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**SECONDARY SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' OPINIONS
ON BARRIERS AND STIMULANTS OF INNOVATION IN RURAL TOURISM**

Słowa kluczowe: barriers, factors stimulating innovation, rural tourism

SUMMARY

The article presents the opinions of 139 students of the University of Life Sciences in Warsaw and 35 secondary school pupils of Jadwiga Dziubińska Agricultural Training Centre Schools in Gołdkowo on the factors hindering and initiating innovative activities in rural tourism. The research shows that the greatest obstacles in driving innovation in rural tourism are insufficient financial resources as well as high costs of innovation. An important driver of innovation is continuous collaboration with NGOs and agritourism farms in implementing joint initiatives. In the respondents' opinions, the owner of an agritourism farm should make continuous changes in order to improve the quality of services.

Introduction

Innovation decides on the level and direction of development of a present day company, including an agritourism one, competitive advantage. Innovation involves the implementation of improved solutions for product development, production, organization and marketing that have not been used before to the economic practice¹.

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¹ J. Cichorska, *Finansowe bariery rozwoju innowacyjności mikroprzedsiębiorstw w Polsce*, in: *Uwarunkowania rynkowe rozwoju mikro i małych przedsiębiorstw. Mikrofirma 2010*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2010, p. 32.

Focusing on tourist companies, it must be said that they are innovative if their owners can develop new products, produce them efficiently and promote successfully. Thus, they should be capable of raising finance in a way that is adequate to the changing conditions and have skills to introduce new technologies and organizational methods necessary to meet the changing targets of development.

The implementation of innovative solutions in tourist facilities faces a series of barriers or determining factors. With regard to innovation, tourist industry should strive to get to know opportunities for the implementation of innovation in the biggest possible number of areas to be able to compete on domestic and foreign markets in the future.

Research Objective and Methods

The article aims to present factors hindering and stimulating innovation in rural tourism². In order to identify these factors fully and objectively, the empiric material has been gathered with the use of surveys and their adequate research technique (a questionnaire). It was sent to 174 respondents, including 125 extramural students of the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Life Sciences in Warsaw (46 first year students of the BA studies in the field of Economics, 30 first year students of the MA studies in the field of Finance and Accounting and 8 students of MA studies in the field of Management), 14 extramural students of the fourth year of the Faculty of Farming and Biology (the field of Farming) and 35 students of Jadwiga Dziubińska Educational Training Centre Schools in Gołdkowo secondary school (12 students of the 1st form trained in Agribusiness, 18 students of the 2nd form trained in Farming Mechanization and 5 students of the 2nd form trained in Veterinary). The respondents were both men – 52.9% and women 47.1%. Most of them (64.4%) live in rural areas and 15.5% in towns with the population below 100,000, 4.6 in towns with the population below 500,000 and other respondents in cities with the population above 500,000.

The respondents formed three groups, i.e. those who attend a secondary school, those who have started studying and those who are going to complete university education soon.

² The proposed study aimed to identify the opinions of students and secondary school pupils on innovation in the development of rural tourism. In the future it is planned to research of owners agritourism farms and tourists.

Essence of Innovation

Innovation is defined in various ways. The term is derived from Latin *innovatio*, which means a 'renewal'. In common use it is often associated with creation, inventiveness, alterations and unconventional solutions. Each of the terms is synonymous but contains only part of the truth about the essence of 'innovation' and does not define it. In accordance with the most common definitions, innovation means introduction or implementation of developmental changes³. *Słownik wyrazów obcych i trudnych*⁴ says that innovation means introduction of something new, usually a kind of improvement, inventiveness or reform, which result in a novelty.

In the theory of economics, the term 'innovation' appeared at the beginning of the 20th century. It was J.A. Schumpeter, who introduced it in 1912. According to E. Mansfeld, the work on innovative processes developed in the 60s⁵. The introduction of the concept of innovation by J.A. Schumpeter started a discussion on the meaning of the term in the theory of economics and in the economy. In his opinion, innovative activities should be understood as a practical use and utilisation of novelties in a product and a process (in supplies, in manufacture and production implementation). Taking this into account, innovative activities are described as a functional combination of the following possibilities⁶:

- manufacture of newly introduced products or improved ones,
- introduction of a new or improved method of production,
- opening of a new market,
- use of new methods of sales and purchase,
- use of new materials or semi-finished products,
- introduction of a new organization of production.

According to J.A. Schumpeter, all these above-mentioned possibilities have a common characteristic feature: a phenomenon of novelty and a multi-directional nature in relation with the pre-production, production and post-production stages of business activities.

³ H. Klages, *Metodologiczne problemy pomiaru innowacji społecznych*, in: *Wybór tekstów*, eds. A. Siciński, J. Gzula, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1976, p. 444.

⁴ A. Markowski, R. Pawelec, *Słownik wyrazów obcych i trudnych*, Wydawnictwo Cykada, Warszawa 2000, p. 169.

⁵ B. Fiedor, *Teoria innowacji*, PWN, Warszawa 1979, p. 22.

⁶ J.A. Schumpeter, *Teoria rozwoju gospodarczego*, PWN, Warszawa 1960, p. 104.

The key word in J.A. Schumpeter's definition is 'novelty', which refers to the first use of a solution. He did not treat their dissemination as innovation and said they were imitations (impressions). He also attributed much importance to the achievement of a positive economic result of innovation and the possibility to its practical use⁷. According to him, innovative activities include technical as well as economic and organisational undertakings with regard to a new product development, production methods, new market opening, obtaining new resources (materials and semi-products) and reorganisation of production processes⁸.

There are many different definitions of innovation in the literature on economics. It is interpreted in a special meaning (*sensu stricto*) and is described as changes in the production based on new or not used before knowledge. Some authors believe that innovation is a process of research and development leading to utilisation and use of improved solutions in the technique, technology and organization⁹. They are:

- a) L. Soete, who defines innovation as "the first commercial use or production of a new technology or product"¹⁰;
- b) S. Kuznets, in whose opinion, innovation is "a new use of old or new knowledge in the process of production initiating the use of an invention"¹¹;
- c) C.F. Carter and B.R. Williams, who believe that innovation is "the introduction of an invention that is an unused part of technological knowledge"¹².

P.F. Drucker's opinion, innovation infiltrates all aspects of a company's operations. These can be product changes, changes in marketing (promotional activities, pricing policy, distribution channels or customer service) or changes in organization and management methods¹³. He also suggests treating innovation

⁷ P. Niedzielski, K. Rychlik, *Innowacje i kreatywność*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2006, p. 19.

⁸ J.A. Schumpeter, *Teoria rozwoju...*, p. 104.

⁹ W. Czemieli-Grzybowska, *Zarządzanie przedsiębiorstwem*, Difin, Warszawa 2011, p. 83.

¹⁰ C. Freeman, L. Soete, *The Economic of Industrial Innovation*, Continuum, London 1997, p. 1.

¹¹ S. Kuznets, *Six Lectures of Economic Growth*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1959, p. 30.

¹² C.F. Carter, B.R. Williams, *Industry and Technological Process*, Oxford University Press, London 1958, p. 29.

¹³ P.F. Drucker, *The Practice of Management*, Harper Collins, London 1968, p. 58.

as systemic activities¹⁴, which consist in active identification of changes in the environment and a systematic analysis of possibilities to utilize them to create subsequent innovation¹⁵.

According to P. Hildreth and C. Kimble¹⁶, and A. Hargadon and R. I. Sutton¹⁷, innovation results from the exchange of knowledge in many different fields, which is next integrated in a new and different way. This results in the creation of new products, services and processes.

W. Janasz says that a category of innovation should be presented in a narrow sense, too. It defines its influence on production, pre-production and post-production processes of the production implementation. It is also necessary to notice that innovation is important from social and organisational point of view (broader sense of innovation)¹⁸.

Barriers to Innovative Activities

Any factors can hinder innovative activities. There are also reasons for giving up any innovative activity and factors slowing down such activities or causing that it does not bring the expected effects. The literature on the subject matter lists the following, most important barriers to innovation¹⁹:

- Market barriers connected with:
 - Regional demand differentiation;
 - Strong market competition;
- Financial barriers connected with the start of a new business, which concern:
 - Limited availability of funding for new undertakings;
 - Financing development;

¹⁴ P.F. Drucker, *On the Profession of Management*, Harvard Business Scholl Press, Boston 1998, p. 54.

¹⁵ P.F. Drucker, *Innowacja i przedsiębiorczość*, Studio Emka, Warszawa 2004, p. 42–43.

¹⁶ P. Hildreth, C. Kimble, *Knowledge Networks: Innovation Through Communities of Practice*, Idea Group Publishing, London 2004, p. 81.

¹⁷ A. Hargadon, R.I. Sutton, *Building Innovation Factory*, „Harvard Business Review” 2000, vol. 78, no. 3, p. 157–166.

¹⁸ W. Janasz, *Innowacje i ich miejsce w działalności przedsiębiorstw*, in: *Innowacje w modelach działalności przedsiębiorstw*, ed. W. Janasz, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2003, p. 53.

¹⁹ M. Strużycki, B. Bojewska, *Rola państwa i rządu w kształtowaniu innowacyjnej gospodarki*, in: *Innowacje w rozwijaniu konkurencyjności firm. Znaczenie, wsparcie, przykłady zastosowań*, C.H. Beck, Warszawa 2011, p. 22–23.

- Leasing as a form of financing investment;
- Lack of thorough information about business partners and contractors;
- Fiscal system;
- Barriers connected with the government policy with regard to:
 - Implementation of law;
 - Ambiguity of economic regulations;
 - Licencing system;
 - Regional policy;
- Barriers connected with production with regard to:
 - Production factors;
 - Employment;
 - Technical infrastructure and premises limitations;
- Barriers connected with access to information at local level.

Podręcznik Oslo presents another attitude; it distinguishes twenty-seven factors hindering innovation and classifies them in five areas of influence connected with²⁰:

- costs,
- knowledge,
- market neighbourhood,
- institutions in the neighbourhood,
- other reasons for innovation failure.

Factors Stimulating Innovation

The literature on the subject presents various suggestions of how the factors stimulating innovation in companies should be classified. The distinctions are usually rather conventional in character. Generally, two main groups of factors are distinguished: external (exogenous) and internal (endogenous) ones.

According to M. Brojak-Trzaskowska, the external conditions include the following groups: macro-economic, formal-legal, social and cultural, technical and technological and organisational factors. Internal conditions include: eco-

²⁰ *Podręcznik Oslo. Zasady gromadzenia i interpretacji danych dotyczących innowacji. Pomiar działalności naukowej i technicznej*, European Commission, OECD, p. 115–118.

nomic-financial, sociocultural, organisational-managerial, intellectual and psychological factors²¹.

Limiting the analysis to internal factors, it is worth mentioning another interesting classification that distinguishes the following categories²²:

- factors resulting from an entrepreneur's personality,
- factors connected with an entrepreneur's experience,
- factors connected with a company's personnel,
- factors connected with the direct market neighbourhood,
- factors resulting from a company's location,
- former and present results achieved by a company,
- legal and financial conditions with regard to a company.

Speaking about tourist industry operations, it is necessary to recall a part of another definition: a company that is innovation-oriented or, in other words, innovative is one that²³:

- a) is broadly involved in research and development (or buys new products or technologies);
- b) allots relatively much funding for this activity;
- c) systematically implements new scientific and technical solutions;
- d) has a big share of novelties (products and technologies) in the whole volume of production and services;
- e) constantly introduces innovation onto the market.

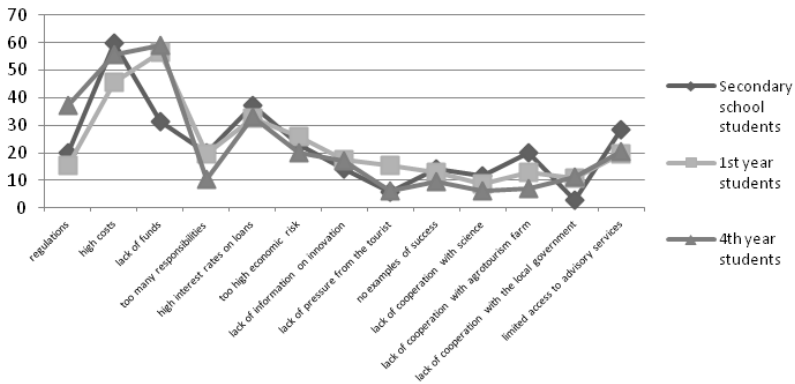
Research Results

The research shows that the biggest barrier to innovation in rural tourism is an insufficient amount of financial resources. Mainly university students: both those who have just started studying and those who are going to finish their studies soon, have chosen this answer. Detailed information on the subject are in Figure 1.

²¹ M. Brojak-Trzaskowska, *Spoleczno-kulturowe determinanty aktywności innowacyjnej przedsiębiorstw*, in: *Tendencje innowacyjnego rozwoju polskich przedsiębiorstw*, eds. E. Okoń-Horodyńska, A. Zachorowska-Mazurkiewicz, Instytut Wiedzy i Innowacji, Warszawa 2008, p. 169–183.

²² L. Kwieciński, K. Moszkowicz, J. Sroka, *Innowacyjność i internacjonalizacja dolnośląskich małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2007, p. 45.

²³ A.H. Jasiński, *Innowacje i polityka innowacyjna*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, Białystok 1997, p. 22 and W. Janasz, *Innowacyjność i przedsiębiorczość w kulturze organizacyjnej przedsiębiorstwa jako systemu społecznego*, in: *Innowacje w strategii rozwoju organizacji w Unii Europejskiej*, ed. W. Janasz, Difin, Warszawa 2008, p. 53–88.

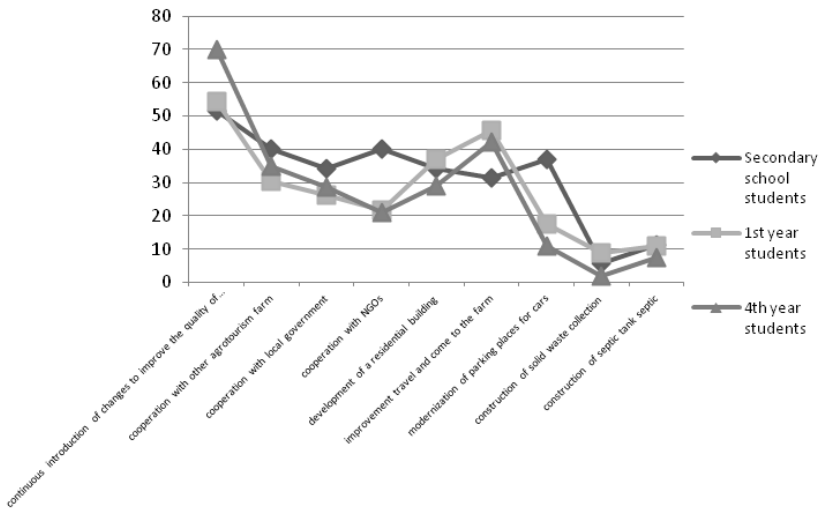


* Respondents could indicate more than one answer.

N = 174

Figure 1. Main factors hindering the introduction of innovation by agritourism farms' owners in university and secondary school students' opinions (%)

Source: author's own research.



* Respondents could indicate more than one answer.

N = 174

Figure 2. Factors stimulating the introduction of innovations on agritourism farms in university and secondary school students' opinion (%)

Source: author's own research.

In the opinion of students taking part in the survey, the biggest barrier to innovation is its too high cost. In the opinion of the same group of respondents, some less important factors hindering innovation include high interest rate on loans, economic risk and availability of advisory services.

On the other hand, with regard to the question about factors stimulating innovation in rural tourism, the opinions are diverse (Fig. 2).

In the survey participants' opinion, agritourism farm owners should continually introduce changes in order to improve the quality of services they provide. According to the students, an important factor for agritourism facilities is the improvement of access routes to farms. Secondary school students believe that constant cooperation with NGOs and other agritourism farms in order to launch joint projects is another factor stimulating innovation.

Conclusions

Based on the conducted research and author's own observations, a few conclusions can be formulated:

- a) innovation decides about the level and direction of development of a present day tourist facility, marking progress, development and competitive advantage;
- b) innovation in tourist industry involves activities inside and outside a company and its aim and result is the introduction of new and improved products, processes and organisation, as well as expansion to new markets;
- c) the biggest barrier to innovation in rural tourism is insufficient amount of financial resources and high costs of innovation;
- d) an important factor stimulating innovation is constant cooperation with NGOs and other agritourism farms in the work on joint initiatives;
- e) the survey respondents believe that an agritourism farm owner should continually introduce changes in order to improve the quality of the provided services.

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**OPINIE UCZNIÓW SZKÓŁ ŚREDNICH I STUDENTÓW
NA TEMAT BARIER I STYMULANT INNOWACYJNOŚCI
W TURYSTYCE WIEJSKIEJ**

Słowa kluczowe: bariery, czynniki stymulujące innowacyjność, turystyka wiejska

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule przedstawiono opinie 139 studentów Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Warszawie oraz 35 uczniów z Zespołu Szkół Centrum Kształcenia Rolniczego im. Jadwigi Dziubińskiej w Gołdtkowie dotyczące czynników utrudniających i inicjujących działalność innowacyjną w turystyce wiejskiej. Z badań wynika, że największą przeszkodą innowacyjności w agroturystyce są niewystarczające środki finansowe, a także wysokie koszty innowacji. Ważnym motorem innowacyjności jest ciągła współpraca gospodarstw agroturystycznych z organizacjami pozarządowymi w realizacji wspólnych inicjatyw. W opinii respondentów, właściciel gospodarstwa agroturystycznego powinien dokonywać ciągłych zmian w celu poprawy jakości świadczonych usług.