

Social Innovation Rediscovered: An Analysis of Empirical Research

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Abstract : In spite of the growing attention for social innovation, it is still considered to be in a stage of infancy with minimal progress in theory development. Upon examining the field of study, one would have to conclude that, over the past two decades, academic research has focused primarily on establishing a conceptual foundation. This has resulted in a considerable stream of conceptual papers which have outnumbered empirical articles. Nevertheless, despite its growing popularity, scholars and practitioners are far from reaching a consensus as to what social innovation actually means which resulted in competing definitions and approaches within the field of social innovation and lack of unifying conceptual framework. This paper reviews empirical research studies on social innovation, classifies them along three dimensions and summarizes research findings for each of these dimensions. Preliminary to the analysis of empirical researches, an overview of different perspectives of social innovation is presented.

Keywords : analysis of empirical research, definition, empirical research, social innovation perspectives

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