
Editorial

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María Huertas González-Serrano has received her PhD in Physical Activity and Sport, in the sport management field from the University of Valencia. Her main researches lines are sport entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship. She has attended different research stays and conferences to specialise on this topic. She has also published several papers on sports entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, sustainable entrepreneurship, lifestyle entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ecosystems in different international journals.

1 Introduction

Innovation can meet the customer necessities by introducing products or processes (Murat and Baki, 2011), and has the capacity to make firms more competitive in their industry (Weber and Weber, 2007). Hence, business model innovation is positively related to firm performance, and can help to overcome organisational inertial (Huang et al., 2013). However, companies can only take advantage of their innovations if they can protect their knowledge. To face this deal, countries have developed their intellectual property rights (IPR) systems (Guo-Fitoussi et al., 2019).

The development of these systems is important due that business value worldwide is increasingly derived from intangible assets, a large part of which is intellectual property (IP), as companies tend to use IPR to protect and extract value from their innovations (Candelin-Palmqvist et al., 2012). Hence, more and more managers, when making strategic decisions about how to capture the value of innovation in companies, choose IP as one of the main strategies (Pisano and Teece, 2007). In addition, the availability of protection methods is a determining factor in a company's decision to engage in research and development collaboration (open innovation). This fact is due to companies fear knowledge leakage due to undesired spillover effects, but through IPR, legal risks can be prevented, and mutual trust enhanced (Van Beers and Zand, 2014).

IPR can protect market share, reduce information asymmetry (Guo-Fitoussi et al., 2019), encourage innovation (Chen and Puttitanun, 2005; Kanwar and Evenson, 2003; Schneider, 2005), and improve firm performance (Hussinger, 2006; Munari and Santoni, 2010). Positive relationships have been found between IPR and open innovation (Brem et al., 2017; Lichtenthaler, 2010). In this way, innovation and IP provide opportunities for firms to stay competitive in the market place (Murthy, 2017). Hence, promising or valuable innovations should be patented, licensed, and spun off (Holgersson and Aaboen, 2019).

However, until recent years, IPR was not at the centre of debates on economic policy, national competitiveness, or social welfare (Granstrand, 2005). But, at present, IP has gained great importance in the knowledge-based innovation-driven economy of the 21st century (Tekic and Willoughby, 2020). About the uses of the different IP, patents are used to protect technical aspects of the invention (process innovation), meanwhile, trademarks and designs preserve the image or symbol of the innovation (product innovation) (Mendonça et al., 2004). For these reasons, industrial designs, as well as trademarks, are considered to be important for taking new products to the market (Kalanje, 2006). However, it is essential to consider that usually, process innovation requires more than one IP to protect the intangible properties of the firms (Somaya and Graham, 2006).

Nevertheless, the broader literature on IP management indicates that although it is a fairly complex phenomenon involving many related actors (Gold et al., 2019; Somaya, 2012), it is still treated in a simplistic manner (Holgersson and Aaboen, 2019). Furthermore, most research in this field tends to focus only on a particular type of IP (Guo-Fitoussi et al., 2019). It is, therefore, a research field where more research is still needed to gain a better understanding of how business knowledge and innovation is managed through IP. Besides, although interest in this field appeared in the last quarter of the 21st century, it appeared first in the USA and then globally (Granstrand, 2005). Therefore, there are still countries where this type of phenomenon is underdeveloped, and more research is needed in these specific contexts.

Hence, the aim of this special journal of *International Journal of Intellectual Property Management* is to focus on the business management of innovation and IP in the specific context of Ibero and Latin America countries. This special issue contributes to the development of business innovation and IP within the particular context of developing countries. It analyses the effect of different IP and innovation strategies on firm performance by using a different approaches and different backgrounds. Furthermore, this special issue focus on how business innovation and IP in Ibero and Latin America countries needs to be integrated with the goal of advancing in the broader field of business management.

2 Overview of the articles in the special issue journal

This special journal issue consists of six articles that were double-blind peer-reviewed. The first article is titled ‘20 years later: what has changed in the Brazilian seed market with the Plant Variety Protection Law?’ by Adriana Carvalho Pinto Vieira and Kelly Lissandra Bruch. As in Brazil, the property rights were recognised by Law No. 9,455/1997, this article analyses how the seed market was restructured in the last 20 years. The authors highlight that there was a change in the model of technology generation in the field of seed production. The seed market was restructuring, the number of institutions and companies, public and private, national and foreign was increased, as well as an increase in partnerships between these companies. One important aspect of this paper is the assumption that the intensified competition has been benefit for farmers in general, due that they had access to a more diversified supply of seeds. Finally, the authors conclude that this scenario allowed Brazil to become a global power in the agribusiness sector. Hence, this article reveals the role that properties rights have to enhance country competitiveness.

The second article titled ‘The gender gap in intellectual property in Latin America and Iberia: the case of patents’ by María C. Parra-Meroño, María D. De Juan-Vigaray and Lilian E. Volcan. This article focused on the gender perspective to analyse the IP in Latin America and Iberia. They compared the status of IP registered by women in the countries of Latin America and Iberia in comparison to the rest of the world, by using a qualitative design. They found that women bring instrumental contribution to IP in Iberia and Latin, and highlighted the necessity of relevant policies and incentives to reduce this gap. Thus, this study provides useful information to reduce the gender gap in IP in Latin America and Iberia countries.

The third article is titled ‘Impact of students’ cultural values on the corporate entrepreneurship management linked to social responsibility’ by Manuela Escobar-Sierra and Felipe Calderón-Valencia. As culture has been a factor that could affect the management of a business, this study analyses the influence of students’ cultural values on corporate entrepreneurship management. Mainly, they focus on the perspective of social responsibility in business management. To achieve this, aim the authors performed a literature review. Terms related to innovation combining stakeholders’ issues, corporate entrepreneurship topic, and innovation management concepts were used. A quantitative sequential methodology was used to analysed this data. The results of this study highlights that only a little amount of student’s cultural values found in the review, predict the corporate entrepreneurship management related to social responsibility.

Therefore, this paper highlights the importance of cultural values to facilitate this specific business management style.

The fourth paper is titled 'Intellectual property in Latin America: the impact of innovation subsidies on Chilean firms' by Rodrigo Fuentes-Solís, Ariel Soto-Caro, Dusan Paredes, A. Mauricio Oyarzo and Carmen Veloso Ramos. The authors focused on the analysed IP due that is related to industrial property and copyright, and it is considered an innovation and development indicator. In this study, the impact of a group of subsidies that support innovative business processes in Chile (developing country) on the income of the firms was measured. For this purpose, a large sample of Chilean firms during two periods (2007 and 2009) was analysed. Finally, the authors found a significant and positive effect of the group of innovative subsidies on the income of these firms. Hence this paper highlights the positive impact that investment on innovation has on firm performance.

The fifth article is titled 'On the concept of an integrated and lean model of product development proposed for intellectual property creation and competitive economies' by Gilberto Santos, Maria João Félix, Manuel Doiro, Enrique Mandado, Jose Carlos Sá and Joaquim Gonçalves and Paulo Teixeira. There is a debate in the literature concerning the role of technological development and its impact on developing countries to reduce poverty. Hence, this article highlights the importance of improving the education system to establish technological development. The authors proposed a model for new product development considering sustainability and quality of products. The results of this study pointed out that Southern Europe and Latin American countries need to developed and created products with their technology rather than provide a cheap workforce to provide products designed by others. Finally, this paper presents new political actions to improve technological development, quality, and sustainability in developing countries.

The sixth article title 'Innovative culture and leadership in technological companies from Argentina and Colombia' by Marina Nieves Santucci, Mónica de Arteche, Sandra Vanessa Welsh and Alan Lerner. These authors focused on the context of Argentina and Colombia. They analyse the types and characteristics of culture and leadership that leads to innovation in the information and communication technological (ICT) firms. A mixed paradigm was used in this paper by using both questionnaires and interviews with managers and field experts. The authors found that an agile leader that is a role model and inspires support for the team is an essential element to foster innovation processes within and adhocratic culture. Finally, this study also presents the challenges proposed by the leaders.

3 Future research lines for the business management of innovation and IP

Innovation is a crucial factor for firm performance, and it is very important both in developed and developing countries. IP can be a strategy to manage innovation in the business context, and to promote open innovation. The vast majority of studies focus on the effect of patents on business performance (Thomä and Bizer, 2013). Hence future studies should focus on the impact of other forms of knowledge protection such as licenses, copyright, trademarks, or designs. Moreover, specifically, research on the relationship between trademarks and firm performance is still scarce (Cammarano et al., 2017). Therefore, the development of research analysing these relationships could be interesting for the development of this research field.

Also, the analysis of the use of more than one IPR tool at the same time has received little attention in literature and practice (Guo-Fitoussi et al., 2019). Therefore, more research on how to use different forms of IP together to promote innovation in firms should be studied. The empirical literature in this research field is still ambiguous (Gold et al., 2017). Hence, empirical research that compares different cultures could also be a future research line to understand better how to enhance innovation through IP. Finally, besides more research is needed in the specific context of SMEs. This is due that using IPRs is especially challenging in this type of firm because of the lack of financial resources and enforcement abilities (Jensen and Webster, 2006). Hence, it would be interesting to understand how IPR may help or hinder profitable SMEs collaborations in Ibero and Latin America. Moreover, to analyse which type of IP is more suitable for this specific sort of firms, and to find formulas to enhance IP in SMEs.

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