

## CREATIVE-INNOVATIVE RELATIONS IN ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES

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**Purpose:** The aim of this article is to present creative–innovative relations in the context of enterprises’ creative activities. Indicating creativity as an imperative of enterprises’ creative actions required consideration of both the factors that foster and those that hinder creativity. In the article author tries to interpret the empirical findings obtained in the study within the broader context of existing research on creativity, innovation, and enterprise development.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The essence of the problem was identified in the impact of creativity on innovation, the result of which are decision-making relationships. An ontological approach to these relations justified the need to emphasize the destructive–creative dimension of innovation in enterprises.

**Findings:** Its practical reflection is an analysis of innovation activity through expenditures and effects of innovations in Poland in the years 2020-2022. The results of the research indicate positive changes in innovation activities of enterprises in Poland. An increase in expenses on innovation is clear and also the number of large enterprises that introduce innovation is growing. Innovations play crucial role in developing Polish enterprises.

**Originality/value:** This type of activity – creative-innovative and destructive at the same time – is distinguished in the interpretation of innovation as an adaptation of anything new in the enterprise. This study has different implications for innovation researchers. It argues for increased attention to creative-destruction relations in enterprises in the context of innovation.

**Keywords:** creative relations in enterprises, creative activities, innovations in enterprises.

**Category of the paper:** Research paper.

### 1. Introduction

In the science of management and quality, various decision-making issues undertaken by enterprises are taken into account. Assuming that the essence of an enterprise’s functioning is determined by its development, it is justified to identify areas of pro-developmental inspiration. One of the significant areas is the creativity of an enterprise, which determines the current and future directions of economic activity (Brzóska, Knop, 2020) The literature emphasizes the

phenomenon of creativity as an operational concept, highlighting moreover the integrative nature of creative initiatives initiated by individual employees and the activities of managerial teams aimed at ensuring the enterprise's development. Development requires a creative attitude from the management staff, characterized by openness, inventiveness, preference for individualism, and visionary abilities regarding the company's operations, based on creative–innovative relations. A visionary attitude of both the management and the enterprise indicates the necessity of increasing production potential, which enables the creation of new products. (Sousa et al., 2019). Their inspiration lies in creative attitudes focused on implementing innovations (Sopińska, Dziurski, 2020).

The idea of innovation in the context of creativity is based on an approach that integrates the imperative of creative actions with Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction. Its foundation lies in innovations identified as instruments of destabilization within enterprises. Through destabilization, the enterprise enhances its potential by implementing innovations that arise from creative destruction and subsequently stabilize its operations. The relationship between creativity and innovativeness is thus the result of a creative behavior of the enterprise striving to achieve benefits from implemented innovations.

## **2. Creativity as an Imperative of an Organization's Creative Activities**

The concept of creativity constitutes a significant area within the discipline of management and quality sciences. Its idea is concentrated in the decision-making processes undertaken in organizations. The essence of the problem can be defined by considering various definitions of creativity.

The starting point is the definition of creativity as a process of combining knowledge from different disciplines in order to generate new and original concepts of a non-conventional nature (Ilha Villanova, Pina e Cunha, 2021). The essence of creativity can also be described as "a set of traits possessed by an individual that enables constant searching for new solutions" (Wojtaszek, 2014).

New concepts of creativity thus refer to the reorganization of creative potential in a given area in order to obtain an analytical view of its essence (Wojtaszek, 2014).

Considering this approach, it is useful to present a definition that emphasizes its creative nature. Creativity is identified as "...the ability of creative thinking, combining various ideas in an original and unique way, adopting new assumptions, viewing things from a new perspective, generating ideas, doing something new or doing the same thing in a better way, as well as the unusual association of different thoughts and views" (Brzeziński, 2009).

The essence of creativity can also be related to a set of elements of lateral marketing, identified with organized efforts to search for new market areas and new partners for cooperation (Strużycki, 2017).

In such cooperation, the importance of the phenomenon of creativity is emphasized - evolving from forms of individual activity to organized teams, which together create a foundation for enterprise development (Suszyński, 2018).

In this context, an often-cited definition states that “creativity transcends the boundaries of ordinary knowledge and proficiency; it requires the ability not only to solve but also to perceive problems, which is something more than simply relying on established patterns” (Simonton, 2014). Creativity thus becomes a course of action for employees and organizations, enabling economic development (Bialas, 2022). The creative character of an organization’s activity is of particular significance in relation to creativity itself.

In the literature, attention has been given to analyzing the identity of the terms creative and innovative (Olszak, 2017). Although these terms are sometimes differentiated, it is possible to indicate features they share. The material of creativity is made up of ideas distinguished by novelty and usefulness. Equally important is the processual approach, which generates new concepts integrating creativity with innovativeness. As a consequence, it becomes possible to implement new, creative ideas within an enterprise (Olszak, 2017).

The context of creativity may also be considered in relation to the “creative class” - a distinct part of society identified with the creative and educational attitudes of individuals forming a social collective (Patson et al., 2021). The task of this distinguished class is creativity, based on openness to diverse ideas of development and a preference for individualism. Equally important is the autonomy of concepts, a high level of specialized competence, and visionary skills in solving problems of enterprises and clients.

Within the competences of the creative class, one may distinguish the ability to generate original products and services of market value, ensuring profits for the enterprise. Achieving economic results requires the creative class to continuously improve their skills (Spalek, Zdonek, 2018).

When distinguishing the characteristics of creativity, it is important to highlight: general intellectual efficiency and effectiveness, possession of knowledge, competences, and creative predispositions. These features make it possible to implement a creative style of thinking based on self-confidence and a willingness to take risks (Ulfah, Syahrudin, 2024).

The analysis of creativity factors is also of great importance. Factors that foster creativity include (Mroczko, 2014):

- openness and tolerance,
- ability to accept criticism,
- sensitivity in relationships involving various problems,
- propensity for risk,

- quick responsiveness in undertaking actions combined with flexibility and originality of initiatives,
- demonstration of courage, curiosity, and initiative,
- sensitivity regarding one's own visions,
- generation of potential in the area of network cooperation.

These factors indicate the essence of creativity in terms of what it is and what it is not (Hee Kim, 2019). To seek answers, it is also allowed to point to the limitations of creativity. The factors limiting creative potential include (Kamińska, 2020):

- lack of ability to make high-risk decisions and fear of making mistakes or encountering conflict situations,
- avoidance of change,
- excessive reliance on consultants' opinions,
- unwillingness to engage in discussions on important issues due to lack of courage,
- limited motivation, flexibility, and initiative.

The above factors constitute barriers to creativity and innovations (Kamińska, 2020). Their consequences relate to the threats facing creativity itself.

Among the threats to creativity, attention is drawn to the priorities of individuals and groups. Their essence focuses on the goals of freedom and equality, which question the problem of restricting individual freedom in relation to the goals of the enterprise striving to achieve profit (Winch, 2018).

Considering the previous deliberations and future research perspectives, creativity is identified with a paradigm that indicates the need to verify existing knowledge in order to respond to current market challenges. The research problems is that creativity constitutes an imperative of enterprise activity and a determinant of innovation processes, demonstrating the central role of creative activity in innovation implementation.

In the processes of creativity, actions related to stimulation and development are crucial, as they result in achieving additional organizational potential. Their aim is to inspire and prepare new innovative concepts oriented toward producing new, original products or services and implementing modern technologies. Such initiatives form the basis for recognizing innovation as a direction for enterprise development (Cheng, 2021).

### 3. The Creative–Destructive Dimension of Innovation in Enterprises

The issues of creativity addressed above indicate the substantive complexity and diversity of conditions, as well as concepts based on the creative actions of organizations.

Taking into account the presented concepts, it is justified to point to a plane of reflection that integrates the imperative of creative actions with Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction, the consequence of which is innovation.

The reference to Schumpeter's creative destruction results from its very nature—as a process reflecting market mechanisms, primarily concerning the competitiveness of economic entities. From the standpoint of this paper's subject, it is justified to emphasize the link between the creative–destructive process and the changes it brings to the existing mechanisms of enterprise and market functioning through the use of creativity directed toward innovation.

Therefore, innovative activities are the consequence of the endogenous potential of enterprises that emphasize creativity oriented toward innovation and a creative approach to problem-solving. Creativity, based on innovativeness, indicates development perspectives for enterprises (Ciborowski, 2014).

In a comparable context, innovation is also identified as an instrument of destabilization of economic entities (Kozmiński et al., 2014). However, destabilization further leads to the process of improving enterprises through the use of innovations that move them from a state of threat to a state of security.

It is significant to emphasize the cyclical nature of these states, as subsequent innovations transfer enterprises from periods of destabilization toward stabilization. In this way, a new cycle of integration through innovation is realized, allowing for the growth of an enterprise's potential (Woźniak, 2014). It can thus be concluded that the increase in enterprise potential is a consequence of implementing innovations resulting from the creative destruction of transformation processes within the area of economic activity (Dachs et al., 2017).

Transformation processes enable the implementation of innovations (Poznańska, 2022). Innovative activity, based on its creative character, displays spatial diversity (Mierzejewska, 2018).

The processes of creating innovations, within this approach, concentrate on three areas:

1. Developing the concept of innovation.
2. Transforming the idea into a specific innovative project.
3. Implementing the project.

The premises for creating innovation concepts may include customer needs identified in the market and the results of R&D activities (Sopińska, 2017). Achieving these contributes to creative cooperation, providing benefits to the collaborating enterprises (Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2018).

An integrative approach to cooperation is reflected in the relationship between creativity and innovativeness, which enables creative behavior in organizations focused on achieving tangible results (Ingram, 2016).

Within this context, the decision-making process aimed at innovation (Głód, Wronka-Pośpiech, 2018) can be associated with the notion of transformational leadership. Its idea is identified with a process of social influence through which managers foster innovativeness. Transformational leadership ensures the integration of creativity with innovation (Szozda, 2022).

In summary, when analyzing innovation in its various but always specific dimensions, it is important to emphasize the significance of introducing new products, services, or technologies within enterprises (Hisrich, Ramadani, 2017). Innovations constitute the result of their creative-destructive dimension.

The purpose of innovation is to achieve economic outcomes (Nesterak et al., 2022). However, for innovative activities to be carried out, expenditures are indispensable, they determine the creative–destructive processes within this area of enterprise operations.

#### **4. Methodology of the research**

The study adopts a mixed methodological approach, integrating qualitative theoretical analysis with quantitative empirical examination. The qualitative component is based on a critical review of selected literature in the fields of management, creativity, and innovation. This review serves to conceptualize creativity and innovation, identify their interdependencies, and justify the adoption of an ontological perspective emphasizing the creative–destructive nature of innovation processes.

From an ontological standpoint, creativity and innovation are treated as interrelated but distinct phenomena embedded in organizational reality. Creativity is understood as a generative capability that enables the creation of new ideas and concepts, while innovation represents the implementation of these ideas in practice, often involving the disruption of existing organizational arrangements. This perspective provides the theoretical foundation for analysing innovation as a cyclical process of destruction and reconstruction.

The quantitative component of the study is based on secondary data analysis using official statistics published by the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS). The empirical analysis focuses on innovation activity indicators, including:

- the share of innovative enterprises by size class (number of employees),
- the structure of product and process innovations,
- expenditures on innovative activities in industrial and service enterprises,
- observed effects of implemented innovations.

Descriptive statistical methods are applied to identify trends, structural relationships, and patterns in innovation activity. The analysis does not aim to establish causal relationships but rather to illustrate the manifestation of creative–innovative relations in enterprise practice.

The activities of enterprises operating in the market, within their decision-making processes, largely focus on creative–innovative relations. Their creative dimension engages the enterprise’s potential, oriented toward development that is ensured by both creativity and innovation. Appropriate relationships in this area create managerial challenges centred on making decisions regarding the creation of innovations and their subsequent implementation.

The realization of such activity requires a measurable assessment of innovative performance. The assessment parameters include expenditures on innovative activities and the effects achieved through their implementation.

The primary aim of this study is to identify and analyse creative–innovative relations in enterprise activities, with a particular focus on the role of creativity as an imperative of innovation and the creative–destructive character of innovation processes. The study seeks to explain how creativity translates into innovation activity and how innovation, in turn, affects enterprise development through both destabilization and stabilization mechanisms.

To achieve this aim, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How is creativity conceptualized as an imperative of enterprise activity in management and quality sciences?
2. What is the nature of the relationship between creativity and innovation when innovation is interpreted through the lens of creative destruction?
3. How do innovation inputs (expenditures) and innovation effects reflect creative–innovative relations in enterprises?
4. Does enterprise size, measured by the number of employees, influence the intensity of innovative activity and its outcomes?

These questions are answered indirectly through the synthesis of literature insights and the examination of statistical data on innovation activity.

The analysis is based on data from the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) — Signal Information, October 30, 2023.

An important issue is the structure of innovative enterprises according to the number of employees (Table 1).

**Table 1.**

*Innovative enterprises in 2020–2022 by number of employees*

Items	Enterprises, which introduced innovations	
	Product innovations (in %)	Innovations in business processes (in %)
Industrial enterprises	15.2	28.1
Number of employees		
10–49	9.4	21.4
50–249	26.2	40.6
250 and more	47.5	65.1

Cont. table 1.

Service enterprises	8.2	30.1
Number of employees		
10-49	6.5	27.4
50-249	13.6	37.8
250 and more	23.8	59.9

Source: [www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl), Działalność innowacyjna przedsiębiorstw w latach 2020-2022 (2023). Warszawa/Szczecin: GUS.

Innovation in enterprises is determined by size, as defined by the number of employees (Table 1). In terms of the number of employees, organizations with 250 or more employees accounted for the largest share of the total number of enterprises introducing innovations. In both industry and services, enterprises in this size class most often introduced business process innovations (65.1% and 59.9%, respectively). An integral problem of innovation is expenditure on innovative activities (Table 2).

**Table 2.**

*Expenditure on innovative activities*

Item	Head in uppercase letters		
	2020	2021	2022
Industrial enterprises	20378.2	19041.5	26011.7
Service enterprises	18399.2	22348.6	29689.1

Source: [www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl), Działalność innowacyjna przedsiębiorstw w latach 2020-2022 (2023). Warszawa/Szczecin: GUS.

Expenditure on innovation in industrial enterprises in 2022 amounted to PLN 26,011.7 million (36.6% more than in the previous year), while in service enterprises it amounted to PLN 29,689.1 million (32.8% more). The growth rate of expenditure in 2022 compared to 2020 is also noticeable.

Both in industrial and service enterprises, expenditure on research and development dominated (accounting for 49.2% and 55.4% of all expenditure on innovation, respectively); expenditure on investments in fixed assets and intangible assets also accounted for a significant share (39.8% and 21.8%, respectively).

When assessing the innovative activity of enterprises in Poland in the period 2020-2022, the following observations can be made:

The above data confirm the thesis that the larger the enterprise—according to the criterion of the number of employees; the greater its tendency to invest in innovation. Financial expenditures allocated to innovative activities increase proportionally to the size of the enterprise. A similar relationship occurs with regard to the effects achieved from implemented innovations.

When evaluating the period 2020-2022, it should be noted that 2021, due to the pandemic crisis, exhibited a declining trend in the field of innovation and other related indicators. However, positive changes in innovative activity already appeared in 2022, which justifies the conclusion about the creative–destructive nature of innovation in enterprises.

Furthermore, the group distinguished by the highest level of innovative activity consisted of large enterprises during the analysed period. Highlighting large enterprises as the key innovators in the economy reflects the importance of creative and innovative potential, which should form an essential element of a creative business strategy.

Innovativeness, as an aspect of a creative strategy, points to the direction of future research.

## 5. Research Limitations

Despite its contributions, the study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis relies exclusively on secondary data from official statistics, which limits the possibility of capturing qualitative aspects of creativity and innovation processes, such as organizational culture or leadership styles. Second, the use of aggregated data restricts the ability to identify causal relationships between creativity, innovation expenditures, and innovation outcomes.

Another limitation concerns the geographical scope of the study, which is confined to Poland. While this focus allows for in-depth national analysis, it limits the generalizability of the findings to other economic contexts. Furthermore, the study does not differentiate between sectors beyond the basic distinction between industry and services, which may obscure sector-specific innovation dynamics.

Finally, the research period, although analytically valuable due to the pandemic context, remains relatively short. Longitudinal studies covering longer time horizons could provide deeper insight into the durability of creative–innovative relations.

## 6. Implications

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the literature by reinforcing the interpretation of innovation as a creative–destructive process rooted in organizational creativity. It advances the understanding of how creativity operates not only as a source of novelty but also as a catalyst for structural transformation within enterprises. This perspective encourages a shift from static to dynamic models of innovation analysis.

Practically, the findings underline the importance of fostering creative capabilities at the organizational level, particularly in large enterprises that act as key innovation drivers in the economy. Managers should recognize that temporary destabilization caused by innovation is not necessarily detrimental but may serve as a prerequisite for long-term development. Policies

supporting innovation should therefore focus not only on increasing expenditures but also on creating conditions conducive to creative experimentation and learning.

The results may also inform public innovation policy by highlighting the need to support small and medium-sized enterprises, which demonstrate lower innovation intensity due to resource constraints. Tailored support mechanisms could help reduce this gap and enhance overall economic innovativeness.

## **7. Directions for Future Research**

Future research should aim to extend the present study by incorporating primary data, such as surveys or case studies, to capture the micro-level mechanisms of creative–innovative relations. Comparative international studies could further verify whether the observed patterns hold in different institutional and economic contexts.

Additionally, future studies could explore sector-specific innovation dynamics or examine the role of leadership and organizational culture in mediating the creative–destructive effects of innovation. Longitudinal analyses covering longer periods would also contribute to understanding the sustainability of creative–innovative strategies.

To sum up, the discussion demonstrates that the results of this study not only confirm existing knowledge but also extend it by offering a dynamic interpretation of creativity and innovation in enterprise activities. By explicitly integrating creative destruction into the analysis of innovation processes, the study provides both theoretical enrichment and practical guidance for enterprises and policymakers. The conclusions are clearly grounded in empirical findings and highlight the enduring relevance of creativity as a driving force of innovation and enterprise development.

## **8. Conclusions**

The perspective of creative–innovative relations in the creative activity of enterprises was analyzed in relation to their innovation activity. The concreteness of such activity was assessed primarily through the inputs and effects of innovation in economic entities during the years 2020–2022.

Based on the available data, it can be concluded that 36.1% of industrial enterprises and 34.2% of service enterprises demonstrated innovative activity in the years 2020–2022. The amount of expenditures on innovative activity in industrial enterprises reached 26,011.7 million PLN, while service enterprises allocated 296,898.1 million PLN to innovation in 2022.

These expenditures enabled enterprises to achieve tangible results from implemented innovations. Among the most significant effects were:

- the overall development of the enterprise,
- improvement in the quality of products and services,
- increase in labor productivity,
- improvement in working conditions, and
- growth in sales and market share.

An interesting issue is the relationship between the level of innovation expenditures and the size of the enterprise, determined by the number of employees. The analysis shows that the larger the enterprise, the higher the investment outlays on innovation. In the research processes, the main investors were enterprises employing more than 250 workers.

The empirical analysis of innovation activity in Polish enterprises during the period 2020-2022 confirms that creativity constitutes a fundamental driver of innovation processes. This finding is consistent with earlier studies emphasizing creativity as a prerequisite for innovation and organizational development (Brzeziński, 2009; Olszak, 2017). The results support the view that creativity should not be treated as an isolated or purely individual phenomenon, but rather as an organizational capability embedded in decision-making processes.

The study demonstrates that enterprises with greater organizational resources - measured by the number of employees - exhibit a higher propensity to engage in innovative activity. This observation aligns with previous empirical evidence indicating that large enterprises possess stronger absorptive capacity, greater access to financial resources, and more developed R&D infrastructure, which facilitate innovation (Dachs et al., 2017; Mierzejewska, 2018). However, the present study extends this knowledge by explicitly linking enterprise size with the creative–destructive nature of innovation processes, rather than merely with innovation output.

The results further reveal that innovation activity intensified in 2022 following a decline in 2021 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This pattern supports Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction, according to which periods of crisis and destabilization are followed by renewal and restructuring through innovation (Ciborowski, 2014; Koźmiński et al., 2014). In this sense, the findings provide empirical confirmation that innovation acts both as a destabilizing force and as a mechanism of recovery and stabilization.

Generalizing these findings, it is justified to conclude that large enterprises in Poland exhibit the highest innovative activity. The level of activity observed during the analyzed period forms the basis for the conclusion that Polish enterprises demonstrate a moderate degree of engagement in innovative activities.

In conclusion, it is possible to underline the results of this study not only confirm existing knowledge but also extend it by offering a dynamic interpretation of creativity and innovation in enterprise activities. By explicitly integrating creative destruction into the analysis of

innovation processes, the study provides both theoretical enrichment and practical guidance for enterprises and policymakers. The conclusions are clearly grounded in empirical findings and highlight the enduring relevance of creativity as a driving force of innovation and enterprise development.

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