

THE CONCEPT OF INNOVATION IN THE APPROACH TO NOVELTY, VALUE CREATING, INTERACTION PROCESSES AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

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ABSTRACT

Countries and businesses focus on processes optimization aiming to cut cost and increase profit. The main keyword for achieving it is usually “innovations”. Innovations is one of the most popular trends in most economies and businesses. The paradox is that there is the lack of understanding the concept both in business and science. The term of innovations is not a new topic in the research literature. However, the problem is that the definition of the concept of innovations is constantly evolving and there is no clear definition. The paper aims to define the concept of innovations and identify the changes in the concept by reviewing the scientific literature. Literature analysis revealed that the development of innovations concept started in 1934, approaching the concept from the novelty perspective. Later new perspectives were introduced such as interaction processes, value creation and social progress. Today the concept can be defined as following: innovation is a company or consumer-initiated economic, managerial, psychological or technological process of renewal within a company, which results in greater added value and a competitive advantage.

KEYWORDS: *innovations concept, innovations in economics.*

JEL CODES: O31, O39

DOI:

Introduction

Nowadays innovation is a very popular and widely used term/concept, seen as the source of businesses or countries wealth. Many companies and countries sets the goal for themselves to innovate, invest huge funds but paradoxically in many cases lack an understanding of the word “innovation”, do not know what the word means exactly and what innovation can be, core of their characteristics is unknown, what and how to achieve through innovation what the results will be. In scientific literature the words “inventions” and “innovation” are mixed, sometimes even used as synonyms. The invention is only the beginning of the transformation process (Gyurácz-Németh et al 2013), and innovation is a more complex concept.

Problem. Even among scientists there is no consensus on how innovation is defined, what it is and what the economic effect is generated by innovations, the definition is constantly changing. Defining innovation concept remains a serious subject of debate and continuous analysis (Mei et al, 2010). Different authors present different attitudes, emphasize different criteria or aspects of the innovation’s content (Carvalho & Sarkar, 2014).

Purpose. The aim of this paper is to define the concept of innovations and identify the changes in the concept by reviewing the scientific literature.

Object. The concept of innovations and its changes.

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Tasks: To analyze research literature on novelty approach in the concept of innovations; to systemize scientific literature on innovations concept based on process of interaction; to analyze the innovations term from the perspective of value creation; to analyze the concept of innovations as a factor of social progress.

Methods. Scientific literature analysis method was used to achieve the aim.

1. Novelty approach in the concept of innovation

Analysis of the scientific literature on the concept of innovation reveals that despite a lot of differences between different theories of authors, there are also some connecting points. In defining the concept of innovation, several different groups of scientific approaches can be systematized by different criteria.

The oldest approach group identifies innovation as novelty. This is the earliest trend in innovation research. The word “innovation” comes from “innovare” and the Latin noun “innovatus”. The meaning on the word is to create or make something new by transforming an idea or process into a demanded product or added value service (Johannessen et al., 2001). Scientists started to investigate innovations topic in 20th century. J. Schumpeter (1934) was in a forefront of innovations theory, he was one of the first scientists who created innovations theory. The scientist had already a quite broad approach of the innovations concept, encompassing new products, new production processes, new markets, new materials and new organizational forms. Schumpeter (1934) stated that the common aspect between all these „new things“ is that they are characterized by “new combinations”, which is important for companies, dynamic business leaders and entrepreneurs (Otterbacher, 2008). Innovation is a new way of doing things, or it describes new or unique combinations of factors of production. Innovation was broadly defined as the development of an organization and the implementation of new products or services, new ways of doing things (Schumpeter, 1934).

J. Schumpeter’s attitude that innovation is any novelty related to a product, activity or organization was a sound basis for further researches. Many later scientists (Steele, 1975; Mansfield, 1963; Rieche & Schön, 1966 ; Damanpour, 1992 and many others) held the same idea that innovation is the assimilation of a new idea, behaviour, system, policy, program, device, process, product or service that are new to the organization. From an economic perspective innovation is a new activity that leads to economic growth. Innovation is essentially a process of creating change, and while such change can be dangerous and the concept of innovation is vague, it is simply described as “the introduction of new things or methods”. Later Drucker (1985) defined innovation simply as an opportunity that results in the creation of new products or services. The link between innovation and novelty is also emphasized in official publications. OECD Oslo Manual (2005) indicates that the innovation is a new and or significantly improved goods or services, the process of implementation a new marketing method or a new organizational method in business, job organization or external relations. Nowadays the definition of innovation does not necessarily imply a major change in relation to a particular individual (Decelle, 2004). Most definitions of innovation has novelty as key elements, but the novelty is not always something new for the world, it can be new for the company (Sipe & Testa, 2009). Whatever the context in which innovation is discussed, it is in related to something new at any level (Mei et al., 2010) - improved areas of business related to product, service, process, marketing methods or even organizational structures are identified as innovative approach (Pirnar et al., 2012). Innovation and creativity are often misinterpreted in terms of novelty, but they mean different things because creativity involves new products and new services, new ideas, new processes, brands, techniques, methods and inventions. Creativity is the ability to generate new and useful ideas (Gyurácz-Németh et al., 2013; Sipe & Testa, 2009), it can help to discover new problem-solving and company-specific opportunities (Otterbacher, 2008), while innovation includes new creative ideas and inventions usage (Pirnar et al., 2012). It is the ability to implement new creative ideas by solving problems through opportunities (Gyurácz-Németh et al., 2013; Sipe & Testa, 2009). Successful innovation requires a high-level professional management and creativity combinations. The general definition of innovation from the perspective of novelty can be formulated as any novelty to a business unit as a result of a creative idea that can occur in any sphere of business. Areas of activity are not differentiated in different historical periods. Analysing the genesis of the concept of innovation in terms of

novelty, it is noticeable that the areas of expression of innovation are becoming less specific as the definition of innovation evolves (see Table 1). In 1934, J. Shumpeter provided a sufficiently specific list of novelties, known as innovations. Later (1975-1996), innovation was called as a new activity for the business unit, not the world. Even later (2005), innovations were considered necessary new but also significantly improved objects, and the latest (2004-2013) definitions refer to innovation even less specifically as the application of creative ideas and inventions.

Table 1. Innovations concept

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Shumpeter, 1934 | Mansfield, 1963; Steele, 1975; Damanpour, 1992 Danmanpour, 1996 | OECD, 2005 | Decelle, 2004; Sipe & Testa, 2009; Pinar, 2012; Gyurácz-Németh et al, 2013 |
| New: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • products, • production processes, markets, • raw material, • forms of organization of activities | New activity for the business unit, not the world, the process of creating change. | New or significantly improved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goods, • services, • process, • marketing or business organization method, • workplace organization or external relations | New creative ideas and inventions of application as at any level |

Source: Created by author

However, all innovation theories are created based on doubting existing assumptions and ways of thinking. A lot of authors ignore creativity aspect in defining the concept of innovation. Creativity driven novelty in the interpretation of the concept of innovation, despite it is the oldest and one of the largest approaches, is not the only approach. Each author questions and supplements previous theories. Different actors have different perceptions of what they consider to be innovation, suggesting that previous research has not been able to provide a useful definition of innovation (Johannessen et al., 2001; Hjalager, 2010). Other viewpoints emerge from this. Much later, as research into the concept of innovation in terms of novelty has developed, other groups of approaches have emerged, emphasizing less specific and more abstract factors in defining innovation

2. Innovation as a process of interaction

Other researchers argue in one or another way that innovation is a process of interaction within a company. Sources of innovation are numerous and highly dependent on the economic sector in which the company operates, but regardless of the sector in which organizations operate, innovation remains an evolutionary process based on knowledge (Johannessen et al., 1999). And while it is possible for innovation to emerge in one particular organization, innovation is often the result of the interaction of several entities. Small and medium-sized enterprises are particularly rarely equipped with the knowledge resources, are needed to innovate and collaborate with other companies and to innovate, develop synergies and share competences (Müller, 2006). According to Muller and Zenker (2001), the knowledge needed for innovation can be generated by organizations internally (for example, through R & D) or acquired from organizations external environment: partners, competitors, suppliers and customers (Iorgulescu et al., 2013). Innovation refers to the interaction between the various combined work production operators, new economically useful knowledge dissemination and use (Lundvall, 1992; Iorgulescu et al., 2013). There is some kind of novelty in innovations definition by interaction aspect as sharing of knowledge resources is pointed out. Knowledge is created and transferred internally or transferred from one entity to another and it is obvious that they will be new for the receiving unit (see Fig. 1).

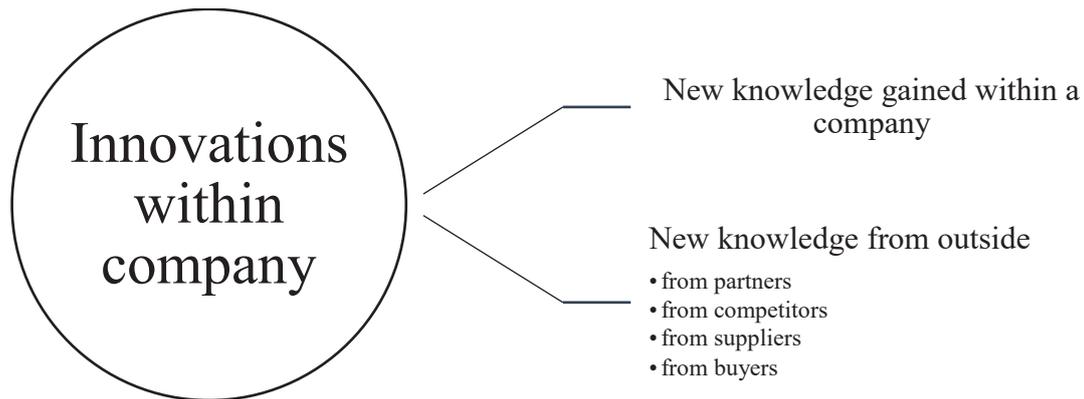


Figure 1. The concept of innovation in terms of interaction processes

Source: Created by author

The synthesis of knowledge within the company and from the outside creates the favourable conditions for innovations. This interaction results in innovations within a company.

3. Innovation as a tool of value creation

The third group of authors describes innovation as value creation. The explanation of innovation definition through value creation is very abstract. It limits to everything that creates value and increases competitive advantage. This trend has also emerged when the concept of innovation emphasizing novelty expanded considerably. This approach supplements but does not replace theories that interpret innovation through novelty.

In the scientific literature the link between value and innovations is described in both ways. It is explained that value creation is innovation, that increases value for customer (Maine et al., 2012). On the other hand, other authors emphasize that the product or service that has value proposition changes are already innovations (Nada, Ali, 2015). Value is identified as an important aspect of innovation (Francis, Bessant, 2005), innovation creates new opportunities to increase value added (Meneses, Teixeira, 2011). Innovations are defined as a way to create value for customers (O’Cass, Sok, 2013). Innovation concept is also defined by emphasizing a competitive advantage. Howells (2007) and Meneses, Teixeira (2011) indicate innovation as a way to maintain competitive advantage and rejuvenate mature business. Value in innovations can be created in the cooperation between innovation holder and stakeholders. It is very visible in digital innovations when value is created through social media interactions (Suseno et al., 2018).

4. Innovations as a factor of social progress

Other authors describe innovation through a social progress aspect. This approach group does not deny the other group of theoretical statements but emphasize different aspects. Innovations definition using social progress perspective is separated from novelty, process interaction and value creation approaches (see Fig. 2).

Innovations as a factor of social progress approach group describes innovation in the least tangible way. From a sociological point of view, innovation is the renewal of social behaviour (McClelland, 1961; LaPiere, 1965). According to Kline and Rosenberg (1986), innovation is a complex social phenomenon. Innovation represents a joint social process (not the result), when in the end it is possible to see the usefulness of innovation (Decelle, 2004). It is defined as a process where innovation does not occur in a linear way but is characterized by complex feedback communication mechanisms and interactive communications. Innovation as an expression of human creativity and unconventional thinking is not the result of economic development, but rather a source of sustainable economic and social progress (Collins & Fahy, 2011; Iorgulescu et al., 2013).

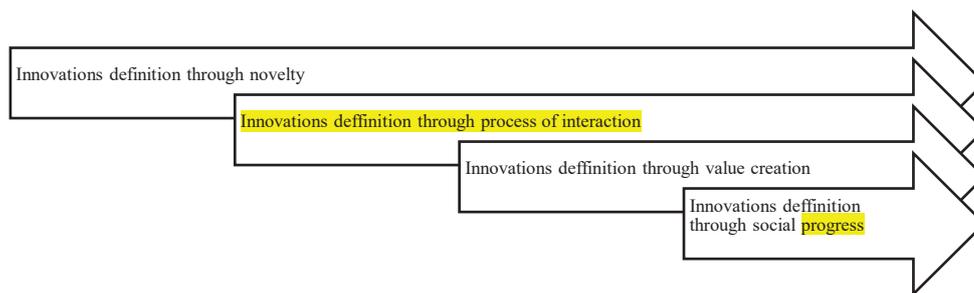


Figure 2. The concept of innovation in terms of social processes

Source: Created by author

Although the scientific literature since 1936 to 2018 revealed 4 innovation analysis trends, which can be divided into smaller parts: novelty, the interaction processes, change, value creation and social progress, J. Jemeljanovič and G. Mikaliūnienė (2016) distinguishes different four innovation areas: economic, managerial, psychologic and technologic, which can classify innovation concept definition directions. All approaches, discussed in this paper, can be classified by these main groups. In addition to economic and management approaches, psychological approach emphasizes employee’s knowledge, skills and creativity as innovation knowledge is linked to people and their abilities. While technological approach focuses on new technologies, stating that innovations are everything that is created using new technologies (see Table 2).

Table 2. Classification of the concept of innovation

| ECONOMIC APPROACH | | |
|---|--|--|
| NEW | VALUE CREATION | COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schumpeter (1934) - a new activity that leads to economic growth. • Steele (1975) - Introduction of new subjects or methods. • Drucker (1985) - Organizing and implementing new products or services, new ways of doing things. • Tidd (1997) Innovare - to create or make something new. • Danmanpour (1996) - does not always mean news in the world, it may be new to a business unit. • Johannessen et al. (2001) - Almost every definition of innovation focuses on renewal. • OECD Oslo Manual (2005) - New or significantly improved goods or services, process implementation, new marketing method or new business organization method, workplace organization or external relations. • Otterbacher (2008) - a combination of professional management and creativity. • Gyurácz-Németh et al. (2013) - that innovation management is the ability to implement creative ideas in problem solving. • Pinar, 2012 - Application of new creative ideas and inventions. • Mei et al. (2010) - related to something new. • Pinar et al., 2012 - Improved areas of business related to product, service, process, marketing methods or organizational structures are identified as innovative approaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peters & Pikkemaat, 2006 - Transforming an Idea or Process into a Demanding Product or Service with Value Added • Martínez- Ros and Orfila - Sintes (2009) - create new opportunities for added value. • Teixeira (2011) - Innovation must create value for the company. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howells (2007), and Meneses & Teixeira (2011) - A way to maintain a competitive edge and rejuvenate mature business. |

| MANAGEMENT APPROACH | | |
|--|---|--|
| INTEROPERABILITY PROCESSES WITHIN THE COMPANY | CHANGES | SOCIAL PROGRESS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lundvall (1992), Iorgulescu et al. (2013) - Interaction between various collaborating production entities, dissemination and use of new economically useful knowledge. • Johannessen et al. (1999) - An evolutionary process based on knowledge. • MÜLLER & pharingsophageal, 2001 • Gyurácz-Németh et al (2013) - Includes not only typical product / process manufacturing innovation but also market, organizational and resource innovation. • Hollenstein (2000) and Carvalho & Sarkar (2014) - cover several stages, starting with the fundamental introduction of new products and the introduction of new manufacturing technologies in-house. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steele (1975) - The process of creating change. • Decelle (2004) - Not necessarily a big change for a particular person. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McClelland (1961), LaPiere (1965) - A Renewal of Social Behavior. • Kline and Rosenberg (1986) - A complex social phenomenon. Represents the totality of the combined social process (not the result). • Collins & Fahy (2011) is not the result of economic development but rather a source of sustainable economic and social progress |
| PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH (WORKERS ,KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND CREATIVITY) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anderson et al. (2004) • Orfila-Sintesa et al. (2005) • Tseng & Kuo & Chou (2008) • Gyurácz-Németh et al. (2013) – Innovation knowledge is linked to people and their abilities | | |
| TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACH (NEW TECHNOLOGY) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oslo Manual (2005) • Van de Vrande et al. (2009) • Gassmann (2006) • Von Hippel (2009) • De Paulo, De Oliveira, Silveira Porto (2017) • Chesbrough (2006) • Van Dijk, Van Den Ende (2002) • Lichtenthaler (2007) – Innovations are based on new technologies. | | |

Source: Created by author

Based on the innovation concept analysis directions, listed above, the innovation concept can be defined as an enterprise or consumer initiated economic, managerial, psychological or technological process of renewal within a company, which brings greater added value and a competitive advantage. The definition of innovation concept does not reveal innovations classification aspects.

Conclusions

In summary, the development of innovations concept started in 1934, approaching the concept from the novelty perspective. This research group identified new products, services as innovations. It can be something new for the consumer, company or world. The research on innovation concept evolved and new perspectives were introduced. Innovations concept was explained as interaction processes inside and outside the company. The definition was based on the synergy between units as it enables the sharing of knowledge, transmitted knowledge helps to create new things – innovations. Later value creation approach was introduced in defining innovations concept. Scientists emphasized value aspect. Innovations were understood as new products or services, delivering higher value for consumers. The latest emerged approach group is explaining innovation through the social progress. Innovation as an expression of human creativity and unconventional thinking is not the result of economic development, but rather a source of sustainable economic and social progress. Today the innovations concept definition is wider and can be defined as following: innovation is a company or consumer-initiated economic, managerial, psychological or technological process of renewal within a company, which results in greater added value and a competitive advantage. Innovation from an economic perspective are treated as a source for competitiveness and economic growth, it is approached also as a tool for economic growth and prosperity in different countries. Innovation has become one of the top priorities in many countries for driving economy.

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INOVACIJŲ KONCEPCIJA NAUJUMO, VERTĖS KŪRIMO, SAŲVEIKOS PROCESO IR SOCIALINĖS PAŽANGOS POŽIŪRIAIS

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Santrauka

Šalys ir verslai, siekdami mažinti sąnaudas ir didinti pelną, šiuo metu siekia optimizuoti procesus. Pagrindinis žodis – *inovacijos*. Tai viena populiariausių tendencijų daugelyje ekonomikų ir verslo įmonių. Paradoksalu, kad trūksta sąvokos aiškumo tiek versle, tiek moksle. *Inovacijų* terminas mokslinėje literatūroje nenaujas. Problema ta, kad šios sąvokos apibrėžimas nuolat kinta, ji aiškiai neapibrėžta. Mokslininkai nėra sutarę dėl to, kaip apibrėžti inovacijas, kas jos yra ir kokią ekonominį poveikį teikia. Yra daug skirtingų požiūrių, pabrėžiant skirtingus inovacijos turinio kriterijus ar aspektus. Inovacijų sampratos apibrėžimas tebėra rimtas diskusijų ir nuolatinės analizės objektas.

Šio straipsnio tikslas – apibrėžti *inovacijų* sąvoką ir nustatyti, kaip apibrėžimas kito, apžvelgiant mokslinę literatūrą. Siekiant iškelto tikslo, taikytas mokslinės literatūros analizės metodas.

Literatūros analizė atskleidė, kad inovacijų koncepcija pradėta analizuoti 1934 m. Pirmieji inovacijas analizavę mokslininkai jas apibrėžė kaip naujovę. J. Shumpeterio požiūris, kad inovacijos – tai kiekviena naujovė, susijusi su produktu, veikla ar organizacija, buvo tvirtas pagrindimas tolesniems tyrimams. Analizuojant inovacijas naujumo aspektu teigiama, kad žvelgiant iš ekonominės perspektyvos, inovacijos yra nauja veikla, lemianti ekonomikos augimą. Daugelyje *inovacijų* apibrėžimų naujumas yra pagrindinis elementas, bet jos ne visada yra kažkas naujo pasauliui, gali būti nauja tik įmonei. Nagrinėjant *inovacijų* sąvokos vartojimą išryškėjo kitos požiūrių grupės, pabrėžiančios mažiau specifinius, abstraktesnius veiksmus apibrėžiant inovacijas.

Kiti tyrėjai vienaip ar kitaip tvirtina, kad inovacijos yra skirtingų subjektų sąveikos procesas įmonės viduje. Jos gali atsirasti vienoje konkrečioje organizacijoje, bet dažnai būna kelių subjektų sąveikos rezultatas. Ypač retai mažos ir vidutinės įmonės turi žinių išteklių, joms būtina bendradarbiauti su kitomis įmonėmis, kad pasidalintų kompetencijomis, įvyktų sinergija ir taip būtų sukurtos inovacijos. Žinios kuriamos ir perduodamos viduje arba perkeliamos iš vieno subjekto kitam, akivaizdu, kad priimančiam subjektui jos bus naujos, inovatyvios. Žinių sintezė įmonėje ir iš išorės sudaro palankias sąlygas inovacijoms. Ši sąveika lemia jų atsiradimą įmonėje.

Trečia autorių grupė inovacijas apibūdina kaip vertės – konkurencinio pranašumo – kūrimą. Inovacijų, kaip vertės kūrimo, apibrėžimas yra labai abstraktus: apima viską, kas kuria vertę ir didina konkurencinį pranašumą.

Vėliau *inovacijų* sąvoka aiškinta dar abstrakčiau, apibūdinta pasitelkus socialinės pažangos aspektą. Ši požiūrio grupė inovacijas įvardija mažiausiai specifiskai. Inovacijos apibrėžiamos kaip procesas, vykstantis nelineariu būdu, bet apibūdinamos sudėtingais grįžtamojo ryšio perdavimo mechanizmais ir interaktyvia komunikacija. Jos traktuojamos kaip žmogaus kūrybiškumo ir netradicinio mąstymo išraiška, yra ne ekonominio vystymosi rezultatas, o darnios ekonominės ir socialinės pažangos šaltinis.

Visos inovacijų koncepcijos apibrėžimo kryptys yra skirtingos. Nė viena iš analizuotų kryptių grupių neneigia kitos teorinių teiginių grupės, tik pabrėžia skirtingus aspektus. Šiandien *inovacijų* sąvoka gali būti apibrėžiama kaip įmonės ar vartotojo inicijuotas ekonominis, vadybinis, psichologinis ar technologinis atnaujinimo procesas, kuris sukuria didesnę pridėtinę vertę ir konkurencinį pranašumą.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: *inovacijų koncepcija, inovacijos ekonomikoje.*

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