

## **IJESB – Call for paper**

International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business

### **« Reshaping research on Innovation and gender issues: Is innovation gendered ?»**

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The innovation process is a topic that has been widely explored (Le Loarne & Blanco, 2012; Tidd, Bessant & Pavit, ). However, research on the identity of the individuals or groups of individuals who take part to the innovation process remains underdeveloped. Indeed, research is based on experimental studies with students or individuals who are not in the real situation to take part to any innovation process by firm (Perry Smith, 2006). Furthermore, the other results are mostly based on case studies taken from the large groups (Amabile, 1988; Le Loarne, 2006), without considering SMEs or starts-up, which mostly contribute to the economic life, and especially in European Countries. Such gaps led us to open in this subtheme a research debate on the social and organisational characteristics of the Innovator by firms, and especially, by small and medium firms.

The first research contribution to such a debate reveal that the firm is all the more innovative that it welcomes and invites different actors coming from different social groups, education systems (Amabile, 2005). Such results are consistent with the claim of politicians for better diversity by firms for a better economic growth (World Economic Forum, 2012). The term of « diversity » implies different forms: diversity in terms of profession, national origins, ages but also genre. Therefore, we propose to explore the role of gender within the innovation process of firms and, moreover, of SMEs.

The debate on gender role within organization is not brand new and the number of journal specialized in such an issue illustrates that point. However, the question of gender role within the innovation process has been restricted to the topic of female entrepreneurship (De Bruin et al., 2006; Hughes et al., 2012). The objectives are to explain the low rate of female entrepreneurs and to shed light on the differences across genders on the way males and females respectively manage their business (Du Rietz & Henrekson, 2000). We propose, here, to enlarge this debate to the innovation process of the firm that remains underexplored (Owen, 1994).

More precisely, given the high impact innovation has on the performance of firms, this sub-theme aims at questioning the specific role of females (and males) within the innovation process and the creative process: legendary figures in innovation and entrepreneurship are mostly those of males. Does this mean that female innovate less? Would females also take less part – or would be given less part – to the innovation process within any company? If no, how do they proceed? Does their creativity differ from those of males? Would there be any “glass ceiling” of innovative ideas conducted by females? Furthermore, since we know that females tend to adopt

a more democratic decision making process by firms (Carter et al., 1997; Cliff, 1998), can we consider that females also develop a more democratic innovation process?

In such a context, the sub-theme welcomes any research related to gender within big or small companies within any innovation process. However, we mostly welcome empirical contributions. Following the call from Ahl (2006; 2012) and Bruton et al. (forth), a particular interest will be given to contributions that deal with a real comparison across genders. Here are some non-exhaustive topics related to the debate we would like to raise within the subtheme:

- Gender within the creative process
- Social networks, Gender and Creativity
- Decision making processes within SMEs: difference across gender
- Intrapreneurship and Gender
- Gender and strategies of growth
- Gender and innovative business opportunity recognition
- Gender and financing any innovative project
- Gender and organizational bricolage
- Gender and the decision making process within the company

#### **Deadlines:**

**1<sup>st</sup> version of the full paper: October 15<sup>th</sup> 2013**

**Submission under the IJESB Website**

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