregate of the desire to implement innovative solutions that refresh and improve the market offer, the ability to take risks in implementing unproven solutions and greater activity in exploiting market opportunities than rivals. Other variables of this type are market orientation, which is related to monitoring the market and introducing new business models. It can also be the introduction of human resource management models that are based on participation, engagement and activity.

And even if we assume that the author has succeeded in accurately identifying the dimensions of entrepreneurial management for businesses, we certainly cannot assume that they are universal and fixed. This was certainly proven by the research results and their overall analysis presented earlier. It turned out that out of the nine identified dimensions, after modification, only four fit for SME companies. However, let's start with the most obvious dimension - innovation orientation, which in entrepreneurial management means orientation towards implementing different types of innovations. The condition is one - the involvement of a possible large number of employees. And whether the company has a system for implementing innovations (the domain of large organizations), or whether they are implemented accidentally (a frequent situation in smaller organizations), is of lesser importance. Though, we have to remember about deficiencies in system solutions, which occurred in the surveyed entities, and may be crucial in the process of their development.

Another dimension of entrepreneurial management (for SMEs) that has been identified and isolated is the entrepreneurial culture in a given enterprise. In addition to this dimension, the author has included the dimension of the philosophy of remuneration, which is understood in the entrepreneurial approach as a permanent setting of

rates for employees, based on their contribution to the creation of company value. This is due to the fact that this dimension is practically absent in the SME group, and activities related to motivation and remuneration include precisely the dimension of entrepreneurial culture. In turn, this dimension is most often understood as management in an entrepreneurial way - encouraging staff to be creative, experiment, generate ideas, i.e. engage in all activities that may lead to the implementation of creative solutions.

The next two dimensions identified for all companies, i.e. performance orientation and growth orientation, after analysis of respondents' opinions, have been replaced, for the SME sector, by the dimension of competences of decision-makers (management). The created dimension is a kind of a foundation for these dimensions - it is a result of research and analysis of available sources, where the basis for growth and efficiency of enterprises is considered to be, first of all, adequate managerial behaviours - it is on these people (including SME owners) that the use of all growth opportunities and improvement of operating efficiency depends. Very strongly related to this dimension is the fourth dimension identified by the author - entrepreneurial management practices, which is derived from the organizational structure dimension. As the analysis of the research shows, the respondents do not attach any importance to the traditional aspects of the essence of organizational structures - what matters for them is the right approach to management (style and techniques of leadership, communication). In small enterprises the influence of individuals on the final result is very significant. Also, often the functions of owner and manager are combined. And so, as J.G. Covin. and D.P. Slevin (2011) argue, the content of strategy at the business level is defined in terms of a general set of management practices (business practices), which include: setting directions, human resource issues, operations, resource acquisition, working with partners, and others. And entrepreneurial management practices are specific mechanisms created by the creative workforce that allow companies to reach their markets and realize their vision for growth.

In summary, a survey of 200 business owners in Poland from 2020 onwards allowed the author to collect data that he believes will allow an attempt (this is a pilot study for now) to create a construct of the entrepreneurial management dimensions described earlier. The author assumed that entrepreneurial management in SME companies consists of four dimensions: entrepreneurial culture in a given company, competencies of decision makers (management), entrepreneurial management practices and innovation orientation. These measures were used in the analysis, as dependent variables, of the effects of specific groups of factors. This means that the sequence of research tasks carried out in this article allowed, in the author's opinion, to develop and implement the main objectives of the prepared material assumed at the outset. On the other hand, the obtained conclusions can find theoretical and practical application - to serve better cognition, understanding and improvement of management dimensions of entrepreneurial management in the face of new challenges.

On the other hand, it can be stated with certainty that the dimensions of entrepreneurial management will remain an element of management - because they have become material assets, organizational structures, strategies, processes, systems, financial and information resources. If we consider the permanent changes that are taking place in the economy, then the determinants related to the development of entrepreneurship will also change - and this is the most important value for the economy of the 21st century. Even more so in the face of the fifth industrial revolution. In science, on the other hand, it is hoped that the need to develop these and new conceptual frameworks, along with methods for studying the dimensions of entrepreneurial management, will not fade away. The author also hopes that the research presented in this paper is headed in the right direction

Conclusions

In this article the author has attempted to identify the elements/dimensions of entrepreneurial management that are most important for companies in the SME sector, according to their owners. In his research he has drawn attention to the differences in the dimensions of entrepreneurial management and their number that we can observe between large entities and those smaller.

The developed and presented dimensions of entrepreneurial management for these smaller companies consist of four identified and described elements. According to the author, the first and most important dimension is the entrepreneurial management practice, which allows for the inclusion of all employees in the process of creating and implementing entrepreneurial strategies for the development of the company, which are based on the exploitation of market opportunities. The second dimension, equally important, is the competence of decision-makers (management). Without a proper approach, knowledge or skills of people in managerial positions, we cannot even dream about the realization of the first dimension. It is also entrepreneurial and visionary attitudes combined with the ability to effectively cooperate with the external and internal environment, which give the whole enterprise management. The third dimension, which is the result of the first two is the culture of entrepreneurship, which is responsible for creating and developing an entrepreneurial atmosphere throughout the organization. The last dimension, i.e. orientation/direction towards innovations cannot be missing in a modern enterprise, because without these activities the company will not develop, which leads in the XXI century even to "going backwards".

According to the author, it should also be noted in conclusion that the respondents, i.e. the owners of the surveyed companies, are perfectly aware that the right proportions of the implementation of activities from the identified dimensions of entrepreneurial management, lead their organizations to build a sustainable competitive advantage in the market.

Of course not everything is so ideal, because as the analysis of the research results has shown, very often there is a clear lack of implementation (observance) of permanent system solutions, which are characteristic for large enterprises. On the one hand, there seem to be structures conducive to creating an entrepreneurial culture, but there are no formalised tools to utilise the potential of all employees. On the other hand, the managers seem to have appropriate qualifications and knowledge to apply partnership management systems, but they lack the tools. In such conditions, unfortunately, it is very difficult to achieve far-reaching goals.

Moreover, the collected empirical material shows that entrepreneurs perceived the importance for the development and success of their enterprises in the identified dimensions of entrepreneurial management - they attributed great importance to innovative management methods and human capital. They also did not forget about increased competition and competitive activities, in the face of market saturation with entities of similar size, which in their offer have similar or even identical products or services. Certainly, an important factor associated with entrepreneurial management is the management - their personality traits, professional competence or consistency in action.

The analyses and studies presented in the empirical part may in the future provide practical guidance for building a dynamic and competitive organizational structure in an uncertain and changing environment. In this approach, we can assume that the pursuit of developing dynamic capabilities is realistically achievable through a partnership management style and organizational learning that are supported by increasing levels of entrepreneurial management. Of course, assuming that cognition is a phenomenon with a high degree of subjectivity, further development of the undertaken topic, in the future we will be able to achieve by expanding the quality and scale of qualitative research. According to the author, this will allow to further define the role of

entrepreneurial management in the development of capabilities of dynamic enterprises, precisely from the SME sector.

In conclusion, according to the author of the article, the current trends in the global economy favor the development of enterprises based on entrepreneurial management. This optimistic attitude has its basis in the analysis of research results, as it was possible to identify (not only but as much as) 4 dimensions of entrepreneurial management in the surveyed entities from the SME sector. Importantly, the results of the study apply to the period after 2020 and, according to the author, already reflect the economic landscape affected by the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic - that is, the difficult economic situation and turbulence in the labor market. Certainly, in connection with the dynamic changes taking place in the economic markets and the growing demand for information on the dimensions of entrepreneurial management in the SME sector, the author of the article plans to carry out the described study on a larger group of entrepreneurs and their companies, so that the results obtained are adequate for the entire population.

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