

ORGANIZATIONAL RENEWAL OR INNOVATION? NEW POSSIBILITIES IN INCREASING FAMILY BUSINESS EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract: Organization environment changes and need for achieving competitive advantage force companies to constantly increase their level of effectiveness. Family business is particularly influenced by this phenomenon as effectiveness is correlated with the family company survival. Purpose of this article is to present the relation between organization renewal, innovation and family business and indicate which present more possibilities in increasing effectiveness level in family companies. This study followed the qualitative method for data collection and analysis. Analysis based on 17 in-depth interviews of company owners and managers as well as extensive observations that occurred in 5 family companies. Study findings revealed a combined process of organization renewal and innovation utilized by family companies in order to gain competitive advantage. The use of in-depth interviews also allowed to show the true state of the researched enterprises. Recommendations based on research findings demonstrate how organization renewal and its combination with innovation can be utilized as a process to constantly increase effectiveness and achieve competitive advantage by family companies as well as a guide for future research and practices.

Keywords: organizational renewal, innovation, family business, organization effectiveness.

ODNOWA ORGANIZACYJNA CZY INNOWACJA? NOWE MOŻLIWOŚCI ZWIĘKSZANIA EFEKTYWNOŚCI BIZNESU RODZINNEGO

Streszczenie: Zmiany w otoczeniu organizacji oraz potrzeba osiągnięcia przewagi konkurencyjnej wymusza na przedsiębiorstwach stałe zwiększanie swojego poziomu efektywności. Zjawisko to w znaczącym stopniu wpływa na biznes rodzinny ponieważ efektywność jest skorelowana z przetrwaniem rodzinnego przedsiębiorstwa. Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie relacji pomiędzy odnową organizacyjną, innowacyjnością i biznesem rodzinnym oraz wskazanie, które z nich stwarzają więcej możliwości w zwiększaniu efektywności rodzinnych przedsiębiorstw. Badanie opierało się na jakościowych metodach badawczych zarówno w postaci zbierania danych jak i ich analizie. Analiza opierała się na przeprowadzeniu 17 wywiadów pogłębionych oraz obserwacji właścicieli firm i managerów 5 rodzinnych przedsiębiorstw. Wyniki badania przedstawiły połączony proces odnowy

organizacyjnej oraz innowacyjności wykorzystanych przez firmy rodzinne w celu zwiększenia poziomu konkurencyjności. Zastosowanie wywiadów pogłębionych umożliwiło przedstawienie prawdziwego stanu rzeczy w badanych przedsiębiorstwach. Rekomendacje bazujące na wynikach przeprowadzonych badań pokazują jak odnowa organizacyjna w połączeniu z innowacyjnością może być wykorzystana jako proces do stałego zwiększania efektywności oraz osiągania przewagi konkurencyjnej przez rodzinne firmy jak również są wyznacznikiem do przyszłych badań oraz praktyk.

Słowa kluczowe: odnowa organizacyjna, innowacyjność, biznes rodzinny, efektywność organizacyjna.

1. Introduction

Organization effectiveness is defined as constant development of the organization (Cameron, 1986) organization efficiency and performance (Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert, 1997) as well as achieving organization goals (Nowosielski, 2008). Key relation can be determined between organization effectiveness and organization environment (Posen, and Levinthal, 2012) while changes in the organization environment influence the effectiveness of the entire organization (Sørensen, and Stuart, 2000). Finally organization need to increase its effectiveness level and can do so by the process of organization renewal (Leonard-Barton, 1995) or innovation (Dyduch, 2015). Presented phenomenon is no different in case of family business. This paper focus on presenting the relation between organization renewal, innovation and family business and indicate which show more possibilities in increasing effectiveness level in family companies. Recognizing the correlation between maintaining high level of effectiveness and organization survival (Dyduch, 2008) family companies constantly need to search for new methods and sources of increasing their effectiveness. Relation between organization renewal and innovation in family companies adds several findings to the matter. The terms “family business” and “firm, company and enterprise” will be used interchangeably throughout this article.

2. Theoretical framework

Scholars have successfully determined and classified connection between organization renewal, organization change, innovation and organization effectiveness (Dougherty, 1992, Yanow, and Tsoukas, 2009, Miller, and Gomes, 2013). Family companies have not been completely utilized in the given matter. Further research can present more possibilities in increasing effectiveness level in family business. Exploring the relation between

organizational renewal and innovation in family enterprises add several constructs to the presented phenomenon.

2.1. Organization renewal

Organizational renewal complexity and interdisciplinary character has been widely recognized (Haggerty, 1969, Floyd, and Lane 2000, Agarwal, and Helfat, 2009, Belz, and Cyfert, 2017). P. Haggerty (1969) introduce renewal as a long term survival and success of the organization as they are dependant on aging process of the enterprise without the lost of creativity and vitality gained in the early stages of its market operation. Author highlights the importance of decision making process which determines success of the entire organization. Managers play key role in this process as they identify the need for change in the organization (Westley, 1990). Defined as actors managers must both notice the need for change in the organization and simultaneously implement it (Weick, 1996). J. Dean and M. Sharfman (1996, p. 389) recognize that the managers have the possibility of influencing the decision making process and in the end can change the level of organization effectiveness. This phenomenon bases on the fact that most organizations are effected by the constant process of change that shapes the entire enterprise (Tushman, and Romanelli, 1985). As organization members create significant company value they also take part in the process of organizational renewal. R. Agarwal and C. Helfat (2009, p. 282) define this state of affairs as a significant and irreversible process of change in the organization which consists of both complete change or refreshing key elements needed for effective functioning of organization in long period of time. Finally organization renewal can effect technology, practices, products and processes (Miller, and Gomes 2013) and is correlated with organization effectiveness (Gabryś, and Bratnicki, 2015) so it can influence the entire organization.

2.2. Innovation

Organization effectiveness defines the organization, strategies and development process (Osbert-Pociecha, 2007). This phenomenon bases on the need for change in the organization environment that influence company effectiveness (Sørensen, and Stuart, 2000) and demand of its constant development (Burt, 1995). K. Miller and E. Gomes (2013) highlight that organization can never fully recreate its past but only interpret it differently and adapt into present environment. It bases on the fact that organization change is correlated with organization environment (Eisenhardt, 1995). M. Hannan and J. Freeman (1984, p. 150) claim that organization is permanently subject to the process of change yet changes in the organization can be controlled and managed. This leads to the conclusion presenting organization renewal as transformation of existing processes in order to gain new resources or competences (Floyd, and Lane, 2000). Given state of affairs stimulate creation of innovation solutions and processes which positively effect the level of organization effectiveness (Drucker, 2004). The need for innovation bases on rising usage of organization resources that

are limited. P. Denning and R. Dunham (2010, p. 3) find the resolution to that problem in innovation as it is the necessary element in order to achieve personal, business and economical success. Finally essential element of the organization survival is innovation (Dyduch, 2008). Connection between innovation and organizational renewal presented by H. Kim and J. Pennings (2009) highlights the influence of renewal process on the organization innovation level by introducing new products and stimulating the technological evolution of the organization. W. Dyduch (2015, p. 19) shows that currently we find innovation as the source of competitive advantage, high effectiveness and survival but innovation itself does not generate company value only with the commercialization of the innovation can organization change its effectiveness. Ultimately both innovation and organization renewal (Miller, and Gomes, 2013) effect organization effectiveness level and are the necessary elements of organization survival and development process.

2.3. Family enterprises

Organization need for increasing level of effectiveness (Dyduch, 2008) bases both on organization environment changes (Posen, and Levinthal, 2012) as well as need for achieving competitive advantage (Szymańska, 2010). Approaching the term of organization effectiveness maintaining its high levels can be achieved by enterprises with strategy, systems, structures and organization members management skills (Peters, and Waterman, 1982). Organization must be open for change and constantly introduce new ideas (Collins and Slayer, 2001). Given state of affairs shows that highly effective organizations are open for innovation (Dyduch, 2015). Family business is no different to that matter as family enterprise goals and needs often play major roles in decisions regarding business and financial strategy in order to maintain competitive advantage (Hall, and Hordqvist, 2008). Maintaining competitive advantage bases on increasing the level of effectiveness (Sulmicki, 1978) as it can achieved both with innovation and organization renewal. Constant need for learning allows the organization to develop with the help of organization renewal process (Leonard-Barton, 1995). S. Floyd and P. Lane (2000, p. 155) introduce renewal as a process of gaining and managing new knowledge in order to introduce changes in the organization. While organizations operate with limited resources they need to manage it properly in order to increase effectiveness (Peteraf, 1993). Both innovation and organization renewal are possibilities for family companies but which is more effective is yet to be determined.

3. Purpose and research questions

Following paper attempts to present the relation between organization renewal, innovation and family business and indicate which highlight more possibilities in increasing effectiveness

level in family companies. Author recognizes positive relation between organization effectiveness level and organization survival as well as need for constantly achieving competitive advantage. Presented study offers deeper understanding of organizational renewal and innovation process utilized by family companies in order to gain competitive advantage. Research focused on discovering data based on following research questions, (Q1) Are there any specific practices for managing effectiveness in the company? (Q2) Is organization renewal or innovation process more common practice in the organization? (Q3) How does the company increase its effectiveness level? (Q4) How does the enterprise maintain competitive advantage?

4. Methods and research group

Qualitative research tools were utilized in order to explore the relation between organization renewal, innovation and family business and indicate which present more possibilities in increasing effectiveness level in family companies. Data collection based on using in-depth interviews, document reviews and field observations in tradition of grounded theory (Glaser, and Strauss, 1967/2017, Konecki, 2000). Fact that the participants were working in family companies operating in different branches provided variety of circumstances enriching the case studied.

Research group consisted of five companies with seventeen participants. Main criteria in selecting the researched companies were that they operated in the same region, were family owned and had managers taking part in the decision making process. Family business criteria based on P. Leach (2007, p. 2) definition describing family business as a body that effectively controls company business actions with the 50% of family firm ownership or if the family members serve management positions and by doing so run the company. Primary focus of the analysis was to gain knowledge regarding organization renewal and innovation process in the enterprise. Secondary goal was to compare the given data with organization effectiveness and competitive advantage. In order to keep the context constant all companies operated in the same region of Silesia in southern Poland. Every company was represented by one owner who also was a family member and at least by one manager. All interviews were conducted separately and randomly in order to show the true state of the researched enterprises. Research sample was presented as followed:

Table 1.
Sample description

Code	Company	Description	Family members	ID	Managers	ID
I	A	IT company specializing in PR and marketing services. Family business owner takes direct part in the decision making process. Organization has a separate department focusing on introducing new technologies and processes.	1 - (O)	IAO	3 - (M)	IAM1 IAM2 IAM3
F	B	Financial product and service provider for both commercial and non-commercial customers. Silesia department is one of the largest in the country. Family member who is a board member takes part in the decision making process.	1 - (O)	FBO	4 - (M)	FBM1 FBM2 FBM3 FBM4
R	C	Real-estate company focusing on renting and managing commercial office space. Family business owner takes direct part in the decision making process.	1 - (O)	RCO	1 - (M)	RCM1
H	D	Health and wellness center operator. Organization focuses on providing new technologies into the market. Family business owner does not take in the decision making process in the company leaving that responsibility to his managers. Enterprise cooperates with international operator who has a separate innovation and new technology department.	1 - (O)	HDO	2 - (M)	HDM1 HDM2
T	E	Telecommunication operator. Due to company size research took place in one of Silesian departments focusing on introducing new technologies and processes for the company. Family business member and two managers take direct part in the decision making process in the department.	1 - (O)	TEO	2 - (M)	TEM1 TEM2

5. Data collection and analysis

Data collection based on in-depth interviews, participant observation and document analysis. Interviews served as main data source as observations and document analysis were important triangulation sources. Main data collection for the study has taken place in the first quarter of 2018 with seventeen participants working in five different family companies. Interviews were conducted in Polish language, translated into English and coded. Areas explored by the interview questions included organization renewal, innovation, competitive advantage, organization environment and increasing level of organization effectiveness. Interviews were conducted in the stress-free environment with complete appreciation of participants roles, culture, knowledge and reactions. Secondary data collection based on observation. Interviewed participants showed their interactions with co-workers as well as exchange of knowledge. Purpose of the observation process was to determine decision making process which ultimately effected the entire company. Received data was confronted with company documentation presented to the public knowledge. Usage of triangulation (Gibbs, 2011) and the varicosity of data collection tools ensured the results are reflective of the real dimensions of the researched case.

6. Findings

W karnego Research results present an interesting perspective of family companies achieve competitive advantage in order to operate on the given market. Both company owners and managers highlighted the importance of developing new technologies during every stage of organization life cycle. Utilization process of both organization renewal and innovation by family companies in order to increase their effectiveness adds several findings to the matter.

6.1. Organizational renewal – family business perspective

Aging process in family companies was one of the major issues brought up by both company owners and managers. Responders scrupulously described the evolution process of their organizations focusing on new business opportunities generated while companies become larger. Given state of affairs demanded both managers recruitment as well as creation of new departments in order to maintain the level of organization development. Managers also brought new knowledge to the companies enriching them with their experience. This phenomenon allowed to change former organization processes and develop new technologies.

[RCO] At the beginning I was able to run my company on my own but as we started managing new buildings I realized that I spend more time with new clients and by doing so I was not able to manage my old contractors sufficiently, after all day has only 24 hours.

[RCM1] When I first joined the company I saw great business with obsolete management system so I said to myself let the owner provide us with new clients and I will focus on upgrading our services to the maximum.

[TEM1] The company had effective management tools but they simply refused to develop them and instead focused on rapidly finding new solutions and technologies while the answer was already there, just needed to be recreated.

While the organization grows technologies, processes and work habits must match new organization requirements. Major role in this particular process plays the number of organization members. While the employee number grows higher the communication process must develop accordingly. With no recognition of that process there can be no effective knowledge exchange transfer which effects the entire organization. Given dilemma is connected with decision making process. While organization members need to develop along with the company they need to be given proper tools in order to maintain their level of effectiveness. Old communication systems must be redesigned, knowledge exchange process needs to be enhanced and organization member effectiveness level management process has to change and develop.

[FBM1] As I started to manage more and more teams I realized our old system basing on weekly meeting and knowledge exchange was no longer efficient. For example we needed to move into video conferences and provide company communication in order to maintain efficiency.

[FBM3] Company members need to know what they are demanded to do and what are the evaluation criteria. Everything should be transparent and no matter if you manage one person or one hundred, adjust the rules so nobody feels disappointed and in some cases even betrayed.

[FBO] The biggest challenge was the moment when we started opening new departments, suddenly you realize that the person you want to meet works in different building or city. The contact needs to remain on the same, professional level so old habits must also evolve.

6.2. Innovation and renewal

Family companies are aware of their constant need for increasing their level of effectiveness in order to remain competitive on the market. This phenomenon can be achieved by introducing new technologies and processes enhancing the organization. In the early stages of their development enterprises seek innovation products outside the company. Family companies focus on technologies that are ready to implicate as they are being perceived as prepared products. This allows for new departments creation as well as managing more organization staff members. New technologies and processes allow family companies to compete with other enterprises operating on the same market. Need for outsourcing innovations is strictly connected with the size of the organization. Small family companies cannot afford to create their own technology departments developing new knowledge for the

enterprise. As the companies become larger they seek out to use their own knowledge and experience rather than turning to other organizations.

[HDO] When our company opened we managed to sign a cooperation contract with one of the worlds largest equipment supplier which supplied us with new technologies unique for our branch. This allowed us to greatly reduce the costs of buying this knowledge from other operators.

[AIM3] When I joined the company we already had an operating, new technology department but I am aware that at the beginning the company did base on outsourced technologies and was not so much independent.

[AIM1] You cannot stand in one place, the company need to develop and provide proper tools in order that employees develop as well.

[FBO] At the start you simply seek out companies that can provide you with technology for the company. Owner focuses on developing his business and does not start to learn how to create a web site on his own.

Organization development process allows family companies to become more technologically independent as they are able to allocate resources in the knowledge creation and development departments. It is strictly connected with new organization members recruitment, specially managers, as the entire organization is being enriched with their experience. Managers seek new technologies and processes not only with innovation but also in developing or changing old products or systems. Many situations showed that renewing old technologies can be same effective as creating new ones and in some circumstances even more effective. Family companies simply can not always maintain that process. Primarily ideas and processes created at the beginning of organization life circle could potentially be effective but the company was not able to afford to develop them at that given time. Secondly as the company became larger organization did not have necessary knowledge to develop that knowledge properly. Thirdly lack of family owners knowledge limits the organizations to outsource new technologies rather than develop their own ideas. Given state of affairs shows that introducing new managers into the organization allows family companies to proceed with renewal process rather than base only on innovative ideas development.

[TEO] As our department began expanding I wanted to introduce new solutions for the company by rather combining our current knowledge with new experience in order to introduce something unique.

[TEM2] In many situations the answer regarding new technology is already present in the company and you simply need to see it.

[HDM1] Solutions introduced by our partner were very effective but they were rather universal and our team adjusted them for our standards and requirements.

6.3. Family business effectiveness and competitive advantage

Maintaining competitive advantage was one of the most important issue highlighted by family company owners. Enterprises must develop and constantly become better in order to remain on the market. Despite organization size the company has to deal with competition during every stage of their development. At the beginning, smaller companies face challenges

from common organizations but when they become bigger more corporate enterprises come into play. These companies are highly developed owning effective processes and technologies that allow the multiple client management. One of the strategies developed by family companies is the combination of organizational renewal process with innovation. This allows organizations to remain financially effective. Enterprises acquire technologies outside the company and remake them in order to be most effective for the family organization. In some situations ideas are simply being enriched with the former company knowledge but in other cases fully remade and combined with family company processes and solutions. This phenomenon allows for creation of combined organizational renewal and innovation products and processes unique for given company. Ideas generated in that way are also one of the kind and present substantial intellectual value for the company. Examples of knowledge combination and product results are presented in the next paragraph of this paper.

[IAO] At some point I realized that combination of several products into one solution can be a great opportunity for the company. We could become both technologically independent and even supply other operators with our products.

[IAM2] I always told everyone we should not spend so much money on outsourcing and instead try to create something on our own after all brainstorming does not cost anything.

[HDM2] The operating system for our club was great but did not have all the functions and solutions that we needed so I combined it with our old management and communication system and the results were just perfect, the company became much more effective.

[FBM2] Everyone is always looking for something fancy and innovative and the most simple solutions are the most effective. Our communication system was not bad just needed a little upgrade, in my opinion buying a new one was simply waste of money.

7. Conclusions and implications

Research results highlight the phenomenon of technology and process development in family companies as well as its complexity and importance. At the beginning of the organization life cycle family enterprises lack the experience and resources of their corporate competition and in order to develop they must outsource new technologies. This process allows family companies to increase their level of effectiveness. As the companies grow and develop the managers who join the organizations become an important source of knowledge and experience that can be utilized by the family company. Managers become actors who participate in new technology development process by either introducing innovative ideas for the company or renewing existing products by enriching and improving them. Real-estate company (**R**) manager introduced a new client management system that allowed the company to operate on much larger market. Family owner did not have the necessary skill or

knowledge to develop such technology and without the manager experience the enterprise could not develop properly.

At some point of organization life cycle acquiring new technologies outside the company became a necessity for every family company participating in the research. Without it family companies could not achieve competitive advantage. Ultimately the true value for the family companies was not the technologies outsourced from other companies but their optimization by enrichment with current organization knowledge. This process allows the family companies to benefit both ways. Primarily, the technology is recreated and meets all the company standards. Telecommunication operator (**T**) being one of the company departments received all the technologies and processes from the company headquarters in Warsaw. Products and processes used by the company were universal but not fully completely effective for the Silesian market. Both family owner and managers optimized the client communication system. Instead of sending standard marketing offers the department began inviting customers for business meeting during which they were able to present the complete company offer. This phenomenon drastically increased employee effectiveness level and with higher sales level the company gained competitive advantage on the market. Secondly, modernized technology becomes a product that increases the value of the company itself. Health and wellness center operator (**H**) acquired club management system – MyWellness® from the equipment operator Technogym®. At the beginning the system had basic functions used by the club manager but it did not meet the standards of a club with more services such as spa, wellness and health. During the one year period managers introduced several changes to the management system and suggested crucial upgrades for the operator. Final result was a completely new universal product that allows for any health institution management. Both Technogym® and health and wellness center operator (**H**) sell new system to other companies and both share the profits.

Neither innovation nor organization renewal were more common practice in the researched companies as the usage combination of renewal with innovation show much greater potential for increasing the level of company effectiveness. Researched process was chaotic as the companies did not create a model that could be introduced as common practice for developing or modernizing technologies in the family companies. Relation between organization renewal and innovation in family companies adds several findings to the matter of gaining competitive advantage and show great potential. Further research of that model can present more possibilities in increasing effectiveness level in family business.

8. Limitations and future research perspective

Author recognizes three major limitations for the presented study. First, small number of both companies and participants limits the generalization of the presented findings. Second, geographical aspect of the presented research narrows the data only to one, specific region. Third, use of qualitative research methods present study limitations as well as ethical problems. Information obtained through in-dept interviews enrich the presented study but the data itself cannot be utilized to reflect the entire industry. Ultimately the conditions for the proper reliable presentation of the given analysis were met as the presented analysis provided triangulation (Gibbs, 2011) and ensured the authenticity of results that are dependable, reflect the real state of the researched problem and add interesting findings to the matter.

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