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GREEN SERVICE INNOVATION: THE ROLE OF RESOURCE INTEGRATION AND SERVICE PROVISION

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Abstract

Purpose: The importance of green services is increasing. The purpose of the research project is to develop a better understanding of the concept “green services” and its relationship to “service innovation”. The research questions are: What factors can define the green services concept? What are the distinctive characteristics of different types of green services?

Methodology: A multiple case study approach is used. The cases represent companies having introduced green service innovations. Based on interviews with the innovators and customers different categories of green services are identified and described. The empirical findings are then analyzed in the light of a literature review.

Findings: By combining empirical observations and theory the authors develop a framework for green service innovations. This framework describes how innovation can be attained through emphasizing changes in resource integration (reuse waste, reduce impact on nature and improve nature) and service provision (direct service or indirect service). In this frame six categories of green services are defined: redistribution of resources, changing customer behavior, improving conditions for nature, upcycling, replacement of technology and products to improve nature.

Originality/value: The majority of existing research on green service has had focus on the service companies and the change of technology in providing services. The authors here rather emphasize the customer roles, and stresses that these roles need to change to fulfill green service innovation. Moreover, the perspective here is that green services have the ability to not only mitigate negative impact on the environment but also increase the quality of nature. The term “greenovation” is proposed to emphasize this.