

Summary

The University of Social Sciences, Department of Management Studies
The Concept of Support regarding the Management of Microenterprises by Business
Environment Institutions

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In the current business sphere, business attitudes may be considered to be a distinctive and key factor in creating new spaces and values. Of all economic subjects, microenterprises have a special significance. Thus, activities aimed at improving the management of microenterprises through, among other things, support from **Business Environment Institutions (BEIs)**, are decisive. Microenterprises manage relatively better during a period of economic downturn. In Poland, it is in fact the micro, small and medium enterprise sector (MSME) which has created over 6 million jobs, also dominating the economy of Gdansk Pomerania province, although it still remains insufficiently described and researched in academic studies. In the subject literature there are numerous management models to be found based on examples of small, medium or large businesses which, to little or no extent, take into account the specific problems present in microenterprises. Therefore, the subject of this dissertation is an attempt to define the main parameters of management in microenterprises, including taking into consideration how this process has been influenced by support from Business Environment Institutions (BEIs). In addition, emphasis was put on the role of **dominant logic** in the management of microenterprises and the shaping of their cooperation with BEIs, an aspect which has been insufficiently recognized by our current knowledge base. Moreover, another interesting reason for conducting this study concerned research on a family's influence on managing a family-run microenterprise, about which little is known in academic works in management studies.

The main purpose of this dissertation is to draw up a concept of supporting the management of a microenterprise by Business Environment Institutions (BEIs). Although the main theory to which the author of this dissertation refers is the concept of dominant logic, **the practical purpose** of this doctoral dissertation is to identify the challenges in cooperation



between the Business Environment Institutions (BEIs) and microenterprises of the province of Gdansk Pomerania. Understanding these will allow one to draw up a more efficient model regarding management support for microenterprises by Business Environment Institutions (BEIs) in the province of Gdansk Pomerania. This should enable one to define the right decisional and management space for microenterprises and Business Environment Institutions (BEIs), as well as those regarding the creation and completion of various projects that facilitate innovative development of the province of Gdansk Pomerania in the sphere of economic enterprise.

In relation to the formulation of this research and its practical purposes, the following **detailed purposes** were also devised:

- 1) Researching and identifying the features of the microenterprise sector in the province of Gdansk Pomerania.
- 2) Researching and assessing the cooperation of microenterprises with BEIs in the province of Gdansk Pomerania.
- 3) Identifying the needs of the microenterprise sector regarding developmental cooperation with BEIs, as well as indicating the role of BEIs in the management support of microenterprises.
- 4) Showing whether the specific nature of a family-run microenterprise strengthens the need for support for management processes from BEIs.

The research question was considered from the following viewpoint – in what way can Business Environment Institutions (BEIs) help with the management of a microenterprise? As part of the author's own research for the purpose of this dissertation, the following **research questions** were established:

- 1) Do BEIs play an active and supportive role in the management of microenterprises?
- 2) What is the relationship between BEIs and microenterprises in the opinions of consultants and entrepreneurs?
- 3) How does the way the entrepreneur perceives their environment influence the cooperation in management between a microenterprise and BEIs?



- 4) Does the specific nature of a family-run business strengthen the need for support from BEIs in order to manage the company effectively?

In this dissertation the following **hypotheses** are put forward :

- 1) The broadly understood BEIs in the province of Gdansk Pomerania play a key role in the support of managing microenterprises.
- 2) The nature of relationships between BEIs and microenterprises is defined by the level of trust, the cost of the service and the perception of its quality.
- 3) Dominant logic and the way the environment is perceived by the owner-manager limit the influence of BEIs on managing a microenterprise.
- 4) Due to their specific nature and character, family-run enterprises of the microenterprise type have a greater need for support in management from BEIs.

The results of this research allowed one to obtain answers to the assumed research questions and to try verifying the proposed management model. One can therefore assume that:

1. EU funds have played an important part in the support of management in the microenterprise sector in the province of Gdansk Pomerania.
2. Business Environment Institutions (BEIs) are conducive to the development of the assessed microenterprises in the province of Gdansk Pomerania.
3. Taking subjective criteria into account, 1/3 of the examined enterprises can be considered as family-run businesses.
4. An essential barrier in the management of an enterprise is the way its owner perceives the business and advisory surroundings, meaning its dominant logic.
5. The specific nature of the type of enterprise which is family-run, strengthens the need for support from BEIs.

As part of this research, an examination of the **subject literature** and **empirical studies** was carried out. Conclusions were reached based on the **deductive method**, while the



author's own research employed both **quantitative** and **qualitative** approaches. Regarding the selection of methods for acquiring samples, the **non-random method** was used. Thus, research subjects were selected in a deliberate and standardized manner, meaning those most representative of a given population in general, as well as those considered to be average. So-called **convenience sampling** was also applied, depending on choosing research subjects from among close family members ("family clans") or acquaintances (consultants, trainers). In addition, **network selection**, which depends on the selection of respondents from among the customers of specific service networks, such as European Fund Information Points (PIFE), was employed.

This dissertation is based on the following **research methods**:

- Studies of the literature, including the theory, as well as the results of research conducted up to now.
- An analysis of secondary sources, meaning secondary research based on the employment and analysis of existing accessible internal information (including the 'Free Enterprise' association in Gdansk and Business Support Centres in Lębork, Sopot and Kartuzy) and external information (such as the Pomeranian Development Agency in Gdansk, the Pomeranian Regional Development Agency in Słupsk, the Pomeranian European Fund Information Network, the Polish Enterprise Development Agency in Warsaw along with its Advice-Consultation Points (PKD) or Consultation Points (PK) project.
- Interviews, based on a standardized interview model, held directly with the owner-managers of micro-enterprises and the representatives of Business Environment Institutions from Gdansk Pomerania Province.
- Survey-based research conducted by the author among micro-enterprises in Gdansk Pomerania Province, on the basis of a standardized questionnaire.

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Key words: *management, microenterprise, Business Environment Institutions, dominant logic, family-run business, sector support, management support models, perception of business environment, owner-manager.*

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