

Rethinking Knowledge from an Imitative Perspective towards Competitive Advantage

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Abstract:

Competitive Advantage (CA) is a company's ability to use knowledge in a way that is superior to that of its' competitors. Some research support Innovation as a process to create CA, while other research consider Imitation as a preferred strategy. A new concept was then presented, which was "Imovation", where companies use innovation of imitated knowledge to create CA. This paper examines how imitation of knowledge could lead to CA, and it is based on the paradox of previous research. Through thorough discussion of previous literature, this paper inspects Imitation and Innovation, both their advantages and fall backs. And because there is a lack in literature around "Imovation", this paper then adds to the literature by proceeding to rely on empirical studies to explore "Imovation", and how utilizing it is the best way to create CA for the company. Practical research is needed for future studies, and more empirical studies are advised.

Keywords: Innovation, Imitation, Knowledge, Imovation, Competitive Advantage, Sustainability

Introduction

Knowledge is defined as information whose validity has been established through tests of proof, so it is different from any unproven information such as opinion and beliefs. Knowledge includes codified knowledge that is written as documents and blueprints can be uncoded such as tacit knowledge (Liebeskind, 1996). Knowing that knowledge is considered an asset like those real ones, it is even considered one of the most important assets a firm can possess (Winter, 1988).

The purpose of every firm is to achieve a sustained competitive advantage (SCA), this is accomplished when the resource of the organization is not available for any other competitor (Barney,1991). As knowledge is considered one of the most critical resources for the firm, the primary objective become is to protect this asset through a protective strategy that is used to prevent any of the rival companies to imitate or to confiscate it.

Imitation is underappreciated, sometimes it can be more valuable than imitation (Shenkar, 2010). However, the fear of imitation is clear, through many literatures that focus on the importance of strategies that works against imitation. The VRIN model that was built by Barney in 1991 in which “I” means that the resource of the firm should be imperfectly imitable. Peteraf (1993) stated that the resources should be impossible to imitate, also Reed & De Fillippi (1990), argues how implementing barriers to imitation is essential for a sustained competitive advantage.

In the ordinary literature, a competitive advantage is based on an innovative and value creative strategy (Barney, 1991; Galunic & Rodan, 1998). At the same time, some refuse to say that only by innovation an organization can achieve a CA, but believe that imitation and innovation are equal and both could lead to a sustained competitive advantage if the imitator could implement a strategy that differentiates it from the innovator. Still, a new value emerged lately, the inovator term that is a combination of the two approaches and doesn't reject or accept the implementation of only one of them (Shenkar, 2010).

Based on the above literature, knowledge is a vital asset that stands as a key to success of the organization. Yet, the paradox that appears in the prior researches conceptualize innovation of knowledge and protecting it as the only way to attain SCA, while imitation is misjudged in a way to keep pace with rivals and to assure the survival of the firm. The other point of view stands oppositely, considering that imitation is even more valuable than imitation and should be taken into account. Therefore, is the imitation of knowledge a good strategy that can achieve a competitive advantage among the competitors, and if so, how?

Furthermore, the issue that all firms want to achieve is an SCA, that means a continuous advantage, not a short-term one. This matter should be considered in the measurement of the new concept inovation, the advantage of this model should be a long-term benefit to be more supported. Although new concepts are severely criticized by the lack of data, experience, empirical studies, and credibility, the idea of inovation overcome this, since it is a combination of two theories that are widely tested.

With the need of literature around the idea of a mixed strategy to obtain CA, when all of the previous studies focused either mainly on Innovation or Imitation, this paper seeks to help in closing this gap. Based on the above, this study will look into both Innovation and Imitation as strategies to obtain CA, and the advantages and limitations of each. Going a step further, this paper will also look into using a mixed strategy, which some have called Inovation, and will show that using this strategy in a company would give it the best privilege in obtaining CA, based on a thorough examination of the literature and of studies.

Knowledge as a resource

Knowledge, as discussed is one of the most important resources that a firm owns; this type of asset is the key to success, especially when it is a unique form. Firms achieve a CA, if the knowledge acquired is unique, new, and protected (Liebeskind, 1996). To be distinguished is to be unique in your knowledge in a way no one else could possess this resource. New knowledge is formed by capitalizing in innovation, in another way to be creative in your knowledge such as ideas, plans, contracts, know-how, etc. the last issue is that this resource should be protected, from imitation and expropriated.

The extent of a firm that can protect the knowledge more efficiently than others, the more incentive it will gain to innovate more. There are two types of knowledge can be protected, by law or by employee contract. Knowledge is not like other tangible resources it can be only imitated by observation, Zander & Kogut (1995), argues that imitation of new knowledge is hard in the lack of social community. Besides, the ease of the transfer of knowledge the easily the rivals can also imitate it.

Protection of knowledge through law has been criticized as costly, have a limited life, so it is not a lifetime issue. Hence, the law is not the ideal strategy to protect our resource, as mentioned knowledge can be imitated by observation, so using patents, trade secrets, and copyrights will not sufficiently protect the resource from expropriation. However, another way can assure the protection of our knowledge using employee contacts. The employer can add to the employment contract a clause of nondisclosure, decreasing the mobility of the employee by using a full-time contract, and by using a provision that refrains the employee from working with a competitor even when the employee leaves the company (Liebeskind, 1996).

Knowledge should be valuable, to achieve this issue, it should be innovated rapidly (Winter, 1988). The innovation has been defined as a creative activity that is engaged in purposive improvising to resolve difficulties (MacLean et al., 2015). As innovation leads a firm to a competitive advantage, whereas to be sustained the strategy should be done sooner, astutely, or more fortuitously (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). Innovation is costly and risky, it is uncertain and doubted until it is evaluated and proved to be successful.

Innovation vs imitation

Many believe that innovation is the only way to achieve a competitive advantage, whereas imitation is also considered as a strategy that leads to a CA, mainly when used in the proper way and place. Innovation as it has a specific plan to work on to be correctly implemented it also consider risky and can fall in the first-mover disadvantage by facing uncertainty (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1988). In addition, innovation of knowledge is protected by property rights, but it is becoming increasingly challenging because it is easily defined and imitated (Hipp & Grupp, 2005). Studies show that imitation of innovations only cost 65% of innovators costs (Schnaars, 1994). Moreover, innovation of resource cannot be guaranteed that it will be successful (Kerin et al., 1992), and there was a variation between the success rate of innovation as time goes, 80-95% in the study of (Berggren & Nacher 2000), 50% in the study of (Ogawa & Piller, 2006), and 10% in the study of (Duboff, 2008).

Battisti et. al (2019), when discussing Innovation, explains how it could be disadvantageous. And argued about how Innovation is a continuous process that should be a non-stop operation. This aspect of Innovation not only is time consuming, but also needs year round research and development, has to be secure against exploitation, and is extremely cost ineffective. Also, stated that Innovation is an exhausting strategy that could only be maintained in an ideal situation, which is not the case in real life companies. Labunska et. al (2019), added about the expense of innovation form the costly research and development issues, technological problems, technical risks, and the acceptance of continues change within the organization environment.

However, an imitation weakens the benefit of innovation, and because the innovation can be disadvantageous, it may not lead to SCA (Wanasika & Conner, 2011). Imitation is a form of cloning, creative adaption, design copies, or counterfeits; its costs are lower than innovation in most industries (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1988). This strategy is used when an organization has no resource as knowledge, and to be successful; they implement imitation to survive within the continuous development of rival firms. Through imitation, late movers can perform an incremental innovation to pass the pioneer (Shankar, Carptner, & Krishnamurthi, 1998). Furthermore, imitators benefit from the time, for example, in the medical field they have more time to see the side effect of a new innovative drug and to develop it if any problem occurs.

Transaction cost economics (TCE) help in defending the strategy of imitation, by arguing the effectiveness of innovation. For example, innovation of knowledge is useful in the ideal conditions, mainly when a firm is protected by property right, and laissez-faire in this order then the innovator will be well rewarded. The issue is these terms are idealistic, but they do not appear in the real world (Wanasika & Conner, 2011). This kind of statement gives a justification for imitation strategy, as mentioned before knowledge is not appropriately protected which will boost the ability of replication. Still there is a gap in the examination of imitation strategies and its effect on the organization, the issue is that imitation is still not investigated for a long period of time, which may make a difference (Im & Shon, 2019).

Besides, imitation is undervalued, it can be more profitable than innovation, it is functional and sometimes a great business. It is not a mindless strategy; smart imitators do not waste time, they continuously search for new ideas that worth replication. They even look far from the region they operate in, and always come in a cheaper and better strategy, and build offers based on the market reaction of the innovative ideas (Shenkar, 2010). However, imitation of new knowledge will make an added value, especially when adding the imitated knowledge for the one previously acquired, then this will create a new knowledge which will aid in doing further improvements and innovations (Massa & Testa, 2004).

Furthermore, the process of imitation will benefit from free-rider effects, so as the innovators are implementing R&D strategies, the imitator will enjoy a less cost of achieving the same one (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1988). Additionally, they can identify the more profitable market position by analyzing the result of the innovation (Wanasika & Conner, 2011). Also, imitators can avoid dead ends, by observing if the new knowledge, ideas, or strategy will work successfully or will fail (Shenkar, 2010). In addition to replication of knowledge is used when the imitator has a weak knowledge base resource (Narver & Slater).

Imitation is enhanced by many booster elements; these elements can be from the competitor's side, environment, or the opportunity that the imitator company possesses. Such factors are if the knowledge of the firm is unprotected, which will

ease the procedure of imitation of the knowledge and will be less cost and time (Posen et al., 2010). The easier the knowledge is taught, the simpler the implementation of the strategy. Likewise, imitation and transfer are two elements as twins so as the speed of transfer of knowledge is high the higher the speed of imitation (Zander & Kogut, 1995).

Barriers to imitation

Imitation as any other strategy is filled with a path of barriers that should be known before the adaptation of the process, and assessing if implementing this kind of approach is beneficial for the firm and leads for a competitive advantage or not. Barriers make imitation very difficult, and the most effective barrier is when the rivals do not understand the competencies that result in a CA (Porter, 1985). One of the most significant obstacles for imitation is the causal ambiguity, which means the ambiguity concerning the nature of the causal connection between action and results (Rumlet, 1982). The causal ambiguity issue does not only block the imitation by the competitor, but also block the factor of mobility (Lippman & Rumlet 1982), for example, this will deter the transfer of knowledge and will leads for difficulties in applying imitation strategies. Barney, 1991 argues that causal ambiguity is the lack of knowledge of the relation between the cause and effect relationship and the unawareness about the linkage between them. The ability to find the link between the resources is the way a firm can achieve a CA (Andersen, 2007).

Another issue is the tacitness of knowledge; such competency is accumulated by learning through experience and built by practice (Reed & DeFillippi, 1990). As knowledge is imitated by observation, tacit knowledge will create a barrier to replicate such competency, because the key that tacitness generates is the unawareness of the action that will be undertaken in specific situations. Still, tacit knowledge is considered equal to the causal ambiguity and the factor of immobility, so a successful replication of it is problematic (Nelson & Winter, 1982).

Complexity is another form of imitation barriers, and it refers to the problem of the resource and strategy establish the CA (Andersen, 2007). As known, the critical factor of achieving a competitive advantage is by knowing how this CA is reached, and with the presence of social complexity, it will produce a barrier for this knowledge, that will make imitation difficult. Barney (1991) mentioned that resource for a CA is sometimes easy to possess, but the difficulty is by knowing how to achieve it using this resource. So, the complexity factor is different from uncertainty, this issue concern what elements are used to accomplish a Ca.

An additional factor that generates a barrier to imitation is its underappreciation, people have been raised on the notion that imitation is done by unoriginal individuals, and if imitation is done, it is done in the dark. Therefore, the culture of imitation is yet not widely accepted; they always try to justify it not from and imitative perspective (Shenkar, 2010).

The adaptive system that engages in imitation of knowledge will suffer the cost of experimentation as innovators and without gaining the same benefits (March, 1991). Imitation is negotiable on the part that it is also costly especially in some fields, such as pharmaceutical, and it needs to pay the same cost and to pass through the same regulatory procedures (Liebeskind, 1996). Even though imitation is a procedure, where you get a free ride and observe the best strategy

to take, still it is considered, as innovation needs to pass through experiment, to be tested, and to be evaluated.

Knowledge as one of the most critical assets of the firm has been heavily protected, and developed safely from mobility using many strategies. Examples of these procedures are, patents, trade secrets, and copyrights, these three law protective strategies are used to protect the knowledge of the firm for a specified period in a way the pioneer organization can enjoy first-mover advantage without concern of the rivals (Liebeskind, 1996). Another example is employee contracts, wherein the firms include clauses of non-disclosure and try to shape the mobility of its knowledge as much as possible.

A crucial implication that is facing imitation is the specificity issue. Business actions are a result of resource, skills, and knowledge that are highly specific and related to the firm internal and external factors (Williamson, 1985). However, specificity, complexity, and tacitness are related to causal ambiguity in a directly proportional way, the more the level of these factors are high the more the level of ambiguity is high, and this will mean the increase of barriers of imitation (Reed & DeFillippi, 1990).

Discussion

After analyzing the theoretical part from knowledge as a resource, to innovation and imitation strategies, it is the turn to choose the best among the alternatives. The agreed issue is that knowledge is considered an intangible resource equal to any other resource, even some view it as the best asset a firm possess (Liebeskind, 1996). Though, after this general assessment, a pick up for the best strategy to achieve a competitive advantage is demanded.

Innovation has been discussed as a strategy of creativity and novelty in the resources, planning, and the process of implementation. This innovation is considered risky procedure because as mentioned it is uncertain, and costly. Firms cannot predict whether an innovative strategy will differentiate it from the competitors and achieve a competitive advantage. Nevertheless, if any company reaches a CA, there is no assurance that it will be sustained, and the risk of imitation and expropriation is exceptionally high especially that the pioneer firm is now thriving. Another issue, if the innovator wants to keep this CA, then he should protect the resource especially the knowledge as it is one of the most important resources a firm have. This protection is costly, will not totally protect the company from imitation because these protections are limited, and as long it will take it will be vulnerable to replication. So, the pioneer firms need to sustain the barriers of imitation to maintain their CA, however, regardless of the level of obstacles and ambiguity, the innovator creates it will be vulnerable by time for imitation (Reed & DeFillippi, 1990). Ghemawat (1986) argues that a competitor will gain detailed knowledge about the firm innovation after one year of development.

An example that supports this notion is the IBM Company that used to be the pioneer in the computer industry. The development of this firm was in a continuous mode, and they sustain a competitive advantage for a long time. However, the time they were assessing new technological issues in the computer field open the way in front of the rivals to start competing the IBM company and in another meaning they competitors weaken the CA they were possessing (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1988). Another example is the decreasing rate of

innovation dependency for the firms, that was discussed in the theoretical part, where the innovation dependency was decreased in eight years from 95% to 10%. The speed of imitation is also increasing as the study that was taken for 100 innovative Swedish company shows that Imitation showed a time profile similar to that of knowledge transfers. Despite that all innovations in the research were protected by patents, approximately two-thirds of the products have been imitated by competing firms (Zander & Kogut, 1995).

The imitation strategy is considered as a dynamic capability, it is not a mindless process, it is a progress of daily observation and searching for new ideas, products, services, or resources (Shenkar, 2010). The firms that use imitation spend many resources on the following up procedure, and it is difficult as the process of creating new ideas, it is not so different in some cases and on other cases, it demands more effort (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2016). Hence, Imitation is a process of analyzing the best knowledge or any other resource that could be replicated, then take into consideration the best way to implement this strategy to assure its succession.

Furthermore, imitation is a good strategy in some particular condition, especially in some unstable contextual settings and if the knowledge is unprotected by law (Wanasika & Conner, 2011). This will give imitators a plus to work on such strategies and the direction towards innovation, creativity, and novelty will decrease instantly. Hence, the ability of imitation is enhanced by environmental issues that help in the flourish of such strategies.

In addition, imitation is also not the ideal strategy, it is criticized to be costly in some fields, and need to pass through the same regulatory issues as innovation. Though it is a complicated strategy; it is uncertain because if a strategy fits with a company and succeed, that doesn't mean that it will work for another firm. Then the imitator should do the same tests and experiment with any imitated knowledge before implementing it. Another issue is that imitation lacks strategic decision, in a way that they do not concentrate on the problems revealed from the late entry issue and how to deal with it in a way could fail in the process (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2016). Furthermore, a study of 129 companies, shows that only a 6%-10% of the imitation process is replicated in a successful way (Levin et al., 1987). Still, imitation is significantly faced by many barrier strategies by implementing, ambiguity, tacit knowledge, complexity, and specificity, and on the other side, imitators fail to accumulate the knowledge that helps in penetrating these barriers (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2016).

The matter is that a fear of imitation is seen from the pioneer firms and innovators; this fear leads us to think about the importance of imitation in achieving a CA, or at least taking it out of the rival control. This concern is recognized through the robust strategies of barriers to imitation and through the urgency of continuous development that assures that imitators are always a step ahead of the pioneer firm. However, if imitation is a risky and costly strategy and the percentage of the success as mentioned is about 10%, why there is a panic form it, unless it leads to business growth and development.

The paradox has been revealed after listing the advantage and disadvantage of both the innovation and imitation strategy and how knowledge is being protected not to be imitated. This paradox shows a gap between all the theories that have been stated in the theoretical review and the analysis of the literature. Hence, what is the best strategy that assures the firm an SCA, and is imitation a good strategy, or innovation is the ideal way regardless of the high cost, uncertainty, and all other issues? If a firm chooses any of these two strategies, it will fall in the same debate that nothing is guaranteed and these two are arguing

about which one could lead to a long-term CA. Both processes have been discussed the extent they can be used and still no answer for a better strategy. Therefore, a fusion of both imitation and innovation is the best idea that can be created to resolve the problematic. DiMaggio (1995), mentioned that best theory of all is the concept of combination, then if a firm manages to combine these two approaches, then it may control the disadvantageous part of both and focus on the best result that they could give them.

Imovation concept

Then, a new factor arises the concept of Imovation; this concept is somehow likewise the idea of inventing around innovation, but also much deeper. Imovation is a theory that is defined by a combination of imitation and innovation towards a CA (Shenkar, 2010). Yet, this concept focuses more on imitation as a base, but with inventing, developing, and improving it to be differentiated from the innovators and to achieve a long-term CA. The firm that uses the imovation term is called consummate imitators, an example, Wal-Mart, Apple, and Procter & Gamble. These companies learn to see imitation as a driver to innovate on its base (Shenkar, 2010).

The first step towards imovation is by involving two forms of action, and to focus on effectiveness in both innovation and imitation. Imovation requires as the two concepts to be fast in the evaluation of any new information or knowledge. Also, emphasizes the complexity instead of the simplistic view. Similarly, imovation demands to analyze the contextual issues, including the economy, politics, and environment, and how it will respond to the rapidly changing environment (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2016).

Second, is not to focus on innovation, but on inventing better and cheaper version from your competitor, it is the challenge of finding and applying (Shenkar, 2010). This finding requires looking not only in the same region the firm is acting but also outside the territory; this will help in observing a massive amount of data and information and assist in the accumulation of new knowledge with the one the firm already has. The key success of imovation is to be a quick imitator and to be innovative, the concept then is more like “creative imitation” (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2016).

Third, imovation also carry the same risks as the imitation and innovation factors, these risks include ambiguity, uncertainty, high costs, tacitness, and specificity. In addition, there is another issue should be taken into consideration when doing imovation, it is the offense and defense problem. Firms should know that in any field they would find imitators waiting for new ideas, and processes to replicate, even though a successful imitation will be under another imitators' eye. So, the idea is to become a good defender at the same time a firm is becoming a better imitator (Shenkar, 2010).

Imovation as a strategy goes beyond the exact copying of competitors' products, knowledge, strategies, and service. It is the art of finding and building an appropriate balance between imitation and innovation that will result in sustaining a competitive advantage for the organization (Krzakiewicz & Cyfert, 2018). Moreover, the advantage of such balance is to focus on the benefits of the two strategies, in a way that an organization can use the free ride effect advantage when using imitation and the added value that can be collected from innovation. In another way, imovation is the talent of fusion that could decrease

the risks of fail (testing the product, R&D expenses, cost of time, and not to keep pace with competitors) (Xia et.al, 2018).

Therefore, it seems that imovation is better than innovation and imitation, because using such a strategy, the organization can manage a way to reduce risk of fail, innovate the strategy, and do it with less cost. To support this argument, Krzakiewicz & Cyfert (2018) stated that Procter & Gamble by 2015 started to implement the actions of imovation by 50% of its strategies, taking the ideas and concepts from other firms, copying them, and effectively modifying it. Apple Macintosh is another example that supports this claim; it is an improved version of Xerox's product, there ability of managing a great balance between imitation and innovation was a source of success (Xia et. al, 2018).

Scutto & Shukla (2018) set the basis of successful imovation and draw a map of conditions that companies should follow to optimize CA achievement. Such conditions include taking inspiration only from successful innovations. After including successful innovations, Scutto and Shukla advice imitating them with better techniques and strategy executions, and/or lowering the cost of production. The most important condition the authors stressed upon is distinguishing the optimized imitation from the original innovation.

Conclusion

Knowledge one of the best resource for the firm that is used to achieve a Competitive long-term advantage, the concern is not about only creating new knowledge, but also to protect it from imitation and expropriation. In addition, the possession of resource does not generate a sustainable competitive advantage; it is what strategy a firm use besides the knowledge (Andersen, 2007). This issue arises, is the risk of imitation for the companies that depend on such strategy to keep pace with competitors and to achieve a CA, that could lead the pioneer firms to lose their CA, and their first-mover advantage. Still, the issue of imitation is arguably costly, risky, uncertain, and dependent to many contextual settings.

The previous notion that only by novelty and creativity a firm will gain a CA has now been unreliable, especially after the empirical studies that assure that imitation is less costing from innovation strategies, it is less by 60-65% (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1988). Besides, the researches have shown an increase in the usage of imitation rather from innovation, even though some implement such process in the dark, as Mac Donalds, Procter & Gamble, and Visa and MasterCard (Shenkar, 2010).

While the two strategies are susceptible to failure or success based on the contextual situation of the company, firms everywhere are still utilizing those strategies. Thus, the idealistic process could be a fusion between the two methods by focusing on the advantages of both of them and neglecting the disadvantages. The best theory of combination will give the firm a better result in the term of traditional purpose, which is survival, and the primary goal of a long-term Competitive advantage.

This idealistic process is represented by "Imovation", which will focus on imitation as a base to take benefit from the process of replication, such as low cost, and then to invent around the replicated stuff. This process is excellent for companies that cannot afford the full innovation procedure and will also create

an added value by combining the imitated knowledge with the one the firm already possess.

As a result, imovation is considered an imitative base, so knowledge imitation is a good strategy that could lead for a long-term competitive advantage, but by combining the new ideas with the knowledge of the firm. This new procedure is generated from the debate of the two strategies innovation and imitation and will help in overpassing the conventional problems as much as possible. In another meaning, imovation is not a solution; it is a new concept that can be a mediator between the two processes and have more probability to achieve an SCA.

Drawing on all the above, this study adds to the literature a rough outline of how Imovation is the best strategy to be adapted by companies to optimize obtaining CA. It differentiates between Imitation and Innovations, draws a clear path between them, and sums them up to explain all about the merging of the best of these two strategies. Also, this article is novel in the sense of outlining why and how this merged strategy is better than the unilateral strategies alone, by explaining that Imovation bases itself of innovating imitations and giving the company the best chance in the face of its competitors.

Limitation

The limitation of this study covers the combination of two processes, it is not an easy procedure, it is complicated, and if not implemented quickly and efficiently it can be an unsuccessful strategy. Thus, it also carries risks of failure as any other strategy and should be taken and assessed before implementing it especially it is about making two entirely different procedures and combining them with each other.

Another issue is the extent of imitation and on what level is used and how to assess it to take new knowledge of imovation. However, it was mentioned above that imitation is a process that is done in the dark, and no firm will come to public and admit this issue, and this is based on the culture of imitation that is meant to be inappropriate and undermined. This point will give additional difficulties to the idea of imovation, since the imitation, which is the base of the new concept will not be assessed and will leave many gaps that will lead any firm following this strategy to fall into uncertainty and ambiguity.

Lastly, the factor of imovation is a new factor, not studied, and is not evaluated. This will be another problem concerning the reliability of this concept and will doubt the credibility of it. Also, there is no empirical study that supports the idea of imovation, so for many firms, it will be still just kind of thoughts, and they will never believe in it unless they are risk takers. Even, many firms could be using this process without knowing because its appearance will be tested through the actions that an organization implement.

Recommendation and future research

Empirical studies are highly recommended for this study, it will be focusing on the reliability of the new concept, and will give a push up for the acceptance of this strategy. Then, for future research, it is good that imovation process starts to be evaluated and to study the relation between the process and long-term

competitive advantage. Then if the results were positive, this issue would start to be dependent.

Furthermore, an interesting approach would be to look into adapting this strategy on companies of different sizes, locations, industries, and ages. Looking into that would help obtaining literature of when and where utilizing that strategy is best.

Finally, the concept innovation should be studied from many dimensions, especially the ethical one, since the culture of most societies has been raised on the notion that replicating something from others is not a good act. Therefore, many firms especially that looks from ethical standards when taking actions in implementing strategies will have a problem with using such procedure if not well defined and studied from all perspectives. In this way, the new concept will gain much more reliability and credibility because there will be a focus on the theoretical and practical consideration.

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