

Karolina Olejniczak

Poznan University of Technology
e-mail: karolina.olejniczak@put.poznan.pl
ORCID: 0000-0003-3563-8015

Anna Dębicka

Poznan University of Technology
e-mail: anna.debicka@put.poznan.pl
ORCID: 0000-0001-9885-0799

SELECTED FEATURES OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES RELATED TO INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

DOI: 10.15611/pn.2020.6.12

JEL Classification: F23

© 2020 Karolina Olejniczak, Anna Dębicka

This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-NoDerivs license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>)

*Quote as: Olejniczak, K., and Dębicka, A. (2020). Selected features of small and medium-sized enterprises related to international entrepreneurship: An empirical analysis. *Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu*, 64(6).*

Abstract: The research presented in the article is part of the current trends in research on international entrepreneurship, in particular in the field of the comparisons and premise for sustainable development and the success factors in the international arena. The main purpose of this work was to examine the characteristics and determinants affecting international activities of small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland. The authors created a research model which checked the importance of selected characteristics of enterprises and their impact on international activity. This allowed to check whether and to what extent individual features of enterprises, business activity, including development strategy, and policies to strengthen the competitiveness and cooperation with business environment institutions are correlated with international activities. The study showed significant differences between enterprises that carry out international activity and those which limit their activity only to the domestic market.

Keywords: international entrepreneurship, SMEs, internationalization, international activities, features of enterprises.

1. Introduction

The acceleration of the processes related to globalization, phenomena associated with regionalization and internationalization, as well as the development of international logistics, have resulted in the growing interest of researchers in the international entrepreneurship of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the last twenty years.

International entrepreneurship is one of the indicators of competitiveness of SMEs. According to Martin's definition (Martin, 2003, p. 8), competitiveness means precisely the ability to produce goods and services that compete successfully on international markets, which contributes to an increase in the standard of living of citizens in the longer term.

On the other hand, the functioning and competitiveness of the SME sector as well as the business environment and the quality of social capital are determinants of the competitiveness of regions (Filo, 2008, p. 2).

The research presented in this article is part of the current trends in research on international entrepreneurship, in particular in the field of the comparisons and premise for sustainable development and success factors in the international arena. It also attempts to answer the question of why some enterprises are developing on international markets, while others remain in their domestic markets.

The main purpose of this work was to examine the characteristics of SMEs in Poland in the context of international entrepreneurship and study the determinants affecting the international activities of these enterprises. The starting point of the research was the statement that numerous aspects such as business profile, size of the enterprise, development strategy and cooperation with business environment institutions can influence their international activities. In addition, numerous further aspects were indicated, such as policies strengthening the competitiveness of these enterprises.

The next sections presents issues related to international entrepreneurship in both theoretical and empirical terms. The following sections present the results of the authors own research and formulate conclusions regarding international entrepreneurship of SMEs for the future.

2. Selected theoretical and empirical aspects of international entrepreneurship

The concept of international entrepreneurship has not yet been given a homogeneous definition. Moreover, in recent years the ways of defining international entrepreneurship have evolved many times. This reflects the multidimensionality and comprehensiveness of this phenomenon. In the following section, some theoretical aspects of the evolution of the concept of international entrepreneurship are taken into account based on the related literature.

2.1. Theoretical background of international entrepreneurship

Although the beginnings of research on the issue of international entrepreneurship can be traced back to the 1980s, its intensive development occurred in the last ten years. As can be seen in Figure 1, starting from 2016, particularly intensive research on international entrepreneurship has been conducted.

One of the first comprehensive definitions at the beginning of this century was proposed by McDougall and Oviatt. According to the authors, international entrepreneurship combines innovation, proactivity and the propensity to take risks as part of activities across national borders in order to create value for the organization (McDougall and Oviatt, 2000, p. 903).

Ibeh and Young presented a slightly different approach. The authors proposed export entrepreneurship, which they defined as a process in which entrepreneurs or organizations are focused on seeking opportunities to export goods and services regardless of the external factors of the environment and regardless of the internal factors related to their resources (2001, pp. 566-586).

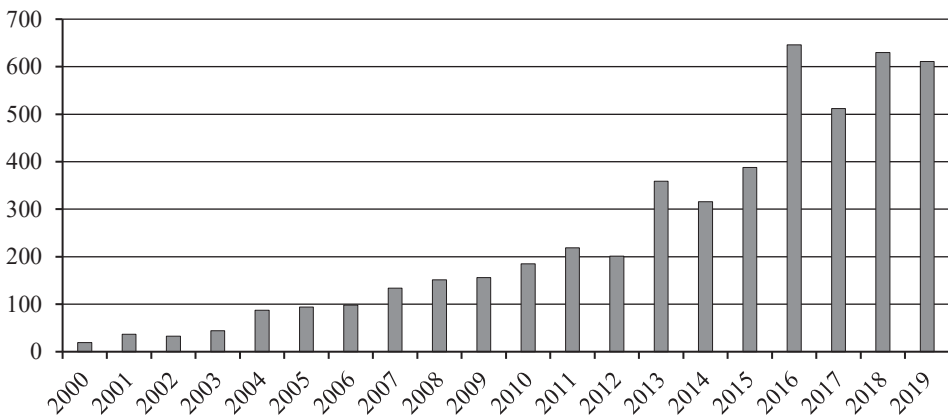


Fig. 1. The number of publications including the key words “International Entrepreneurship” in Scopus in 2000-2019

Source: own study based on Scopus.

Zahara and George (2002, pp. 255-288) drew attention to the importance of international entrepreneurship for achieving a competitive advantage. According to the authors, international entrepreneurship can be defined as a creative search and exploration of new opportunities outside the home market in order to create a competitive advantage. Duliniec (2013, p. 33) also indicated that international entrepreneurship should be understood as a process related to the creative discovery and the achievement of benefits from opportunities located outside the home country in order to seek a competitive advantage.

Mtigwe (2006, pp. 5-25), in turn, pointed out future benefits. According to the author, international entrepreneurship is a bold risky process of creating value through innovative, proactive and risky activities abroad. These activities are associated with the possibility of success but also failure in many different countries. The main purpose of such activity is to achieve financial and non-financial benefits in the future.

The understanding of international entrepreneurship as a research area is not clearly defined, either. Nowadays international entrepreneurship is most often treated as a field on the border of three disciplines: entrepreneurship, international business and strategic management (Zucchella and Sciabini, 2007, p. 22; Wach and Wehrmann, 2014, p. 14). Nevertheless, it should be noted that international entrepreneurship and international business differ from each other in the theory of internationalization as well as the theory of transaction costs (Allen, 2016, p. 96). Regardless of this, the area of research on international entrepreneurship is considered in two different ways. Firstly, as an area of research within the theory of entrepreneurship and the theory of internationalization, and secondly, as an independent research area. Over the last ten years the latter approach has become more and more popular (Wach and Wehrmann, 2014, p. 14).

2.2. International entrepreneurship as the subject of empirical research

Research on international entrepreneurship can be broadly divided into three categories: internationalization of entrepreneurship, international entrepreneurship comparisons, and comparative internationalization (Allen, 2016, p. 97).

Beginning from the 2000s, the attention of researchers has been directed in particular to comparisons of international entrepreneurship. The most considered aspects concerned the study of the scope of entrepreneurship across national borders, an assessment of entrepreneurship patterns at national level and their relationship with cultural and institutional differences, and a comparison of the internationalization of entrepreneurship with an emphasis on the types of international ventures (Allen, 2016, p. 101).

Peiris, Akoorie and Sinha (2012, pp. 1-49) examined the gaps, issues and trends of international entrepreneurship between 1993 and 2012. They suggested an integrative framework based on international business, entrepreneurship, strategic management, social network and marketing theories and highlighted the significant role played by the entrepreneur or team, organization and network resources that cooperate to search for international development opportunities and create innovation. The authors suggested a typology of firms that should be studied as part of the research on international entrepreneurship, namely: born global, enduring global, early exporter and mature exporter.

An important part of the research are studies on SMEs, which differ fundamentally in internationalization processes from large enterprises. They do not use many

models of internationalization, such as strategic alliances or joint ventures, which are the domain of large enterprises. Nevertheless, SMEs are also successful in international markets, although they often do not use strategic planning. They focus on exporting and creating branches abroad, first in neighbouring countries, then gradually moving to global markets, while taking advantage of the potential of business networks (Hofmann-Kohlmeyer, 2018, pp. 105-107).

The survey by Perez and Avella (2010, pp. 27-46) contributed to the knowledge about the export decisions of Spanish SMEs. The results obtained show that a high level of competitiveness is important for SMEs to make a decision to export when the conditions on the domestic market are favourable. However, when the competitive situation on the market is unfavourable, good results are less important as a factor determining the export decision.

Innovation plays a significant role in the international activity of SMEs. Bodlay et al. (2020, pp. 466-475) studied the impact of technological and non-technological innovations on the increase in SME exports, taking into account the financial constraints in Central and Eastern Europe. The results indicated that an increase in SME exports depends not only on successful technological innovations, but also on organizational innovations that, together with product innovations, support SME marketing innovations. In addition, financial constraints reinforced the positive impact of organizational innovation on product innovation. Finally, the authors found that exporting SMEs benefit more from geographically diversified marketing innovations.

In turn, Haaja (2020, pp. 15-43) studied the process of the collective recognition of opportunities on international markets among 20 Finnish small and medium enterprises. Collective opportunities are created through the interaction and joint actions of several companies, and therefore involve a complex combination of different perspectives and interests. The study analyzes why some entrepreneurs recognize joint opportunities on foreign markets while others do not. The research results suggest that the recognition of common international opportunities is related to the mental images of the entrepreneur regarding cooperation between companies and foreign markets, related to personal experience, development strategy adopted and resources held.

The study by Artem et al. (2020, pp. 259-285) describes the internationalization of SMEs as a process connecting entrepreneurship and non-entrepreneurial behaviour among Italian SMEs. The research results indicate the interaction of entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial behaviour during the internationalization process. In addition, the research results suggest that the internationalization of SMEs can occur without clearly defined internationalization strategies.

The next section presents the results of the authors own study conducted on SMEs in Poland.

3. International entrepreneurship of Polish small and medium-sized enterprises in light of own research

The starting point for the study concept was the international entrepreneurship model created by Ruzzier et al. (2006, p. 491), in which the effectiveness of the enterprise is determined by internationalization, which in turn depends on the characteristics of the enterprise, environment, entrepreneur, human capital and social capital (see Figure 2).

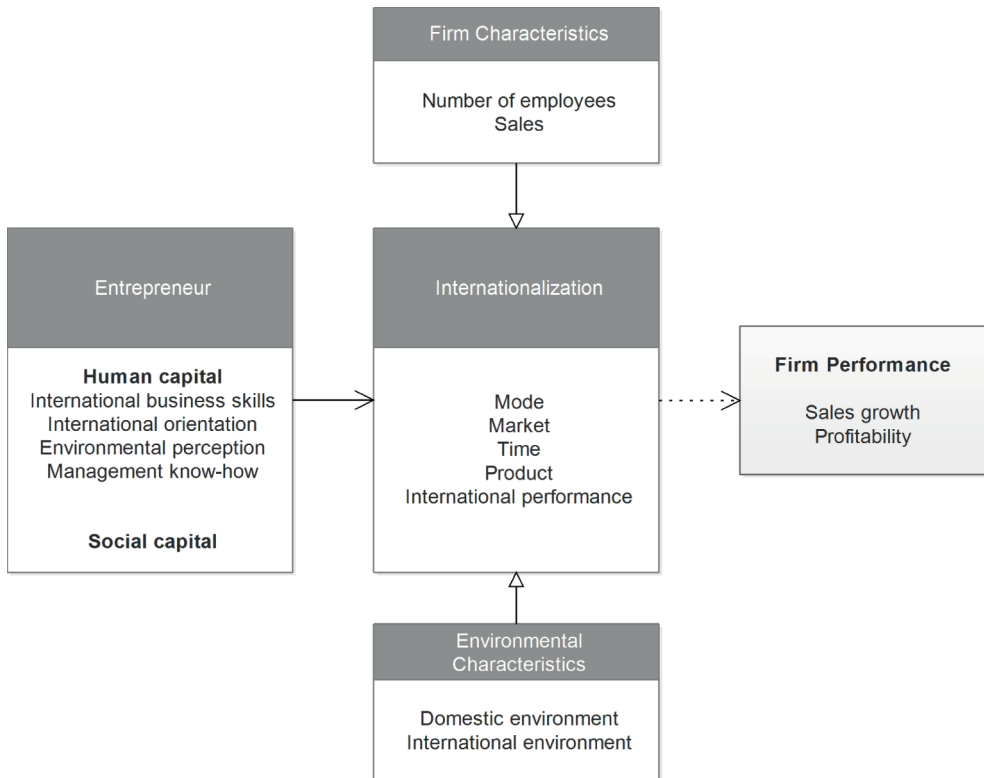


Fig. 2. The international entrepreneurship model

Source: (Ruzzier, Hisrich, and Antoncic, 2006, p. 491).

Appertaining to this concept, the authors created a research model which checked the importance of selected characteristics of the enterprise and their importance for its international activity.

In considering this, it was possible to check whether and to what extent individual features of enterprises, business activities including development strategy, policies

to strengthen the competitiveness and cooperation with business environment institutions are correlated with international activities.

To achieve the main goal, the following questions were formulated:

How does the size of enterprises affect international activities? What business profile is most correlated with international activities? Can the company's possession of a development strategy affect international activities? Can conducting international activities be associated with support from business environment institutions? Which activities do enterprises active on international markets undertake to strengthen their competitiveness compared to enterprises operating on the domestic market?

3.1. The research method

The study was conducted in 2019 among 450 micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Wielkopolska region and was preceded by a pilot study carried out one year earlier. This region in Poland, compared to the national average, is characterized by higher GDP per capita, slightly lower GVA per employee and a higher employment rate (Olejniczak and Łuczka, 2019, p. 150). Nevertheless, it shows relatively low innovation compared to the European average.

The research was conducted using categorized interviews among SME owners in Poland. The sample was selected using a targeted method to reflect the size and structure of the features of the general population as closely as possible.

The data was collected through a questionnaire previously prepared based on an analysis of the related literature. The study was conducted using a CATI interview. The questionnaire was divided into three main parts. The first part contained questions about the characteristics of the enterprises. The questions in that part were closed-ended with the possibility of a single choice of answers. The next part contained questions about the cooperation of enterprises with the institutional environment. The last part of the questionnaire concerned selected problems related to the functioning of enterprises.

In the initial phase of the analysis, all qualitative parameters were characterized by presenting the number (n) and percentage (%) of individual items, and then the answers were subjected to the coding procedure. The chi-square test (χ^2) was used to determine the differences between the compared groups. To determine the level of significance of the relationships found or differences (p -values), the following determinations were used: $p \geq 0.05$ as a statistically insignificant value and $p < 0.05$ as a statistically significant value.

To assess the probability of occurrence of selected characteristics in the surveyed enterprises, a one-way and multiple logistic regression analysis with a zero-one code was performed. The results of the analysis are presented as the odds ratio (OR) together with 95% confidence intervals (CI).

3.2. Research results

The distribution of the surveyed enterprises was not typical for SMEs in Wielkopolska since it was also essential to compare the differences between enterprises of different sizes (see Figure 3). The surveyed enterprises conducted their activities in rural areas (25%), villages and small towns with up to 250,000 inhabitants (45%), and in cities with a population of over 250,000 (30%). The vast majority of the surveyed enterprises had operated on the market for more than ten years (90%). The surveyed enterprises that were present on the domestic market operated both on the local (39.1%) and regional markets (32.7%), and to a lesser extent on the supra-regional market (28.3%). On the other hand, the surveyed enterprises whose activities went beyond the borders of the country more often operated on European markets (63.6%) rather than on a global scale (36.4%).

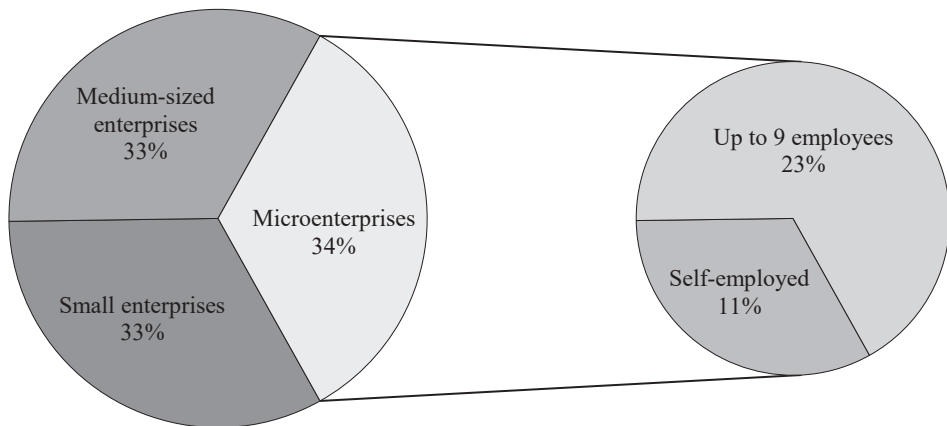


Fig. 3. Size of enterprises surveyed

Source: own study.

In the first part of the analysis, one-way regression was carried out, for which selected questions were taken based on the chi-square test (χ^2). Among them were questions related to the size of enterprises, business profile, having a development strategy and cooperation with the business environment. In the following step, the questions were taken to construct the multiple logistic regression model.

The distribution of the surveyed enterprises operating on the domestic market regarding their size was relatively even. In the case of enterprises active on international markets, a different size distribution of enterprises could be seen. These enterprises more often belonged to medium-sized enterprises (48.6%), much less frequently they were micro-enterprises (19.63%). The statistical analysis showed significant differences between the size of enterprises and their international activities

($p = 0.0011$). Further research indicated that with the emergence of international activity, the size of the enterprise increased. The probability that an international enterprise is a medium-sized enterprise is almost twice higher (OR 1.81) compared to enterprises operating only on the domestic market (see Figure 4).

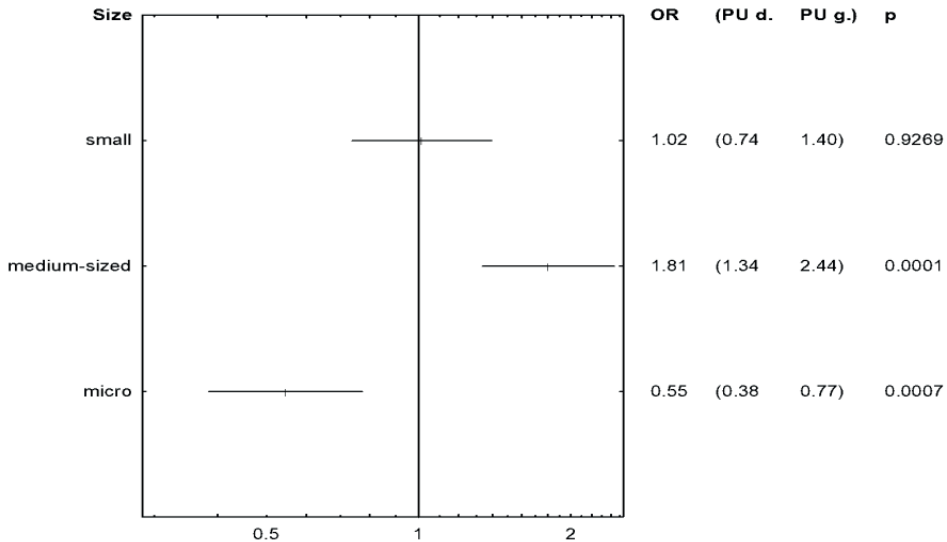


Fig. 4. Probability of undertaking international activity related to the size of the enterprise

Source: own study.

In the case of enterprises that concentrated their activities on the domestic market, a significant part of these enterprises offered services (41.4%); they were much less frequently commercial (25.4%) and manufacturing (22.2%) enterprises. In comparison, companies operating on an international scale more often had a production profile (56.1%) and much less frequently a service profile (17.8%). The analysis showed statistically significant differences between the type of conducted activity and the international activity of enterprises ($p \leq 0.0001$). The characteristics of the surveyed enterprises depending on the scale of their activities are presented in Table 1.

A further data analysis included verifying whether the surveyed companies operate based on a development strategy. The research showed that most microenterprises did not have any development strategy (62.5%). In the case of small enterprises, 53.38% declared that they had a development strategy, but it was often informal (77.8%). The results among the medium-sized enterprises surveyed were different – in this group of enterprises, two-thirds declared that they had a development strategy (66.73%). The statistical analysis of the data showed a statistically significant difference between the size of the enterprise and having a development strategy ($p \leq 0.0001$).

Table 1. The characteristics of the surveyed enterprises depending on the scale of their activities ($n = 450$)

		Domestic market	International market	<i>p</i> -value	
Size of the enterprises					0.0011
	<i>Microenterprises</i>	<i>n</i>	131	21	0.0007
		%	38.2	19.6	
	<i>Small enterprises</i>	<i>n</i>	114	34	0.9269
		%	33.2	31.9	
	<i>Medium-sized enterprises</i>	<i>n</i>	98	52	0.0001
		%	28.6	48.6	
	Main business profile				
<i>commercial</i>		%	25.4	23.4	0.2737
<i>production</i>		%	22.2	56.1	≤ 0.0001
<i>services</i>		%	41.4	17.8	0.0419
<i>other</i>		%	11.0	2.7	0.0249

Source: own study.

Additionally, one could check whether having a development strategy can affect international activities, and whether international enterprises more often operate based on a formal or informal strategy. Many studies showed that SMEs, even when formulating a strategy, usually rely on short-term goals because they more often focus on day-to-day activities. However, the lack of a clearly defined strategy leads to a short-term vision (Dębicka and Łuczka, 2019, pp. 44-50; Garengo and Bernardi, 2007, p. 519; Singh, Garg, and Deshmukh, 2008). As Singh et al. (2008) indicated, enterprises that want to expand the area of their business should focus on a development strategy, which should primarily include recognizing and taking advantage of market opportunities through the use of advanced technology.

The research results indicated that more than half of the enterprises operating on the domestic market did not have a development strategy (51.9%). Nevertheless, over two-thirds of international enterprises had a development strategy (67.29%). The analysis of the data showed a statistically significant differentiation between international activity and having a development strategy ($p = 0.0005$).

As further research results showed, international enterprises also more often used the support of the external environment – this was indicated by over half of the surveyed enterprises (54.2%). In contrast, enterprises operating on the domestic market less frequently indicated that they had ever benefited from the external support – only 37.6% of enterprises in the surveyed group indicated that they had used such support. The analysis of the data showed a statistically significant differentiation between international activity and cooperation with the external environment ($p = 0.0024$).

The multiple logistic regression analysis showed the probability of the occurrence of selected characteristics in enterprises performing international activity compared to those which operated only on the domestic market (see Table 2). According to the logistic regression model, international enterprises were more often production-oriented enterprises – the probability that the company offered its products on international markets was more than two times higher (OR 2.35) than for companies operating on the domestic market. Furthermore, international enterprises almost twice as often used external support (OR 1.78). Additionally, the probability that this group of enterprises had a formal development strategy was almost two and a half times higher (OR 2.42).

Table 2. The probability of the occurrence of selected characteristics in enterprises performing international activity

<i>Variables</i>	Estimation	<i>p</i> -value	Odds ratio	Confidence level OR –95%	Confidence level OR 95%
Production	0.85	0.0040	2.35	1.32	4.17
Services	–0.82	0,0160	0.44	0.22	1.86
Used external support	0.58	0,0180	1.78	1.10	2.88
Held an informal strategy	0.32	0.2360	1.38	0.80	2.37
Held a formal strategy	0.89	0,0090	2.42	1.25	4.70

Source: own study.

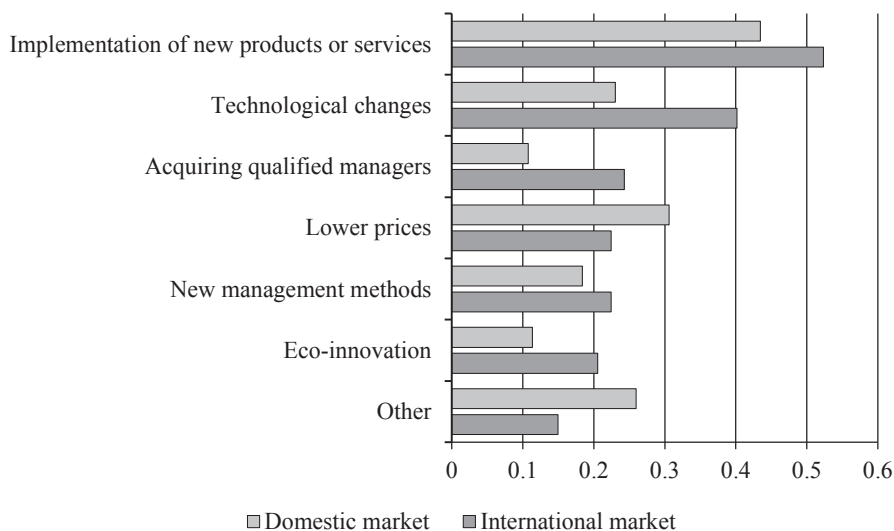


Fig. 5. Selected actions taken by the surveyed enterprises to increase their competitiveness (%)

Source: own study.

Furthermore, the surveyed enterprises indicated what activities they implemented in the context of increasing their competitiveness. Interestingly, there are significant differences between enterprises that operate on domestic and international markets. In the first group of enterprises, the most frequently mentioned activities relate to the implementation of new products and services (43%) and lower prices (33%). International enterprises also implemented new products and services (52%); however, they indicated it more often than enterprises operating on the domestic market. The next most frequently mentioned actions concerned technological changes (40%) and acquiring qualified managers (26%). The surveyed international enterprises also implemented changes in management and reduced prices (see Figure 5).

Selected actions taken by enterprises to strengthen their competitiveness that entered the multiple logistic regression model included eco-innovations, technological changes, acquiring qualified managers and lower prices.

Table 3. Multiple logistic regression for the association between international enterprises and policies strengthening competitiveness

	Estimation	<i>p</i> -value	Odds ratio	Confidence level	Confidence level
				OR -95%	OR 95%
Technological changes	0.762	0.011	2.14	1.19	3.85
Acquiring qualified managers	0.322	0.009	1.90	1.18	3.09

Source: own elaboration.

According to the model, the probability that enterprises active on international markets undertook technological changes as part of actions taken to increase competitiveness was more than twice higher (OR 2.14) compared to enterprises operating on the domestic market. Similarly, the probability of acquiring qualified employees was estimated. The probability of international enterprises taking such actions to increase competitiveness is almost twice as high (OR 1.90) (see Table 3).

4. Conclusion

In connection with the changes taking place in the external environment, which also affect the market orientation of enterprises, the interest of researchers in factors affecting international entrepreneurship is growing. Due to the diversity of SMEs and their specific features on the one hand, and their importance for the global economy on the other, a special role is played by the study of international entrepreneurship in this sector. This is reflected in the theoretical aspects of the issue, as international entrepreneurship is increasingly being treated as a separate research domain.

Although the empirical research in this area of research is over 30 years old, many aspects are still unrecognized. It would be extremely interesting to find out

why some companies enter international markets and in many cases are successful, while for others the domestic market remains the only one. This research is part of the current trends of research on international entrepreneurship of SMEs. In particular, the authors took into account entrepreneurial characteristics and examined their correlations with international activity of this sector in Poland.

The research results allowed for answering the questions posed in the paper and create a model describing selected characteristics of enterprises and their links with internationalization (see Figure 6).

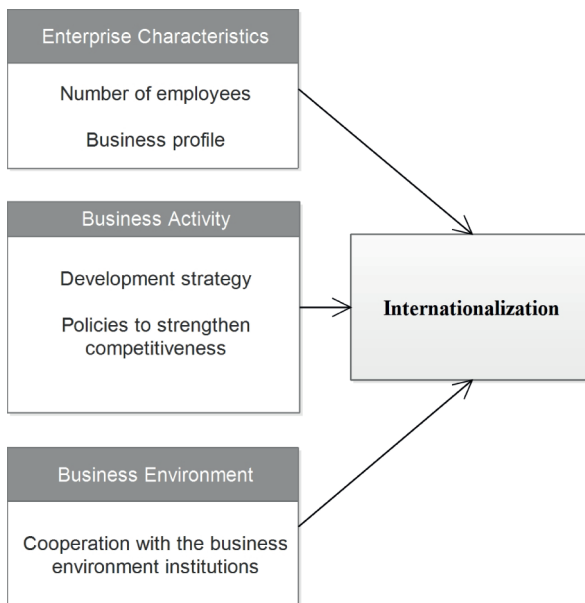


Fig. 6. Selected characteristics of enterprises and their links with internationalization

Source: own study.

Studies have shown that there are significant differences between enterprises that carry out international activity and enterprises which limit their activity only to the domestic market. These differences mainly concerned the characteristics of enterprises, their activity in building a competitive advantage, development strategy and cooperation with the institutional environment.

International enterprises were more often production-oriented enterprises. The study also showed that companies that undertook international activity cooperated much more often with the institutional environment. This group of enterprises used the support of business environment institutions almost twice as often as compared to enterprises active only on the domestic market.

The authors also checked the characteristics of the surveyed enterprises, taking into account having a development strategy.

The research results appear interesting, showing that companies conducting international activity more often had a development strategy, and in addition, it was a formal strategy. Such a result may indicate the importance of building a development strategy for the internationalization of enterprises.

Moreover, the study also showed that, apart from technological changes, the implementation of new products and services, the acquisition of qualified managers and the implementation of modern management methods are more often the domain of enterprises operating on international markets than that of enterprises operating only in the domestic market.

The obtained research results can provide valuable advice for business environment institutions in Poland, and can be an inspiration for further research of SMEs in the context of international entrepreneurship. It will be interesting to see how the entrepreneur, human or social capital built inside the company can influence international behaviour and activities. Further research requires also checking what are the main factors of the failure of international entrepreneurship in Poland.

It will also be important to find out how a crisis situation may affect international entrepreneurship; whether a crisis will result in withdrawal from external markets or become an incentive to change the market orientation.

References

- Allen, I. (2016). International entrepreneurship theory: past, present and the way forward. *Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review*, 4(4), 93.
- Bodlaj, M., Kadic-Maglajlic, S., and Vida, I. (2020). Disentangling the impact of different innovation types, financial constraints and geographic diversification on SMEs' export growth. *Journal of Business Research*, 108, 466–475. DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.10.043
- Dębicka, A., and Łuczka, T. (2019). *Zarządzanie sytuacją kryzysową w małych i średnich przedsiębiorstwach: Diagnozy i procedury*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej.
- Duliniec, E. (2013). Ujęcia teoretyczne wczesnej i szybkiej internacjonalizacji przedsiębiorstw. *Gospodarka Narodowa*, 21(1-2), 31-52.
- Filo, C. (2008). *Indicators of territorial competitiveness* (International Conference of Territorial Intelligence “Information, Indicators and Tools”, Pécs). Retrieved December 15, 2016 from <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00794668/document>
- Garengo, P., and Bernardi, G. (2007). Organizational capability in SMEs. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17410400710757178>
- Haaja, E. (2020). Why do some SMEs engage in joint internationalisation and others do not? Exploring the role of mental images in collective international opportunity recognition. *J Int Entrep*, 18(1), 15-43. DOI: 10.1007/s10843-019-00253-4
- Hofman-Kohlmeyer, M. (2018). Przedsiębiorczość międzynarodowa w świetle badań naukowych – Przegląd literatury. *Studia Ekonomiczne. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach*, (352)
- Ibeh, K., and Young, S. (2001). Exporting as an entrepreneurial act: An empirical study of Nigerian firms. *European Journal of Marketing*, 35(5/6), 566-586.
- Martin, M. (2003). *A study on the factors of regional competitiveness*. A draft final report for the European Commission Directorate-General Regional Policy, Brussels.

- McDougall, P., and Oviatt, B. M. (2000). International entrepreneurship: The intersection of two research paths. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 43(5), 902-906. DOI: 10.2307/1556418
- Mtigwe, B. (2006). Theoretical milestones in international business: The journey to international entrepreneurship theory. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 4, 5-25.
- Olejniczak, K., and Łuczka, T. (2019). *Czynniki konkurencyjności subregionu*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Politechniki Poznańskiej.
- Peiris, I. K., Akoorie, M. E. M., and Sinha, P. (2012). International entrepreneurship: A critical analysis of studies in the past two decades and future directions for research. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 10(3), 1-49. DOI: 10.1007/s10843-012-0096-3
- Pérez, F. G., and Avella, L. (2010). Influence of firm competitiveness on SMEs' export decisions. The moderating effect of domestic market conditions. *Revista Europea de Direccion y Economia de la Empresa*, 19, 27-46.
- Ruzzier, M., Hisrich, R. D., and Antoncic, B. (2006). SME internationalization research: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14626000610705705>
- Singh, R. K., Garg, S. K., and Deshmukh, S. G. (2008). Strategy development by SMEs for competitiveness: A review. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 15(5), 525-547 <https://doi.org/10.1108/14635770810903132>
- Stopochkin, A., Sytnik, I., and Sytnik, B. (2020). Methodology for analyzing the level of international entrepreneurship development. *ERSJ XXIII* (1), 259-285. DOI: 10.35808/ersj/1548
- Wach, K., and Wehrmann, C. (2014). Entrepreneurship in international business: International Entrepreneurship as the intersection of two fields (chapter 1). In A. S. Gubik, K. Wach (Eds.), *International entrepreneurship and corporate growth in Visegrad countries* (pp. 9-22). Miskolc: University of Miskolc.
- Zahara, S. A., and George, G. (2002). International entrepreneurship: The current status of the field and future research agenda. In M. A. Hitt, R.D. Ireland, D. L. Sexton, L. Donald, M. Camp (Eds.), *Strategic entrepreneurship: Creating an integrated mindset. Strategic management series* (pp. 255-288). Oxford: Research Collection Lee Kong Chian School of Business.
- Zucchella, A., and Scabini, P. (2007). *International entrepreneurship – Theoretical foundations and practice*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

WYBRANE CECHY MAŁYCH I ŚREDNICH PRZEDSIĘBIORSTW POWIĄZANE Z MIĘDZYNARODOWĄ PRZEDSIĘBIORCZOŚCIĄ: BADANIA EMPIRYCZNE

Streszczenie: Badania opisane w artykule wpisują się w aktualne kierunki badawcze międzynarodowej przedsiębiorczości, szczególnie w zakresie porównań i uwarunkowań zrównoważonego rozwoju oraz czynników sukcesu na arenie międzynarodowej. Głównym celem pracy było zbadanie wybranych cech oraz czynników warunkujących działalność międzynarodową małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw w Polsce. Stworzono model badawczy, na podstawie którego sprawdzono znaczenie wybranych cech przedsiębiorstw w kontekście ich działalności międzynarodowej. Przeprowadzone badania pozwoliły ocenić, czy i w jakim stopniu indywidualne cechy przedsiębiorstw, aktywność biznesowa, w tym strategia rozwoju, polityki mające na celu zwiększenie konkurencyjności i współpraca z instytucjami otoczenia biznesu są powiązane z działaniami międzynarodowymi. Badanie wykazało znaczne różnice między przedsiębiorstwami prowadzącymi działalność międzynarodową a przedsiębiorstwami, które ograniczają swoją działalność tylko do rynku krajowego.

Słowa kluczowe: międzynarodowa przedsiębiorczość, MŚP, umiędzynarodowienie, aktywność międzynarodowa, cechy przedsiębiorstw.