

An enormous importance of interorganisational relationships in today's world is a challenge for strategic management and creates a need for research on a relational strategy of modern enterprises. On the whole, a **relational view (RV)** explains and provides theoretical foundations for understanding why organisations establish and develop different structures of relations.

Interorganisational relations were analysed in terms of the motives of establishing relations, i.e., the creation and appropriation of value, the development of competitive advantage, obtaining economic rent, access to resources, flexibility, learning, innovativeness, or coordination of partners' activities. A separate research trend refers to the types of interorganisational relations and their features. Interorganisational relations were also considered in terms of teleology and evolution, as well as in respect to organisation and management of relations.

Although the topic of interorganisational relations has recently enjoyed an immense popularity among researchers, and the published results show that the network (relational) paradigm should be adopted in management science, a **relational strategy** itself has not been clarified either on the ontological or epistemological basis, which is a **theoretical gap** in current knowledge. **The project's scientific objective** is therefore to determine the content and types of a relational strategy and its descriptors at the conceptual level from, as well as their empirical verification. **The project's cognitive objective** is to identify positive and negative effects (benefits and costs) related to the implementation of different types of a relational strategy (identified during the research). **The methodical objective** is to create a tool for analysing relational strategies of enterprises, which may be used in replication studies.

The proposed studies are **basic research** conducted primarily to acquire new knowledge about a relational strategy sensu largo. The results formulated on the basis of the study will be of a theory-building nature and will contribute to the development of the strategic management theory, fitting into the trend of interorganisational relations as a source of competitive advantage. Due to implementing a methodical objective, the research conducted within this project will also provide an addition to methodological knowledge. The knowledge thus expanded will be directed towards limiting the identified theoretical gap. However, practical application of acquired knowledge would require additional applied research that is not planned within the framework of the submitted research project.

The need and innovativeness of research stems from a few reasons. First, the recognition of the content of the relational strategy, its kinds, features and effects was not a subject of deeper analysis and consideration either in foreign or in Polish literature, thus remains relatively poor in mainstream literature on strategic management. Second, the dependencies that exist between these elements have so far been outside the scope of broader research exploration. Third, the tool for diagnosing relational strategies, planned to be developed in the project, may be used by other researchers, thus increasing the chances of replicative and comparative research. Fourth, proposed research fits into the current research trends concerning strategic management, promoted by, e.g., researchers associated with SAP-IN, who are postulating a return to the roots and focusing the studies on the problems of the content of the strategy, the process of its formulation or implementation.

Research will reinforce the theoretical basis and verify theoretical assumptions concerning the content of a relational strategy, as well as recognize its types and effects in companies operating in Poland.