

Abstract

Implementation Knowledge in Sustainable Business Model Innovation: New Value Opportunities [†]

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Research Gap

Innovation has brought new value opportunities to countries worldwide for decades. Albeit these advances, there are still challenges that current and future generations must face to advance society and entrepreneurship [1]. Some of these challenges are related to the circular economy and sustainable business model innovation [2–4].

Introduction

By focusing on sustainable business model innovation, Geissdoerfer et al. (2018) explain that several solutions for sustainability and circularity are rooted in business modeling and enable strategic approaches to innovation [4]. These solutions target sustainable value, long-term outlooks, proactive stakeholder action, and the closing, narrowing, slowing, intensifying, and dematerializing of resource loops for a circular economy [4]. The intersection between design and implementation is where the purpose of this research lies: identifying uncaptured value.

Methods

A total of five small- and medium-sized enterprises are part of this research, and the chosen methodology is a qualitative canonical development framework [5]. The methods are divided into the following three domains: the philosophical context domain, the research question domain, and the methodical content domain [5]. Subsequently, this research was operationalized through semi-structured interviews, interpretive qualitative data analysis, and descriptive first- and second-level coding.

Results

The design process in sustainable business model innovation has been initiated by all the cases, supported through participation in a project focusing on sustainable transitions toward a circular economy. The cases are also entering the implementation phase, where challenges arise and are met with new decisions and actions, iteratively shaped by their entrepreneurial mindset. This is balanced by paradoxical tensions, where different strategies and intentions affect decision-making. However, the challenges associated with design and implementation can be outlined and can lead to new value opportunities, even if the cases use different terminologies depending on their respective industries. Hence, there is awareness of implementation knowledge in sustainable business model innovation when identifying uncaptured value.

Conclusions

The conclusion highlights the need to identify uncaptured value in sustainable business model innovation by being iterative and enabling a circular economy. This leads to



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new decisions where entrepreneurs ensure that the implementation of sustainable business model innovation is successful, from a long-term perspective, moving from a linear to a circular economy.

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