

# Strategic Coherence and Company Ambidexterity – a Necessity or a Delusion?

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## Abstract

Organisations have to take into account rapid, non-linear changes in their environment that build pressure on the company's development strategy. Therefore, one of the key challenges and paradoxes is to how maintain mutual coherence between different areas of the organisation and simultaneously leverage being ambidextrous so as to continue with exploration and exploitation activities. The main goal of this paper is to present research results on the relation between strategic coherence and company ambidexterity.

Strategic coherence is a proprietary concept allowing for measurement of the balance between the vertical and horizontal adjustment of an organisation. Vertical adjustment is the relation between strategy and the elements of the business model measured by: 1) the cascading of goals, 2) feedback on matching elements of the business model according to strategy, and 3) control over financial results and strategy implementation. Horizontal adjustment refers to matching the business model components measured by: 1) creating value, 2) capturing value, and 3) creating a synergy effect) Meanwhile, ambidexterity is determined by four areas: 1) company goals, 2) products, 3) market and 4) competitive advantage for both exploration and exploitation activities. The research survey was conducted with the use of the CATI method. Altogether, 400 medium-sized and large Polish companies were included in the study. To calculate the dependencies, the Pearson correlation coefficient was applied. The companies studied achieved similar results in terms of strategic coherence dimensions, as the vertical adjustment was 6.47, and the horizontal was 6.29 on a scale of 1–10. Meanwhile, in terms of ambidexterity, the companies achieved a moderate level, with the average value for exploration being 4.26, and that for exploitation 4.51 on a scale from 1 to 7. Based on correlation analysis, the relation between both variables has the shape of an inverted “U” with the most favourable point for ambidexterity at the “high strategic coherence” level. This study is a comprehensive guide for practitioners, and presents development guidelines for companies. The value of this research is an empirically validated framework that describes relations based on a dynamic balance between strategic coherence and two types of adjustment in the area of regulation – vertical and horizontal, as well as ambidexterity with two types of activity in the area of operations: exploration and exploitation. This study is unique and explores uncharted areas of strategic management.

## Keywords

Strategic coherence; Business model; Strategy; Ambidexterity; Exploration; Exploitation.

## Introduction

Organisations have to face rapid, non-linear changes in their environment that build pressure and set specific conditions and boundaries for company development. Striving to meet these challenges is as-

sociated with changing the core components of the business model (BM) and the interaction between the elements that create it. At the same time, attempting to achieve strategic coherence within the organisation's architecture is an important challenge in business practice (Verweire, 2014), and maintaining mutual coherence between different areas of the organisation is crucial, especially in terms of building effectiveness and implementing a successful business model. Based on this paradox, a crucial challenge arises. How to define, measure and shape relations between elements that create the key features of business, such as strategy and business model, so as to ensure effective company operation both in the short and long term.

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There is a concept called ambidexterity that assumes the balancing of two contradictive areas of operation: exploration focusing on creation of new value and development of new business, and exploitation directed at value capture and the increasing efficiency of an existing system. Ambidexterity describes a competence of organizations that allow simultaneous use of two key activities: exploration and exploitation, stressing that achieving a balance between these operations determines the well-being of the organizational system (March, 1991, p. 71–87).

The implementation of operational activities is embedded and determined by the regulatory framework of the organization, and additionally by the degree of its harmonization between achieved results and performance. Surprisingly, in many studies, it is a priori assumed that individual components within the same organisation and in relation to the environment are coherent with each other. Thus, the issue of harmonisation of individual components, as one of the main determinants of the success of the organisation, is disregarded (Obłój, 2002). Harmonization can be seen as a sort of desired and model state of organization, but due to constant disruptive changes, it is rather a form of seeking dynamic balance. As an operational definition, this is the minimum level of adjustment in the relations between the organization and the environment, as well as in the scope of intra-organizational relationships. Therefore, it is a limit value above which it is possible to manage and function the organization's subsystems and the company as a whole.

The main goal of this paper is to present research results on the relation between strategic coherence and achieved company ambidexterity. The main assumption of this research is that the long-term development and performance of an organization is dependent on seeking a dynamic balance between two types of adjustment in the field of regulation: vertical and horizontal, and two types of activities in the operational area: exploration and exploitation.

To achieve the goal of this paper, several concepts must be defined and described, such as strategic coherence, types of adjustments, exploitation and exploration activities. In addition, a quantitative survey was conducted with the use of the CATI method to obtain the primary data. Altogether, 400 large and medium-sized Polish companies were studied. The data gathered covers the time period 2015–2017.

## Literature review

### Strategic coherence

Individual researchers perceive the issue of coherence differently, depending on the material scope

adopted in their deliberations. In the literature, the terms fit, cohesion, match, adjustment, compatibility, coherence and consistency are in many cases used interchangeably (Gadomska-Lila, 2013). Despite efforts to standardize the terminology, the problem itself is complex and multidimensional, therefore it is advisable to properly discuss and organize the concepts.

Coherence brings together components (Kathuria, 2010) and is based on the interaction and relationships between components, and the results of these interactions (Demil and Lecocq, 2010). In relation to organizations, coherence means “sticking together”, self-recognition of an organization’s own boundaries and actions that link the levels of the organization together (Lissack and Roos, 2001).

Many researchers perceive coherence through the perspective of the situational conditions of configuration of the organization’s components in relation to the changes created by the business environment. In this approach, a coherent entity is characterized by distinctive internal capabilities that match its place in the market (Leinwand & Mainardi, 2010).

In detail, two types of coherence can be distinguished:

1. Internal, understood as coherent configuration of key activities of the organization, which refers to the mutual interactions of the elements building the organization and can be analysed from three perspectives:
  - The first is to adjust the elements of the organization. Coherence ties the components of the organization together (Kathuria, 2010), and its basis is the interaction of key elements based on the relations and reactions between these elements and the effects of these relations (Demil and Lecocq, 2010). Organizational consistency refers to the configuration of key processes based on the fit between components and the economic dimension of the business model (Morris et al., 2005).
  - The second perspective is vertical adjustment involving a “cascading” strategy at the level of individual processes by binding strategic objectives with processes and then with the goals of teams and workplaces (Kathuria et al., 2007). Therefore, if decisions taken at lower levels of the organization are consistent with the strategic vision and plan created at higher levels of the organization, this means vertical adjustment has been achieved.
  - The last approach concerns horizontal adjustment, that is the coordination of processes and projects in the organization. In strategic plan-

ning, it is especially important to take into consideration and involve lower levels of the organization in terms of adjusting the scope of activities for each individual function. Delving into this issue, it is possible to indicate two types of adjustment: functional and internal functional. The first type refers to achieving consistency between the performance of each function, such as logistics, production and sales & marketing, so as to ensure complementarity and support each function and generate efficient decision making. On the other hand, internal functional adjustment is defined as the coherence of various decision-making areas of a given function (Gadomska-Lila, 2013).

2. External consistency is the result of comparing environmental conditions with the configuration of business model elements (Morris et al., 2005). In order to increase the level of external adjustment, it is necessary to define the needs and requirements of external stakeholders by analysing the competences of the organization and identifying the gap between the actual state of development and potential results in terms of perceived opportunities (Hatch, 2018).

### Ambidexterity of the organization

One concept that assumes the balancing of these two areas – exploration focusing on value creation and exploitation directed at value capture – is ambidexterity. This term was first applied by Robert B. Duncan for organizations with double structures that allow simultaneous execution of activities of varied scope and time range, and which therefore require a different set of managerial abilities. James March proposed the theoretical foundations for an organization's ambidexterity as a concept. He pointed out the necessity of concurrent use of two mutually exclusive activities, exploration and exploitation, emphasizing that the pursuit of a balance between these two operations conditions the well-being of the organizational system (March, 1991, p. 71–87).

J. March identified exploration with striving for new development opportunities through the use of changes, research, discoveries and experiments, as well as innovation, risk taking and flexibility (March, 1991, p. 71). Exploration requires actions that include the search for new solutions that can be applied, or the reinventing of existing ones. So, these activities come with a risk, and therefore the test phase of new ideas is very important, as the first return on implemented and commercialized innovation is postponed in time.

The other activity, exploitation, is focused on keeping the current level of efficiency, maintaining control, implementing improvements, concentrating on operationalization, increasing the predictability of processes and reducing risk – in a broader view on generating profits in the operational perspective (March, 1991, p. 71). Exploitation is focused on securing and maintaining a competitive advantage on a given market in terms of supporting business performance with existing technologies and products by cost reduction and implementing economies of scale (Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2016, p. 438).

Companies can apply different strategies in terms of ambidexterity. For instance, one is where exploration and exploitation are implemented as separate activities, so there is a period when the whole organization is focused on exploration, and next one where all employees are engaged in exploitation. This approach is called time separation. In the case of a majority of bigger companies, simultaneous implementation of both activities is used. This approach has two forms: 1) structural separation – where both activities are implemented by separate organizational units, and 2) harmonic ambidexterity where the entire organization tries to integrate and organize both activities within one organizational unit (Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2018, p. 56). Irrespective of the chosen form, striving for the simultaneous implementation of exploration and exploitation determine both organizational efficiency (Raisch, & Birkinshaw, 2008) and the use of the strategic potential of the enterprise (Bratnicka-Myśliwiec, 2017, p. 13).

### Materials and methods

The data presented in this paper was collected using quantitative surveys based on the CATI method applied by a professional market research and analysis company. All of the terms used were defined in advance, and the interviewers were trained. The survey covers the period 2015–2017 and was conducted in 2018. Incomplete questionnaires or those that did not meet the formal requirements were rejected. Proportional stratified sampling was used and the obtained data is representative. Altogether, 400 medium-sized (86.93% of the sample) and large (13.07% of the sample) companies were included in the survey.

In the next step, the data was coded and analysed using statistical software (R and MiniTab 2017). For calculation of the variable dependencies, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used with a  $p$ -value threshold set at 0.05.

## Strategic coherency – research framework

The concept of strategic coherence is based on several assumptions (...):

- The duality of phenomena that allows for the outlining of different but complementary approaches: 1) dynamic – in which an organization's survival and development depend on constant adaptation to changes in the environment. The optimal level of adjustment is set by a dynamic balance between the organization's elements that allow the implementation of the strategy. 2) static – involving configuration of organizational components which, through consistency and cause-and-effect interaction, define a specific level of organizational effectiveness in a given situational approach.
- The optimal level of coherence does not have to be equal to full and complete coherence. Optimal coherence is conditioned by the simultaneous maximization of efficiency in given operational conditions, and the possibility of achieving long-term goals and growth. This means that an organization wishing to develop will be forced to carry out full adjustment of its elements in order to create new value (e.g. by expanding the resource base or increasing economies of scale and scope), which will temporarily mean a loss of coherence and setting a new point of equilibrium that will have to be reached.
- The elements of the business model that are subject to complementarity are: value propositions, customer segments, customer relationships, key resources, operational activities, distribution channels, key partnerships, cost structure and revenue streams.
- The development of strategic coherence is determined by the simultaneous interplay of two forms of adjustments (Fig. 1):
  - a) Vertical alignment between strategic objectives, strategic processes and projects understood as a strategy covering each of the components of the business model. Vertical adjustment is composed of competencies to: 1) cascade strategic objectives at the level of business model components, 2) create feedback from current activities in order to manage them and mitigate errors and dysfunctions, 3) provide comprehensive information related to the measurement system within three areas: goals achieved, financial results and elements of the business model, which altogether create information for the strategic management process. Triangulation of these information sources provides a comprehensive insight into the state of strategy implementation.

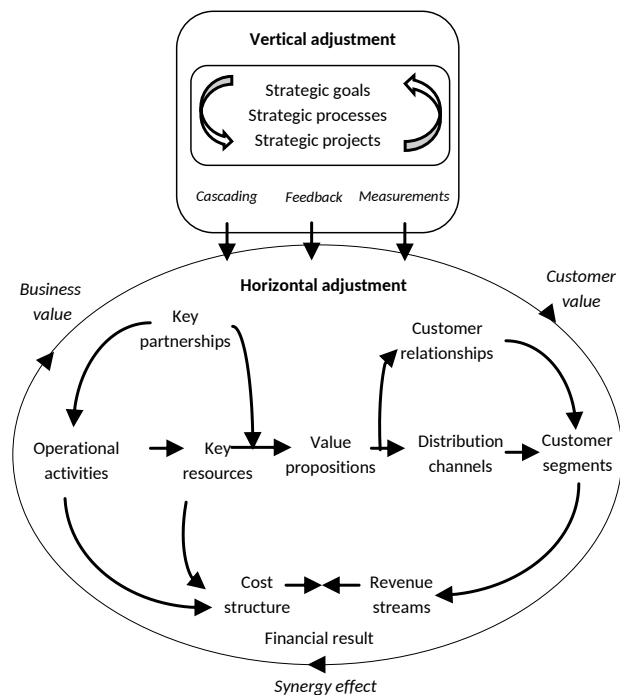


Fig. 1. Strategic coherence model

Vertical adjustment (consisting of: cascading, feedback and a measurement system) is measured by a managerial rating (on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is the lowest level of adjustment between the BM elements and strategy, and 10 is a highest level of complementarity). Then, based on the arithmetic mean of the three variables (cascading, feedback and measurement system), the vertical adjustment is calculated.

- b) Horizontal adjustment consists of reciprocal complementarity that is created by the interactions taking place between the elements of the BM, and includes: 1) added value for business – business value, 2) added value for customers – customer value, and 3) synergy between the components of the BM - synergy effect. The added value for business is the profit obtained from the sale of products. Ultimately, the synergy conditions how effectively the value for business and customers is created within a given architecture of BM elements.

The horizontal adjustment is measured for each of the three listed features (business value, customer value and synergy effect). The values of the horizontal adjustment are determined on the basis of a managerial assessment on a scale of 1 to 10, similarly to the vertical adjustment.

- The optimal level of strategic coherence is established by matching the vertical adjustment to the

horizontal adjustment. The application of the concept of strategic coherence is based on the following steps: 1) estimate the mean for the variables that make up the vertical adjustment, 2) apply the same procedure for the horizontal adjustment, 3) estimate the mean for the horizontal and vertical adjustment, and then compare the strategic coherence value with the left column of the table below. For instance, if the vertical adjustment value is 7 and the horizontal adjustment value is 5, the strategic coherence is 6 ( $12/2 = 6$ ), which is interpreted as a “moderate level” (Table 4).

### Ambidexterity – framework and measurement

An organization’s ambidexterity is determined by four areas: company goals, products, market and competitive advantage for both exploration and exploitation activities (Table 1). There are two questions regarding each individual ambidexterity measurement

Table 1  
Operationalization of the organization’s ambidexterity

Exploration activities – measurement of the construct	
Company goals	The company’s development was seen from the perspective of long-term profits
	New market opportunities were used
Product	New products were created
	The range of products was expanded
Market	Entry into new markets was made
	New, unique utility values were offered to clients
Competitive advantage	The company’s competences were developed
	A new competitive advantage was created
Company goals	Short-term profits were hedged and generated
	Continuous improvement was carried out and efficiency gains were achieved
Product	The existing products were improved
	Production costs were reduced
Market	Increased economies of scale in existing markets
	The satisfaction of existing customers was investigated in a systematic manner
Competitive advantage	The existing competences were improved
	The current competitive advantage was protected and maintained

(Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2018). Then, each of the measurements is scored on the basis of a scale of 1 to 7. Next, the means for the measurements of exploration and exploitation are calculated. The final level of ambidexterity is the sum of the exploration and exploitation averages, resulting in values between 2 and 14.

## Results

The average level of strategic coherence in the companies studied is 6.38, which corresponds to a moderate level of coherence. The state of vertical and horizontal adjustment was analysed, and was found to be respectively 6.47 and 6.29 on a scale of 1 to 10, with a standard deviation of 2.07 and 1.92 (Table 2). Similar results obtained in terms of vertical and horizontal adjustment suggest a relatively high level of balance between these variables. This conclusion is confirmed by the values of the medians and standard deviations for individual components of the model.

Table 2  
Strategic coherence of large and medium-sized Polish companies ( $n = 400$ )

Determinants of strategic coherence	Mean value	Standard deviation	Median
Vertical adjustment – 6.47			
Cascading the strategy to business model elements	6.27	2.33	6
Feedback on the state of business model elements	6.25	2.37	6
Information on the company’s financial performance and strategy implementation	6.88	2.30	7
Horizontal adjustment – 6.29			
Creating value for the customer	6.80	2.22	7
Capturing value for the business	5.93	2.17	6
Synergy effect between business model elements	6.15	2.17	6
Value of strategic coherence 6.38 (moderate coherence level)			

Analysis of the components of vertical adjustment showed that the highest score was obtained for gathering “information from the measurement system regarding the company’s financial performance and strategy implementation” (6.88), followed by “cascading strategy for business model elements” (6.27), while the lowest score was obtained for “feedback on the current state of business model elements” (6.25). This result is particularly interesting because intuitively it is expected that gathering “information from the measurement system regarding the company’s performance and strategy implementation” would have the lowest result among the implemented activities.

For horizontal adjustment, the lowest score was obtained for “capturing value for the business” (5.93), then “creating a synergy effect between business model elements” (6.15), while the highest score was obtained for “creating value for the customer” (6.80). “Capturing value for the business” obtained the lowest score among all the components of the model. This situation is unfavourable because this element determines the value of revenue streams and the company’s performance.

It may generally be concluded that, in most cases, the vertical adjustment score exceeds the horizontal adjustment score. This means that the companies studied better handle cascading strategic goals and their operationalization by engaging individual elements of the business model, as well as by controlling and obtaining feedback, than by matching the business model components in terms of creating and capturing value.

In terms of ambidexterity, the average level of exploration is 4.26, and that of exploitation is 4.51 on the scale of 1 to 7 (Table 3). Both results exceed the average and have relatively similar values. The overall ambidexterity level of the enterprises studied was 8.76 (on a scale from 2 to 14), which is a moderate result. However, it is based on two balanced and complementary areas of operation.

In the case of exploration, the most important measurement is achieving the company’s goals (4.57), with the market receiving the lowest score (3.76). Such a result can be interpreted as the occurrence of an inside-out approach in the conducting of exploration activities, appreciation of the planning approach, and the importance of internal conditions in the development of large and medium-sized Polish enterprises.

In the implementation of exploitation, a different result is achieved. The most important measurement is that of maintaining the current competitive advantage (4.92) with the lowest result for the market (4.16). The dominant role of maintaining a competitive advantage can be interpreted as a strategy fo-

Table 3  
Exploration and exploitation in large and medium-sized Polish businesses ( $n = 400$ )

Areas of exploration	Mean	Standard deviation	Median
Company goals	4.571	1.41	4
Products	4.278	1.76	4
Market	3.760	1.67	4
Competitive advantage	4.420	1.56	4
Average	4.257	1.25	4
Company goals	4.673	1.28	5
Products	4.270	1.31	4
Market	4.156	1.40	4
Competitive advantage	4.924	1.39	5
Average	4.505	1.05	5

cused on securing current streams of income and at the same time boosting profit in a short period of time, which allows for the financing of investments in innovation and ensuring ongoing operations.

The next step of the analysis is the relation between strategic coherence and ambidexterity (see Table 4). The table below contains the values for exploration, exploitation and ambidexterity for each level of strategic coherence. Based on a preliminary assessment, there is a positive relation between the rise in strategic coherence and ambidexterity from 7.22 for “lack of coherence” to 10.28 for “total coherence” (Fig. 2). Another observation is that the exploration and exploitation values are similar for each of the strategic coherence levels (columns 4 and 5 in Table 4).

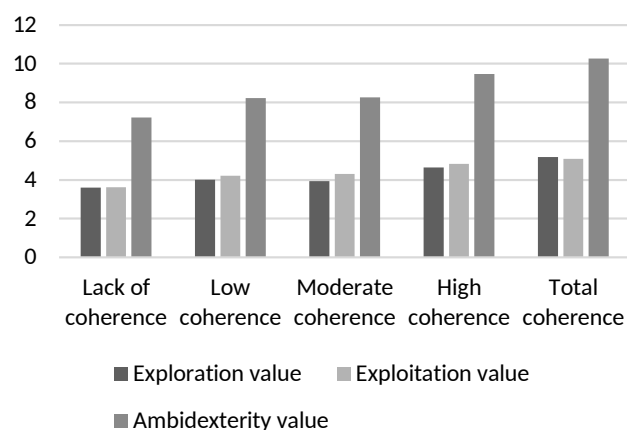


Fig. 2. Strategic coherence and ambidexterity in large and medium-sized Polish businesses ( $n = 400$ ).

Note: — Pearson correlation coefficient for strategic coherence and ambidexterity

Table 4  
Strategic coherence and ambidexterity in large and medium-sized Polish businesses ( $n = 400$ )

Strategic coherence level	% of sample	Average exploration value*	Average exploitation value*	Ambidexterity**	Correlation*** / $p$ -value
Total coherence 9.00–10.00	7.50	5.18	5.09	10.28	-0.178 0.346
High coherence 7.00–8.99	32.75	4.64	4.83	9.47	0.263 0.002
Moderate coherence 5.00–6.99	44.75	3.94	4.31	8.26	0.140 0.061
Low coherence 3.00–4.99	11.25	4.02	4.21	8.23	0.142 0.352
Lack of coherence 1.00–2.99	3.75	3.60	3.62	7.22	-0.229 0.411

Note: \*scale 1–7; \*\*scale 2–14;

\*\*\*significant when  $< 0.05$

Meanwhile, when the Pearson correlation coefficient between both variables is taken into consideration (see column 6 in Table 4), a new insight into this phenomenon emerged. At the lowest and highest levels of strategic coherence there is a negative correlation with ambidexterity. The highest correlation was achieved for “high strategic coherence” with a value of  $r = 0.263$  ( $p$ -value = 0.002). This indicates that the relation between strategic coherence and ambidexterity can be described by an inverted “U” function with left-hand asymmetry (left-hand skew) of the distribution (Fig. 2). Therefore, the most favourable condition for creating ambidexterity is maintaining “high strategic coherence”.

## Discussion

Strategic management processes should be oriented toward activities related to maintaining synergy between creating value for the customer and capturing value for the business. The relationship between the business model, performance and orientation were confirmed by M. Brettel, S. Strese, and T.C. Flatten (2012). They pointed out that in the early stages of a

company’s life cycle, above average performance can be achieved by developing customer relations using increased relationship marketing efforts (Brettel et al., 2012, p. 94).

In terms of capturing value for the business, it has been confirmed that efficiency-centred and novelty-centred business models have a positive relationship with company performance (Zott & Amit, 2007). However, in the case of the novelty-centred business model, above average performance can be obtained with a low level of relationship-specific investments (Brettel et al., 2012, p. 94).

According to other findings, it is important to create the ability to identify essential elements of strategy, and on their basis reconcile competing or conflicting ideas and development paths more coherently than other organizations (Xu et al., 2006). It should be emphasized, however, that dynamic business models do not have to have the highest possible score in terms of vertical and horizontal adjustment. This is because there seems to be a trade-off between completeness and the interrelationship of the business model framework (Khodaei & Ortt, 2019, p. 9). For instance, a simple business model framework that consists of a limited number of elements can obtain high agility and adjustment to the environment while ignoring some aspects of internal cohesion between the elements. This becomes even more complicated when the assumption is made that there are multiple business models either within the organization or created in conjunction with other entities (Chesbrough, 2007; Gilbert, 2006).

While in terms of ambidexterity the companies achieved a moderate level, with an average value for exploration of 4.26 and of 4.51 for exploitation on a scale from 1 to 7. The most important element of exploration is achieving company goals (4.57), while for exploitation it is securing a competitive advantage (4.92). Surprisingly, the lowest scores were noted for the market in both exploration (3.76) and exploitation (4.16). However, this is inconsistent with the results presented for strategic coherence. Nevertheless, an attempt can be made to interpret this result as a gap in the strategic-operational approach of enterprises. In other words, in the regulatory layer of strategic management, a great deal of emphasis is placed on defining and creating value for the customer, but due, amongst others, to a lack of synergy of business model elements, significant difficulties arise in the implementation of operational activities related to exploration and exploitation concerning offering new value for customers or acquiring new markets. This observation is confirmed by bibliometric analysis pointing out that there are sev-

eral research themes concerning ambidexterity: innovation, dynamic capabilities, providing framework for product development and competitive advantage as well as human resource management (Kononiuk, 2022, p. 356–368), so mostly focusing on strategic and regulatory layer of organization. Neutralizing this gap is the most critical as there is a relationship between the performance management system (including focus, legitimacy and strategic decision making) and the level of ambidexterity of the organization, and further between ambidexterity and organizational performance (Severgnini et al., 2018).

## Conclusions

The main goal of this paper is to present research results on the relation between strategic coherence and achieved company ambidexterity.

The companies studied achieved similar results in terms of strategic coherence dimensions, with their vertical adjustment at 6.47 and horizontal adjustment at 6.29 on a scale of 1–10. The most important determinant for vertical adjustment is providing feedback on strategy implementation, with a value of 6.88, while for horizontal adjustment it is creating value for the customer, with a value of 6.80. This indicates that the strategic coherence profile of large and medium-sized Polish companies is oriented towards customers and a measurements system, with a moderate but relatively balanced level of adjustments. Achieving a higher level of strategic coherence should focus on capturing value for the business (5.93) and creating a synergy effect of business model elements (6.15). This will improve integration between the organization's goals and the activities used to implement them, as well as cohesion between elements of the business model.

To sum up, based on correlation analysis, the relation between strategic coherence and ambidexterity has the shape of an inverted “U” with the most favourable spot for ambidexterity at a “high strategic coherence” level. Therefore, the general recommendation is to increase the level of strategic coherence to the point of “high coherence”, where there is a maximum correlation with ambidexterity. Despite some positive effects of raising strategic coherence to a higher level of “total coherence”, a constant increase in vertical and horizontal adjustment should not be treated as an ultimate goal. This can lead to some stiffness in the organization and exposure to efficiency losses in the event of changes in the business environment. This is mainly because complete adjustment of business model elements will limit the redundancy of resources and the capacity for coping with emerging

opportunities (Krupski, 2008). It will also create some risk connected with “aversion to change” based on the phenomenon of continuing to invest due to previously incurred costs, or certain cognitive errors of management such as “the illusion of perfection” (Krzakiewicz, 2006). Moreover, in business practice there is more emphasis on the survival of the organization, creating cashflow and securing financial liquidity, than on achieving a balance between vertical and horizontal adjustment, which can shift multiple times during the lifetime of a company depending on ongoing changing conditions of operation.

This paper and the research are not free of limitations. The first concerns the focus only on large and medium-sized companies, with the exclusion of small entities (due to such firms often lacking a formalized strategy). More in-depth research into foreign entities and various levels of industry would be of great value. The second limitation results from the particular set of variables accepted for formulating the framework of strategic coherence and ambidexterity. These variables can be measured in a more accurate and detailed way. The third consideration is the results of the statistical analysis. Most of the results do not meet the *p*-value threshold, mainly because of the low number of entities in the research sample subgroups. The last one concern influence of environment changes, such as Covid-19 or disruption of supply-chain and in result raising role of new technologies as well as building towards intelligent society and Industry 5.0 (Acioli et al., 2023; Ardolino et al. 2022).

Therefore, it is advisable that further studies be undertaken to address the above limitations and extend the scope of the analyses.

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