

Internationalization and design innovation in furniture industry – exploring the interdependencies

The research project aims to holistically assess effects of the links between design innovation and internationalisation of the company and its position in global value chains. Innovations usually are linked with significant changes in the functionality of a product or technology of manufacturing but more and more attention has been recently paid to other types of innovations, including design innovations (which are related to new product design). Some of these innovations will be classified as non-technological innovations. Their relationship to internationalization of a company has not been thoroughly explained yet and it may be argued that it will be vital in the case of furniture industry.

Furniture is one of the top exporting goods in Poland, however it is often sold abroad under foreign brands and local producers compete primarily with a price. Launching such innovative products on foreign markets should allow to raise profit margins and building own, recognizable brands, which will be associated by the consumers with unique and stylish furniture designs. On the other hand, just being present on foreign markets could have an influence on new product designs. Only a few research has tackled these issues so far therefore, it would be interesting to verify empirically these assumptions..

The research holistically assess effects of the two-way link between design innovation and internationalisation on the example of furniture companies In the first step a literature review will be made, which will result in a set of definitions and measures of design innovation, internationalisation and global value chain position. These will be used in the next stage of research. Secondly, a broad survey among furniture producers will be held and a model developed, which will allow to study thoroughly the innovativeness in the context of internationalization.