

Guideline for Summer School abstract

Theme

You can freely choose a topic that fits with the overall Summer School theme. Please think of a suitable title for your abstract, too.

Form & Content

Following Hyland (2000, p. 67)¹, your abstract should comprise the following aspects and themes:

Introduction: Establishes context of the paper and motivates the research or discussion.

Purpose: Indicates purpose, thesis or hypothesis, outlines the intention behind the paper.

Method: Provides information on design, procedures, assumptions, approach, data, etc.

Findings: States main findings or results, the argument, or what was accomplished.

Conclusion: Interprets or extends results beyond scope of paper, draws inferences, points to applications or wider implications.

If your research project just started and you are not able to present results, highlight your abstract as “work in progress”. However, you should describe what you found out until now (e.g. based on literature review) or what you expect to find out.

Guideline for layout, references, etc.

Please regard the professorships [guideline for term and final papers](#).

A cover sheet is not necessary, please provide your contact information on the first page of your abstract (including **full name and mail address**).

You can use British or American English; however, you should follow terms of language consistently thereupon.

Example of an abstract

Subsequently, an example of an abstract is presented.

¹ Reference: Hyland, Ken: *Disciplinary Discourses: Social Interactions in Academic Writing*. Harlow: Longman, 2000.

Summer School topic: “Transdisciplinary and intercultural innovation for sustainable development”

Frugal innovations in the South African context

- Work in progress -

Name:

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The concept of frugal innovation was developed by mainly studying emerging markets like India and considering innovations that serve the special requirements of these markets with products and services that are user oriented and affordable [cf. Tiwari & Herstatt 2012, p. 15 f.]. In the meantime, the term frugal innovation becomes more and more known, besides the connection with the developing world also associated with industrial nations [cf. Fraunhofer ISI and Nesta 2016].

Nevertheless, there are still uncertainties concerning a common definition of frugal innovation. Weyrauch and Herstatt [2016, p. 2 f.] compared different papers and concluded that there are various characteristics associated with frugal innovations. Based on literature review and interviews the authors elaborated three key criteria for frugal innovations: substantial cost reduction, concentration on core functionalities and optimized performance level.

However, even if a definition like the one of Weyrauch and Herstatt prevails and gets generally valid, further research is necessary to cover the whole approach of frugal innovation. At the moment many questions seem to be unanswered still. Are there specific, similar or various circumstances influencing the occurrence of frugal innovations? Are there particular conditions fostering their dissemination? And in what way can industrial countries take advantage of frugal innovations? Among other things questions like these intend to examine what factors support the successful implementation of frugal innovations.

For instance, Zeschky, Widenmayer and Gassmann [2011] emphasized that resource-constrained environments influence the emergence of frugal innovations. The authors point out that western companies have to recognize these contextual factors to enter new markets. According to Wohlfahrt et al. [2016, p. 5 and 13 f.], to implement an innovation successfully enterprises have to take into account the target group adequately. Grassroot innovators consider their target group and environmental conditions automatically. It is like they are part of their innovation. That is why corporate innovators should take inspiration from the way grassroot entrepreneurs are acting.

This paper intends to analyze motives, ideas and circumstances that drive the development of frugal innovations. Therefore, several frugal case examples are considered regarding the following questions: Why is the innovation categorized as frugal innovation? What are typical features of the innovation? And in what way is it linked to its context? The purpose of this investigation is to make propositions concerning the development of frugal innovations within

a specific context. In the ideal case this could serve as foundation for further research exploring a successful implementation of frugal innovations with respect to their context.

To categorize a case example as a frugal one, the classification of Weyrauch and Herstatt is used. South Africa is chosen a research context to limit context factors to a specific national setting. Case examples are compared and embedded into the countries context by considering political, social and economic circumstances. South Africa is one of the BRICS and frugal innovations are associated with the BRICS often [cf. Wohlfahrt et al. 2016, p. 5] Moreover, there are several examples of frugal innovations emerged in South Africa [cf. Bremmen 2014]. Due to that, the country seems to provide a suitable context for examining frugal innovations.

The research methodology follows a qualitative approach. First, I carried out literature research to narrow the research topic of frugal innovations, its definitions and possible context factors for the emergence of frugal solutions [cf. Ebster and Stalzer 2008, p. 41 f.]. Then several examples of South African frugal innovations are collected for further analysis. For studying the cases qualitative guided interviews are conducted and additional information are considered [cf. Patton 2002, p. 343]. The interviews consider mainly the understanding of frugal innovations, main features of the case examples and their surrounding context.

This is a work in progress. Until now, one case example, the moladi building system, is compiled fully. Moladi is a building system creating affordable houses based in Port Elizabeth [cf. Coetzer 2010, p. 3]. The system works with plastic forms and a special mortar-mix. The plastic panels are clipped together, their cavities are fitted with steel reinforcements and the mortar is filled in. Once the walls are dried, the plastic forms are removed and can be used again. There are no restrictions concerning the buildings size or type. [cf. Coetzer 2010, p. 8 f]

Moladi intends to implement frugality in every area of its business and tries to minimize administrative costs permanently. It sources material and resources from local suppliers, in the ideal case from the region where the planned buildings emerge. And the company's main approach is to empower people to build their own houses and communities. Due to that, it concerns two of South Africa's main problems: The organization tries to tackle housing shortage by building affordable houses [cf. Coetzer 2010, p. 5 f.]. And moladi empowers people to get a work and addresses the high rate of unemployment thereby [cf. Statistisches Bundesamt 2015, p. 1 f.].

However, the challenges moladi has to face show that concerning the local context seems not to be enough to establish a successful solution. Quite the contrary, moladi's main markets are outside of South Africa. Moladi is active in African countries like Tanzania and Nigeria as well as in Sri Lanka and in the Latin American countries Mexico and Panama. Currently it expands to the United Kingdom and further industrial countries. [cf. World Economic Forum 2017, p. 40]

To recap, the first case example supports the assumption that a frugal innovation is closely connected to its context on the one hand, however, this is no guarantee for success on the other hand. There are much more factors influencing the emergence and diffusion of frugal innovations. Due to that, as previously announced, further cases of South African frugal innovations are considered. A tentative proposition could be that the persistence of a frugal innovation is more linked to the occurrence of a holistic frugal process than the embeddedness in its context. This assumption is supported concerning moladi's global long-term expansion. Nevertheless, the surrounding environment shapes the basic conditions.

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