

# 1. Service innovation research methods

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## 1.1 THE CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

This book aims to discuss, exemplify and broaden the horizon of methods applied in service innovation research. Supported by applied research examples and contemporary theories, the book offers a structured overview of a number of innovative research methods that can help to approach the investigation of different aspects of service innovation within an eclectic range of theoretical and methodological traditions.

Services, service innovation and service innovation processes have gained increasing socioeconomic importance in the past decades and are receiving growing interest from the research community (Drejer, 2004; Miles, 2005; Bitner et al., 2008; Carlborg et al., 2013). Services not only play a fundamental role in well-established economic sectors, they also have an increasingly broad impact on a wide range of developments related to interpersonal and social relations that affect society as a whole (Miles, 2005; Bryson and Daniels, 2015).

Despite this growing interest in service innovation and service innovation research, there is an apparent void of methodological literature on this topic. Furthermore there has been little or no systematized effort in offering an overview of all the available or developing methods in service innovation research. Quantitative surveys, qualitative case studies and semi-structured interviews seem to dominate the landscape of service innovation research literature. This book with its exploration of alternative methodological approaches offers to move towards a more inclusive and organized account of developing and available methods. This book aims to present service innovation research methods that are particularly relevant to the contemporary socioeconomic context. To that end, the chapters in this book are based on a number of studies that we believe to be representative of areas of growing relevance for contemporary service innovation studies (Chapter 1, section 1.2.2). The chapters also make a case for the specificity of the processes underlying service innovation and the unique dimensions of service innovation (Chapter 1, section 1.2.1). Together

they arrive at and are based on the conclusions that: The knowledge and application of new research methods developed for the study of service innovation need to become part of the common toolset of the service innovation researcher and practitioner. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the research community to develop new theoretical models and specific methodological frameworks that can support practitioners and businesses in their efforts to innovate in an ever-changing environment (Chapter 1, section 1.2.3).

This book seeks to be a first step in that direction and offers an overview of innovative methods that the research community and students in the field can explore. Additionally it is an organized and creative methods toolbox that service innovation practitioners can exploit and use to reflect upon, initiate and conduct sustained innovation efforts in service companies and organizations.

## 1.2 THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE BOOK

How can we define service innovation? How do we observe, capture and influence often complex service innovation processes? What theoretical interpretation may we use to interpret them? How can we detect and collect data about unplanned innovation processes lacking systematization in order to analyse and understand them? How can dynamic service innovation processes involving many different types of actors be grasped? What methods can researchers and practitioners apply to optimize collaboration in service innovation research and development? And how can different methodological approaches to all these different aspects lead to practical solutions that result in improved innovation processes and innovation capacities in service companies? How do we identify, quantify, or estimate the effects of service innovation? To what extent can quantitative approaches explain the nature and complexity of service innovation and service innovation processes? And in what instances and in what research issues are phenomenological, hermeneutic, interpretive and qualitative approaches relevant? This introductory chapter offers an overview of the theoretical and methodological framework that undergirds the answers given to these and other questions in the chapters of the book. It contextualizes these different questions and answers by identifying what we believe to be the three unique dimensions and dynamics that characterize and influence service innovation research today. One dimension is theoretical and methodological. There are a number of interpretations and theories that deal with service innovation research; two representative ones appear

to be in apparent juxtaposition. In this chapter we contextualize the different contributions of the book under one theoretical umbrella and approach that positions it within these established traditions. Two other dimensions that are perhaps not immediately discussed in service innovation literature are those of the forces that are influencing its very own evolution and development. In this chapter we identify trends that have at times a problematic programmatic influence on service innovation studies and research. We believe that these influences, of which we are also subject, need to be known and problematized to understand both the contribution of this book and the challenges of the books that will hopefully follow on these subjects. We conclude the introduction with a short presentation of the individual chapters and their specific methodological subjects and contribution.

### **1.2.1 The Unique Theoretical and Methodological Dimensions of Service Innovation**

The term 'innovation' is normally used in service studies to refer to new service 'products' introduced in an established service sector. These innovations include, for example, new services, new production processes, new organizational structures or new marketing strategies. In the context of service innovation analyses, however, the term 'innovation' is often used as a synonym for the term 'innovation processes', more specifically related to the activities that lead to the development of these new products. These alternative uses of the term 'innovation' as either a service *product* or service *product development process* can create confusion and are part of a definition of service innovation that remains fuzzy (Snyder et al., 2016; Witell et al., 2016). Their juxtaposition, however, offers the opportunity to position this book and its chapters within an ongoing theoretical debate that emphasizes different interpretations of what innovation in services is, what it entails, how it can be studied and how it can be elicited.

The main aim of the research methods analysed in this book is to focus on service innovation processes rather than innovations. Innovation research methods, as applied in this book, comprise methods that are, of course, related to the study of innovations; they are, however, focused on the processes that lead to such innovations, the drivers and barriers to such processes as well as the complex dynamics that exist among actors, activities, resources and other elements and factors that may impact such processes. This theoretical and methodological position can be contextualized within the two above-mentioned areas of debate. One looks at the definition of what constitutes innovation in services. The other investigates the underlying dynamics that lead to innovation in services and their specificity (as opposed to other processes of innovation).

Traditionally, innovation is defined as new products, production processes, organizational structures, or marketing strategies that have already gained acceptance in an organization, in the market or in society (Amabile et al., 1996; Kanter, 1996; Sundbo, 1998; Mulgan and Albury, 2003; OECD, 2005). Certain criteria and conditions are emphasized that need to characterize these products to define them as innovations. These new products need to be intentional (part of a specific process of research and not part of accidental evolution). They must represent significant or radical changes in products or practice. Furthermore, they must have a recognizable benefit (especially economic) and be possible to replicate and put into systematic production (Drejer, 2004; Koch et al., 2005; OECD, 2005; Toivonen et al., 2007; Fuglsang and Sørensen, 2011).

While the above-mentioned perceptions of innovation have also been applied in services, especially in the more recent service innovation research, these definitions and limitations have been contested (e.g. Toivonen et al., 2007; Fuglsang and Sørensen, 2011; Sørensen et al., 2013; Kallio, 2015). It has been argued that, because of the nature of services and because of the way services are often produced and consumed, the typical delimitations discussed above do not always represent innovative services well, the processes that lead to their development, how they may occur and how they may be organized (Gallouj and Weinstein, 1997; Sundbo, 1997; Edvardsson et al., 2000; Miles, 2005; Nijssen et al., 2006; Toivonen et al., 2007; Toivonen and Tuominen, 2009; Fuglsang and Sørensen, 2011; Sundbo et al., 2013).

The authors of this book share the latter critical perspective, but accept some considerations of the former. The focus of the book and the majority of its individual chapters is on qualitative and interpretive approaches for the study of service innovation processes. This is the result of our understanding of service innovation and innovation processes as complex, iterative, interactive and dynamic processes that can be better captured and explored by qualitative and interpretive research approaches. We acknowledge, but do not investigate specifically, other quantitative tools and methods that can be developed and can be complementary or necessary to assess, for example, innovation impact and business performance (however, see Chapter 2 for a discussion about innovation measurements). We do, however, focus on innovative qualitative research methods that can elicit an understanding of service innovation processes and foster these processes of service innovation.

At a general level, three different approaches have been suggested regarding how to understand service innovation processes: 1) an assimilation approach that considers service innovation processes to be similar to innovation processes in manufacturing; 2) a demarcation approach that argues

that service innovation processes are different from those of manufacturing and that they have features that require new theories and instruments; and 3) a synthesis approach, which suggests that service innovation processes have intrinsic characteristics but these can also be of relevance for manufacturing (Coombs and Miles, 2000; Carlborg et al., 2013). As service innovation research has developed during the last three or so decades the demarcation approach, and later the synthesis approach, have gained support instead of the assimilation approach (Carlborg et al., 2015).

Based on the individual investigations and experience of its contributing authors, this book follows the assumption that specific characteristics do exist that set innovation processes in services apart from other areas of innovation (for example, industrial product innovation) thus supporting the demarcation approach (though without neglecting the relevance of the synthesis approach). These peculiarities of service innovation research processes have consequences that affect not only the perception of service innovation but also how this specific form of innovation can be theoretically understood and methodologically studied.

The authors accept Schumpeter's notion that ideas are not in themselves valuable. Ideas, Schumpeter stated, must be turned into actual new products or services, or result in actual organizational changes or changed practices, to really be interpreted as innovation (Schumpeter, 1969). New marketing practices, for example, must have an economic impact or contribute to reshaping an organization, a company and/or society to be considered actual innovation. However, we also acknowledge that services are, among other things, intangible and perishable, and their processes of production and consumption are inseparable (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) often relying on unstructured employee–user interactions (or service encounters) (Carlzon, 1989; Bitner et al., 1990; Nickson et al., 2005; Sørensen et al., 2013). This intangibility and immediacy often lead to innovation processes in services that occur as ad hoc innovation (Gallouj and Weinstein, 1997) based on bricolage combining resources at hand (Fuglsang, 2010), or in specific project-oriented efforts (Salunke et al., 2013), or during daily interactions with users resulting in changes over time (Fuglsang and Sørensen, 2011) that may be recognized and acknowledged as innovations only in hindsight (Toivonen et al., 2007).

It is our opinion that to grasp service innovation it is necessary to consider these and other characteristics of services. When production and consumption are inseparable, innovation and innovation processes are also conceptually and practically integrated. Acknowledging these dynamics also means refusing the otherwise often cited requirement of service innovations to necessarily arise as a consequence of a conscious managerial strategy (Fuglsang and Sørensen, 2011). Many service organizations do

not have innovation or R&D departments, and while some or most might have established procedures designed to take care of innovation within the business, it is also common for innovation processes in services to occur as spontaneous (Sundbo and Sørensen, 2014) or invisible (Fuglsang, 2010) processes lacking systematization (Sundbo, 2010).

The recognition of these complex interactions, the fact that service innovation can be characterized by both top-down- and bottom-up-based innovation processes (Sundbo, 1997, 2010; Rubalcaba et al., 2012; Sørensen et al., 2013; Kallio, 2015), systematic or spontaneous efforts, leads us to understand service innovation as a form of innovation that requires methods apt to interact and integrate with service innovation specific dynamics. For example, understanding the origin of service innovations that result from unsystematic processes, and understanding the drivers and barriers of such processes, can benefit from certain ad hoc types of data collection techniques. Similarly innovations evolving gradually during daily routines and/or on the basis of employees' interactions with users may not be detected and understood through traditional methods of measuring innovativeness. But their understanding can benefit from alternative methods, for example, by observing innovation processes 'in action'. Chapters in this book will discuss, for example, how mapping methods, critical incident techniques and narrative methods can be applied to capture complex and partly invisible service innovation processes and how the inputs to and outputs from such processes (and thus their profitability) may be measured. Others will indicate how innovative methods can integrate in established practices of idea generation that can be later transformed, via practice and experimentation, into innovation in services.

### **1.2.2 Trends in Service Innovation Research and Themes Reflected in the Book**

Departing from the general theoretical and methodological aspects of services and service innovation processes discussed above, we also contend that a number of specific social trends that characterize contemporary service industries influence the development of identifiable types of innovation processes in service organizations and affect the methodological possibilities for investigating such service innovation processes.

These contemporary developments create a hierarchy of relevance among a number of possible methodological approaches to the study of innovation and innovation processes in services. They also remind us that such methods need to be in constant development and problematized. Relevant developments for the book include, for example, the contemporary role of experience (Boswijk et al., 2007; Pine and Gilmore,

2013; Sundbo and Sørensen, 2013), individualization (as well as ‘tribalization’) and self-actualization of consumers (Cova, 1997; Boswijk et al., 2012), the role of co-creation of value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Kristensson et al., 2008; Payne et al., 2008; Melton and Hartline, 2015), and the role of value in use (Sandström et al., 2008; Grönroos and Voima, 2013) or well-being (Anderson et al., 2013). They also include the development of hybrid production systems (Bryson and Daniels, 2015) or new business models (Chesbrough, 2010) that have increased the awareness of the value-creating potential of services in traditional industrial sectors resulting in product-service systems (Baines et al., 2007; Beuren et al., 2013) and servitization processes (Baines et al., 2009; Neely, 2009). User-based (Alam, 2002; Magnusson et al., 2003; Sundbo and Toivonen, 2011; Kallio, 2015), employee-driven (Rubalcaba et al., 2012) and service encounter-based innovation processes (Sørensen et al., 2013; Sundbo et al., 2015), co-creation (Kristensson et al., 2008; Grisseman and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012) and other types of interactive innovation processes, including networking (Gilsing and Duysters, 2008; Ahuja et al., 2012; Eide and Fuglsang, 2013; Rusanen et al., 2014; Sørensen and Fuglsang, 2014; Sørensen and Mattsson, 2016), public–private (Link, 2006) and open innovation processes (Chesbrough, 2003; Huizingh, 2011; Mina et al., 2014), are all examples of aspects of innovation processes in services that have gained increasing importance because of the mentioned societal trends among others. However, these trends also raise new questions about perceptions of the elements that constitute service innovation. For example, the value in use perspective refers to customer-created value (Grönroos and Voima, 2013) but innovation definitions have failed to include aspects of the user value of innovations (Snyder et al., 2016).

In this already complex scenario, we cannot forget to account for the role of communication and information technologies in service production and consumption and its potential role in service innovation (Gago and Rubalcaba, 2007; Cabiddu et al., 2013; Della Corte et al., 2015; Nicolaisen et al., 2016). The disruptive and almost endless potential and affordances offered by these technologies have the potential to constantly renegotiate not only innovation and innovation processes in services but also the data collection and methods of analysis they create and entail.

The above-mentioned concepts are part of some of the key trends that influence how we can investigate service innovation processes and what we can choose to investigate about such processes. In relation to the above-mentioned aspects, different chapters in the book will, for example, discuss methods that use social media or discuss the possible use of developing technologies and information technologies. Other chapters investigate co-creation processes, the services’ deeper values for users

and the methods that study open service innovation processes occurring between companies and their users.

### **1.2.3 The Role of Service Innovation Research**

The above-mentioned societal and academic trends exert significant influence on contemporary understandings of service innovation. As we have seen, these trends are important to understand what theoretical and methodological approaches might be used to investigate and confront service innovation. However, current developments in service innovation research cannot be fully understood without a larger contextualization in the changing dynamics that exist between business and academia as well as the changing demands posed by governments and society on the service innovation research community.

These trends include growing governmental, institutional and civil society demands concerning evident benefits, practical applicability and specific societal and business value of research results (Bornmann, 2013). A kind of Mode 2 research (Novotny et al., 2001) is being advocated, that results, for example, in an increased focus on more collaborative research methods (Van de Ven, 2007) involving close collaboration between researchers and service companies and organizations. These forces have methodological consequences and are favouring specific methods and approaches, such as action research methods (Stringer, 2013) and field experiments, in which researchers are encouraged to develop and implement new innovation procedures in close collaboration with companies (Sørensen et al., 2010).

Furthermore the growing governmental and intergovernmental interest in (often) large-scale research projects that involve a number of different research institutions as well as other public and private stakeholders is another factor that currently influences service innovation research. This has resulted in the creation of increasingly complex collaborative innovation research projects and set-ups that include a multitude of actors in, for example, Triple Helix (Leydesdorff, 2013) or Quadruple Helix projects and in subsequent Mode 3 knowledge production (Carayannis and Campbell, 2012). This results in new methodological challenges as well as challenges concerning the organization and collaboration in such projects, challenges which need scrutiny and investigation.

The relevance of the mentioned expectations for service innovation research methods will be emphasized in various chapters in this book. It will be discussed, for example, how action research, Future Workshops, Future-Oriented Technology Analysis, and experiments can be applied as collaborative service innovation research methods. Additionally, how public-private and university-company collaboration may be developed

and organized in large triple helix service innovation research projects to overcome some of the obstacles of research collaboration will be discussed. Such challenges are posed, for example, by the different ontologies, practices and objectives of actors participating in the projects.

### 1.3 FRAMEWORK AND CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK

The three unique dimensions of service innovation research explored above form the framework upon which the book is based. These dimensions suggest that complex social dynamics, societal changes, research trends, and evolving theoretical models have an influence on relevant service innovation processes and studies. Social changes and research trends have an impact on relevant service innovation processes and on the different actors' participation in these evolutions. As our discussions above have evidenced, these actors include not only service practitioners, but also service innovation research that is equally affected by social trends and evolution. This framework forcefully describes a dynamic environment in which, in a mutual process of adaptation and influence, any of the actors can contribute to the evolution of one, and consequently the other, area of investigation of service innovation practice. These dynamics constitute a research imperative that requires a constant adaptation and evolution of theories and methods that can help to observe and investigate evolving areas of service innovation. This process requires the constant development of innovative research methods specifically developed for the areas of investigation under study or the strategic adaptation of existing methods to specific service innovation practices. The book and its chapters are proof of these two theoretical and methodological dynamics. Each chapter of the book deals with a specifically tailored method, created or adapted to the study of service innovation processes. Each chapter discusses the relevance of the method to the investigation of given aspects of service innovation in relation to the specific framework. The chapters also situate the presented methods in the epistemological and ontological landscape on which they are based. They provide suggestions for how the method can be applied (including more or less specific guidelines), discuss the potential and limitations of the method and its relevance and contribution to service innovation research and practice. To achieve this, each chapter will present research examples that serve to illustrate and discuss how the method has been specifically applied and with what benefits. Together they aim to fulfil the mission of this book: To be a first step in the creation of a systemic overview of innovative methods that the research community, students in the field and practitioners can explore and refer to.

The contributors to the book are members of the ISE (Innovation in Service and Experience) research group at Roskilde University, Denmark. The group's members have studied service innovation processes intensively during several decades and have been influential in service innovation literature and debates. The group has applied a variety of innovative methods in a large number of studies and research projects on innovation processes in public and private service organizations. It is a collection of these methodological experiences that is presented in the following chapters of the book.

While the chapters in general pursue a qualitative approach to service innovation research, Chapter 2, authored by Jon Sundbo discusses how a quantitative instrument can be developed to measure input to and output from specific innovation processes. However, the author also discusses how 'soft' variables other than economic ones may be relevant in order to measure the cost-benefits of service innovations at the firm level. These variables may include, for example, employee motivation and customer satisfaction. Such an instrument is relevant for practitioners to evaluate the benefits and costs of innovating, and for researchers, particularly in practice-oriented studies (such as those discussed in other chapters of the book), because it can provide a possibility for estimating the benefits of collaborative service innovation research projects. This is also relevant in many publicly funded collaborative research projects in which the impact of research on participating companies has become an important aspect for evaluations of such projects. The method developed in the chapter can make such evaluations more transparent. The chapter discusses what and how to measure, and why. It presents existing instruments for measuring the costs and benefits of innovation at the firm level (which are primarily focused on manufacturing sectors) and it discusses the particularities and challenges in measuring service innovations' inputs and outputs.

The next two chapters focus on two different interviewing techniques and their related methods. In Chapter 3, Lars Fuglsang argues that the critical incident technique (CIT) (Flanagan, 1954), combined with other more 'Heideggerian' approaches, provides a basis for analysing everyday experiences of innovation activity in services and can help people make sense of innovation. The author places CIT in three different research traditions with examples from services and innovations: a positivist-functional, a phenomenological and a process-oriented research tradition. The value of CIT as a special interview and research technique for service innovation research is discussed. The method may be particularly relevant in service sectors where, for example, innovation processes are often not strategically planned or intentional but occur as bricolage and are recognized in retrospect.

Niels Nolsøe Grünbaum places emphasis on the benefits of another type of particular interview technique and research method in Chapter 4: *The Laddering Method in Service Innovation Research* (Reynolds and Gutman, 1988). The author argues that the Laddering Method, which builds on means–end theory (Gutman, 1982), can beneficially be applied to service innovation research as it attempts to create an understanding of the value that users extract from service attributes and depicts mental or cognitive maps of consumers related to the consumption of specific services. In the chapter it is argued that knowledge derived from the Laddering Method is particularly relevant for guiding service innovations and, thus, to optimizing cost–benefits of service innovation and supporting user-based service innovation. While the Laddering Method has clear practical applications and implications for public and private service organizations it can also, for example, support service research by providing insights about different levels of service users' values.

In Chapter 5, Anne Vorre Hansen discusses the possible use of narrative methodology in service innovation research and, compared with the methods presented in the former chapters, she applies the method in a more collective set-up rather than in an interview setting. The potential use of narrative methods is illustrated by an empirical example of a service innovation process, which was planned and carried out as a collaborative research project involving researchers, a non-profit housing organization as well as its users. The author presents the design, the process and the outcome of an innovation workshop and shows how users can create stories of their service experiences and that employees and residents, by co-creating new service-stories, can find a fruitful and neutral place for development. The chapter suggests that narrative methodologies represent a beneficial 'mindset' in service innovation processes rather than a fixed method. The method facilitates user-based innovation and co-creation of value, thus it relates to important aspects currently emphasized in service innovation research.

Mapping innovation processes as visual techniques for opening up the black box of service innovation is the focus of Chapter 6, authored by Anne Rørbæk Olesen. The author argues how different mapping techniques, more or less simple and complex, can help structure, explore, analyse and present messy and complex innovation processes while not reducing their complexity too much. She argues that certain visual mapping techniques are particularly relevant for service innovation research processes, as such processes are exceedingly complex, fuzzy and difficult to make sense of because they often lack systematization and can involve a multitude of different actors. In particular, Olesen discusses the potential of service innovation research for the mapping techniques related to Situational Analysis

(Clarke, 2003, 2005) and a further development of these techniques, which the author calls Temporal Situational Analysis. The chapter illustrates the potential of mapping techniques by presenting findings from a case study of innovation processes in two museums, involving museum staff and digital designers.

While Chapter 6 suggests how the mapping of innovation processes that involve different actors can help sort out complex service innovation processes, Chapter 7 focuses more specifically on the importance of investigating the dynamic relations and networks among actors participating in service innovation processes. The chapter focuses on the potential of social network analysis (SNA) in service innovation research but advocates for applying a qualitative and interpretivist approach to SNA which is otherwise dominated by positivist and mathematical graph approaches. Because contemporary service innovation processes can involve many actors (e.g. individuals, companies and public organizations), they are often organized in complex and very dynamic networks. The authors argue that a qualitative approach to investigating a social network can provide complementary knowledge of such dynamic networks and how they influence, and are influenced by, innovation processes in which many different factors of relevance operate in concert. This is illustrated by a case of the development of an event in a local community. While the authors argue for the benefits of an interpretivist approach to SNA, they also acknowledge, however, the potentials of mixed methods approaches to SNA that combine positivist and interpretivist approaches simultaneously.

Chapter 8 by Ada Scupola focuses on the potential use of social media in service innovation research. Specifically, the author presents the use of blogs as a particular type of social media that can function as a means to collect ideas in open innovation processes for service innovation in engaged research. The potential for the use of blogs is illustrated by the case of a university library. The results of the case show that for service organizations, blogs can generate useful service innovation ideas from users and thus facilitate user-based innovation. From a research point of view the study indicates that the use of social media in service innovation research can provide knowledge about, for example, the value and types of different user inputs as well as about the potential role, use and set-up of different social media platforms.

In Chapter 9, Francesco Lapenta describes how methods, theories and inferences derived from future-oriented technology analysis can and should be developed and implemented in technology-dependent service businesses and activities. Advancements in technology and service innovation have always been intertwined. Information technologies, however, have profoundly reshaped the very nature, and many fundamental processes,

associated with the service sector as a whole and with service innovation in general. This chapter specifically focuses on 'future scenario analyses' as a methodological tool that service companies in heavy technology-dependent business can utilize to maintain or build their business advantage. The chapter specifically looks at the banking sector and the fast changes that characterize the financial technologies services that depend as much on the comprehension of the banking practices of the past as the understanding, evaluation, development and adoption of the IT-based service practices of the future.

The relevance and potential of collaborative or engaged service innovation research, such as that illustrated in Chapters 5 and 8, are further discussed in the following chapters of the book. Chapter 10 illustrates how Future Workshops can be used in service innovation research that examines the relevance and ways of engaging users as well as employees in service innovation processes. The method presented is also an example of a collaborative research method that can benefit practitioners and researchers alike and can provide new knowledge and solutions to organizations. As such, the method can result in practically applicable knowledge in the shape of new innovation ideas. The future workshop method is exemplified by the case of Future Workshops conducted at a research library. The author discusses and illustrates the benefits of different types of set-ups of Future Workshops, for example, involving users, employees or both.

In Chapter 11, Flemming Sørensen argues that field experiments present an important potential for service innovation research. He argues that field experiments can sustain the development of new service innovation processes that can increase service organizations' innovativeness. Thus they comply with society's call for collaboration between academia and businesses and for the development of practically relevant knowledge. Furthermore, field experiments are argued to provide researchers with new knowledge about service innovation processes that could not be gained using other methods because they can test prototypes of service innovation procedures. The chapter illustrates the potential of field experiments in service innovation research, with the example of a simple experiment in a hotel where the joint development of new practices led to service innovations. The author also discusses certain limitations and risks of the experiment method.

The last chapter of the book follows in the footsteps of the former chapters dealing with collaborative and engaged research but changes perspective compared to those chapters. In this chapter Claire Esther Staddon Forder focuses on the set-ups of triple helix research projects that involve many different actors and the issues that follow from such set-ups. There is a growing interest in triple helix projects from society and from funding

actors and this also includes applied service innovation research projects. However, knowledge on the process of developing service innovation triple helix projects and how they function in practice is still rather limited. By following the case of a large applied tourism service innovation research project that involved researchers, tourism companies, a labour union, sector organizations, educational institutions and other actors, the author discusses and exemplifies the inherent ontological and epistemological differences of various actors in service innovation-oriented triple helix projects, and the issues and controversies that these differences may cause during collaboration. The author discusses how bridging the ontological differences can facilitate service innovation in triple helix projects.

Thus, each chapter presents a specific method that is argued to be particularly relevant for service innovation research, taking into consideration the various characteristics of services, service innovation and service innovation processes, the relevant social conditions and the political and societal requirements of service innovation research. The result is the presentation of a varied collection of methods that can help focus on various aspects of service innovation processes. We hope that the book and its chapters can be inspiration for the application and further development of different methods and thus sustain the continuous development of new knowledge on service innovation and service innovation processes, thereby also sustaining the future innovativeness of the different service sectors.

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