Social Innovation Design

Subjects: Architecture And Design

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social innovation design | sustainability | Sustainable Development Goals

1. Introduction

Eleanor Shaw pointed out that the practice of social innovation began in Britain in the 19th century when a few charitable entrepreneurs noticed that the improvement of the working environment, education, and cultural life helped enhance the well-being of employees [1]. In 2003, the OECD considered that social innovation aims at social and economic problems and improves the quality of life of the people and the general public by rediscovering and giving new services and solutions [2]. Social innovation is an innovative model with scientific and technological needs, platforms, and organizations [3]. Schumann et al. divided organizational innovation into product innovation, process innovation, and program innovation [4]. Additionally, economist Harvey Brooks stated that organizational innovation should come first [5].

In 2007, British economist Geoff Mulgan and others believed that “Social innovation” is defined as “innovative activities or services motivated by meeting social needs, whose main purpose is to affect the entire society.” [6] Defined by James Phills, Professor of Stanford Social Innovation Organizational Behavior in 2008, “*A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals*” [7]. Social innovation involves the interplay of resources, environmental factors, and interactions between actors [8].

The characteristics of social innovation [9]: (1) comprehensiveness; (2) openness; (3) pluralistic participation; (4) decentralization. The so-called decentralization is to give full play to the initiative and creativity of the bottom-most organization and distribute the decision-making power to the subordinate organizations [10]; (5) super social responsibility; (6) relevance [11]. Social innovation is the combination and recombination of social practices [12]. Putnam believes that social capital includes networks, norms, and trust in social life so that participants can act together and achieve their goals effectively [13]. Onyx and Bullen pointed out that social capital includes participation, trust, network, reciprocity, and norms [14]. Many companies with little infrastructure, regulatory authority, or money to respond to newcomers’ immediate needs or make longer-term integration investments [15].

Victor Papanek deemed that designers should pay attention to the needs of society, the environment, and design for 90% of the general public in the world [16]. Tim Brown of IDEO, a design innovation company, emphasized that design thinking is optimistic, constructive, and experiential in nature, which can meet people's needs for products and services [17]. Social innovation is to apply knowledge and meet the needs of the public. Meanwhile, the operation method can obtain social resources, social support, and promotion [18]. As the concrete implementation of social innovation is through social design, it can be seen that social innovation design uses social resources and knowledge to meet the needs of society and put forward innovative schemes.

Dr. Ezio Manzini stated, "Social innovative design is all the activities that professional design can implement to activate, maintain and guide society towards sustainable development". Only on the basis of establishing contacts can small local organizations have a large-scale impact. Under the positive influence of the network age, there is another possibility to avoid structural bureaucracy; that is, through horizontal and vertical connections [19]. In the connection strategy stage, it is necessary to achieve scale improvement through connection, where design schools play an important role. He argued that the emerging trend in design is gradual networking [20], which shows that design schools can become cultural institutions for social innovation. The potential of design schools may be a collaborative social resource, becoming an active key, and having a creative role in sustainable development [21]. The development and popularization of the internet provides a new channel for rural service innovation, showing the following characteristics [22]: (1) diversified service roles [23]; (2) localization of service content and resources [24]; (3) network communication of service vision. At present, villagers lack willingness and have a weak perception of the value of rural culture. Economic development has become the biggest factor in guiding villagers to participate in cultural revitalization [25], which is necessary to spread the vision [26]. A spike in community solidarity and a resurgent appetite for cross-stakeholder solutions based on multidisciplinary know-how could make this a historic opportunity for social innovation to strengthen community resilience [27].

2. Social Innovative Design and Sustainability

Sustainable development is defined as a development model that can meet our present needs without damaging future generations' ability to meet their needs [28]. In September 2015, the United Nations issued Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the agreement of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). This policy plans 17 sustainable development goals, taking into account three major aspects: economic growth, social progress, and environmental protection [29]. In 2004, Dr. Hua-Shan Guan sorted out the essentials and practices of a sustainable community mentioned by many scholars (Kline, Hancock, Roseland, Barton) and summarized them as follows: (1) economic sustainability: having the ability to maintain its own economic development, green business, create new products, update the operation mechanism of the community, and achieve its own economic balance operation; (2) social sustainability: paying attention to the organization and operation of the community, establishing the consensus of residents for the community, establishing the mutual benefit mechanism of neighboring areas, and improving the local autonomy and social responsibility of the community; (3) environmental sustainability: the management and application of community environmental practices, including waste reduction, recycling, local resource management, etc. [30]. The DfSS framework

specifically encourages designers to create solutions that are not just user-focused, but are systems-focused. Rather than focusing on how products can solve people's needs, we draw attention to how the entire product lifecycle (including design, manufacture, use, and maintenance) can maximize social impact [31].

The shift to a low-carbon community needs the transformation of government functions, improvement of a community system, and citizens' participation [32][33]. Social innovation realizes the harmonious relationship among people, the environment, and society through pluralistic participation [34]. People and designers design together and participate in constructing a low-carbon community, which can not only meet residents' needs to the maximum, but also promote community development [35]. Designers should re-understand their value, understand the inner spirit and meaning of culture, fully communicate with the locals, and jointly develop necessities suitable for local life, circulating commodities, and even international products with a high added value [36]. Chang Wenshan, a design scholar in Taiwan, believed that SDGs correspond to USR in Taiwan, and through the companionship and squatting of university teachers and students in the community, it will produce a closer sense of connection and carry out social practice programs for local problems. These will form a testing ground for sustainable management that practices commercial, social, cultural, and ecological values [37]. Chris Ryan, an expert in the field of social innovation, stated that "the distributed system model has attracted increasing attention, and it is regarded as a way to build a sustainable economy" [38]. He further remarked that "distributed models place and arrange infrastructure and critical service systems near resource and demand points. Individual systems can operate independently and adjust themselves, while also connecting with larger local, regional, or international networks" [39]. Distributed systems learn from problems and are more resilient than mainstream vertical systems [40]. Moreover, the necessary condition for a sustainable society is recoverability [41].

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