Research on innovation has been getting more attention among Academic scholars, which considered it as unique key driver for the companies’ success and as a main strategic orientation, with which companies attained a competitive advantage (Schumpeter, 1939). Recently, not for profit activities are implementing models and techniques on innovation traditionally linked to the manufacturing sector and the phenomenon is more widespread.

The rise of emerging markets has introduced another type of strategic orientation such as imitation strategy to improve performance of companies. Consequently within such a context pioneer firms have new rivals known as second movers.

The second mover implements not just an imitation strategy but it combines aspects of both imitation and innovation strategies (Zhou, 2009). It exploits the external resources and capabilities of its own network system in order to improve its performance and increase technological capabilities (Oded, 2010). It takes in consideration innovative products and partly imitates them while offering a product that is different from the original with higher technical specification and/or lower production costs.

Imitation becomes a viable and more common strategy than innovation (Zhou, 2006). Pioneer firms have the potential to generate markets, to make consumer preferences, to modify consumers’ behaviour (Naranjo-Valencia, 2011) but imitators have a chance to introduce improved technological product gathering information for their product development from existing products. For the creation of a new product, the second mover firm typically exploits the knowledge available in its own network system. Such knowledge exploitation is defined as the process through which a firm acquires, absorbs, and combines existing knowledge, and transforms it into new knowledge (Kim, 1997).

This type of firm improves its business performance through network system factors such as government, R&D, human resources, competitive environment and investment funds. For example, Amara and Landry (2005) empirically show that the government and universities can increase the
business performance of a second mover firm. Knudsen (2007) adds that the relationships with universities and research institutes have a positive effect on innovative performance especially in the long run. Hillman et al (1999) suggest how executives’ service of the Government had a positive effect on firm performance reducing uncertainty and transaction costs, and increasing the level of legitimacy and prestige of the second mover firm. The development of a new product can be originated from various sources, not only internal to the firm, but also external, including customers, competitors and others sources outside the industry, such as supporting companies, universities, government, and research centre (Kessler et al 2000). These external factors are much more than background conditions, they are the predictors of success of a second mover firms (Ingram and Silverman 2002). They have an essential role in a market, supporting the effective functioning of the economic system, such that firms and individuals can engage in market transactions without incurring undue costs or risks (Peng et al 2008).

Middle Eastern and Far eastern markets are perfect environment to analyse the relationship between network system and second movers. In China the government employs policies to encourage both imitation and innovation strategies (Lee and Lim 2001). In this situation, the Chinese firms trust and rely on the government for not only political and economic reasons but also for cultural ones. As a matter of fact, they think the government represents the country, and in Chinese the word, “country”, means the national family. Not surprisingly, the department of public relation in most firms pays too much attention to the relation with the government (Wang and Scuotto, 2011). In addition, in these countries emerge strategic alliances in order to share risk and costs related to research and development and to rapidly absorb technological capability and know how (Hobday 1995). This kind of alliances involve technology and knowledge transfer through the knowledge exploitation model. Hence these external factors play a variety of roles towards market support, including risk mitigation and support of remote commerce (Clay and Strauss 2002), market success (Spicer and Pyle 2002) and legitimisation of new industry entrants (Rao 2002).

This special issue invites both scholarly articles of a theoretical and empirical nature, from researchers and practitioners. The purpose of this special issue is to develop new research so as to analyse what drive firm strategy in emerging markets? What are the difference between pioneer and second mover firms? Themes which could be developed in the special issue include:

- Innovation and imitation strategy;
- Theories and Models used to describe strategic orientation;
- Temporal studies of imitation and innovation process;
- The impact of exploitation knowledge on absorptive capacity;
- Absorptive capacity and desorptive capacity on the process of technology transfer;
- Collaboration for Imitation (inc. Networks & Clusters) (SIG)
- The diffusion of new technologies and new communication platforms supporting cultural value
- Empirically establishing the role of network system.

The issue encourages submissions which deal with the above themes, but are not limited to the above list.

Please contact all three Editors with your paper proposal (maximum 500 words) by:
May 31, 2014
Submission details:

Using appropriate theories and research methods, all submissions to the journal are made online at:

- https://www.editorialmanager.com/jkec/

Submissions should follow the Springer Journal of the Knowledge Economy guidelines at:


All papers will be blind reviewed following JKEC’s normal review process and criteria.

- **Call for papers deadline is September 30, 2014**

*For further information please contact JKEC Editor-in-Chief at: caraye@gwu.edu*

References


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