

Social innovation, evaluation and stories: where do they meet?

Emergence by Design / D.3.2: Annex
Literature Review

Place:	Amsterdam
Date:	01-02-2014
Author:	Martha Vahl
In cooperation with:	Marlieke Kieboom

Abstract

The European Union as well as many governmental and political organisations appear increasingly interested in social innovation and are funding relevant projects. The results are expected to help countries like those in Western Europe improve the quality of life for their citizens and maintain a competitive edge on world markets. Kennisland, a small research organisation in the Netherlands is participating in two projects aiming to provide such results: 'Educational Pioneers' and 'Emergence by Design', respectively.

A first step in any projects is to review the literature. The present contribution is the result of such an effort. Originally the task was expected to be straightforward: one checks the Internet and the Library, summarises what has been done and designs a way to fill the gap of what hasn't been done. Social innovation did not appear to differ from many similar gaps in our knowledge of social life. Unfortunately, identifying the gap proved more difficult than expected. No convergence in terms of what is meant or of how one might proceed could be found.

This is not due to a dearth of publications. Their distribution appears a bit skewed, however. While one would expect the study of a social phenomenon always to invite two types of results, studies from the outside appeared to dominate. Part of the gap proved to be a lack of information about what guides people to socially innovate from the inside. There were more complex difficulties as well. To be able to build on what has gone before one needs to access definitions and preliminary theories. Their variety without a clear pattern suggested a deeper problem.

What seemed to be especially relevant in terms of a gap were insights on how to initiate and support social innovation – not as something accidental, but systematically. This led to an exploration of the type of research that might be needed: if the study of a certain area does not seem to go forward, it may be that the approach taken is misguided. It was argued that traditional forms of research require that the data set can be closed, i.e. the set of reports about some events or series of events. This makes it possible to model that set and to use the model to guide the events, whichever way.

It also is argued that no closed set of reports can be found if the events one studies concern a change from old to new. This implies that the set of reports is frequently updated and hence cannot be closed. Two ways to deal with this problem were identified and explored. One is to approximate closure by some form of evaluation – for example comparing intended and actual effects or providing feedback to social innovators and thereby support them. The other is to focus on what research may support the construction of social innovation.

The literature concerning both approaches was reviewed. It was attempted to identify the advantages and disadvantages of a form of evaluation that aims to minimise closure via the external evaluator. An example is a form of evaluation called Dynamic Evaluation (developed in one of the projects). It was noted, however, that innovation requires that no external closure be attempted. This led to the identification of a form of research

aiming to improve the link between instructions and the set of reports. The result would consist of double instructions.

It was concluded that double instructions help to structure activities in the same way that stories and narratives do. This implies identifying high quality stories in support of innovation as the result of the improvement of underlying double instructions. More generally, it is argued that the analysis that had to be undertaken given the state of the field of social innovation helped to resolve some of the confusions pertaining to efforts in its support – in particular concerning the role of evaluation and of the type of study needed to deal with open sets of reports or data.

Table of contents

Abstract

Section 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Structure of the paper

Section 2 Social innovation

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Definitions
- 2.3 Assessment

Section 3 Evaluation

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Dynamic Evaluation
- 3.3 Assessment

Section 4 Construction

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Instructions and constraints
- 4.3 Narratives
- 4.4 Assessment

Section 5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Summary
- 5.2 Assessment

Bibliography

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The topic of social innovation is receiving increasing attention on the level of politicians, universities, individuals and many others¹. It is touted as a major new objective to resolve social ills as well as a way to 'stay ahead' of other countries economically and politically (Moulaert, 2013)². This raises the issue how to contribute to it. Some authors point to a problem of external control (can one 'make' others act innovatively?), others emphasise internal changes of organisational structures (Glänzel, 2013; Design Council, 2013)³. All appear to share an interest in guiding these changes such that the effect/cost ratio of doing so systematically is positive (Lane, 2013; Fowler, 2013)⁴ – as many are reported to arise accidentally (Mulgan and Leadbeater, 2013).

We report here the results of our own attempts to participate in this quest for an approach to support and understand social innovation, based on our exploration of the relevant literature. The source of our attempts is a social innovation project called 'Educational Pioneers' (EP), which is run by Kennisland.⁵ It has been designed as an informational source to another project, called 'Emergence by Design' (MD, funded through the European FP7, 2012-2014). Its aim is to find ways to purposefully support social innovation. Kennisland is a research organisation operating in the Netherlands and focusing on making Dutch organisations and public services 'better, smarter and more enjoyable' – preferably bottom up.

When it is attempted to study a social phenomenon systematically, two approaches tend to be recognised. In the first the aim is to delineate what is of interest and what its features are as observed from the outside (The Young Foundation, 2012).⁶ In the second the focus is on the actors who contribute to the development of what is of interest, i.e. on what happens inside. Both approaches face the problem of identifying what the objectives of the developments are and who defines them. Dealing with this problem has led to a characterisation of the two approaches in terms of who benefits, who

¹ See Handbook of Social Innovation (2013), conferences (Social Frontiers, 2013) and research projects, such as (TEPSIE, FP 7 Emergence by Design), practical projects (Lab and Lab2), HIVOS (international aid and development organisation) and organisations like NESTA.

² Social exclusion is one of the ills mentioned by Moulaert and Van Dijck (2013). According to Lane (2013), the Innovation Society has reached a meta-crisis due to the problem-solution-problem ideology that focuses too much on individual activities and characteristics (like creativity) and does not cater for mutual coordination, cascades and the direction of social innovation.

³ Fowler (2013) suggests 'changing the rules or changing the game'. See also the European Commission DG Regional and Urban Policy Guide to Social Innovation (2013).

⁴ One possibility is to think of 'functional differentiation', e.g. where one person takes part in many different networks with different roles. Experiences from one area can be used in another and vice versa, although usually linguistically rather than literally (e.g. as metaphor).

⁵ Funding is provided by Arbeidsmarktplatform Primair Onderwijs (an Employment Platform for Primary Education) supported by CAOP (<http://www.caop.nl/storage/nav-menu-top/english.html>).

⁶ 'Measuring' social events depends on the possibility of finding their unique representations and hence on being able to identify boundaries that are independent of them (Suppes and Zinnes, 1963). Normative concepts help to create boundaries and hence only allow for purposeful approximations to measurement (Section 1.3).

contributes, what resources are used and how their results impact on other social processes (which is what identifies innovations as social).

Research would seem the obvious choice when one wishes to deal with social innovation systematically as it is systematic by intention. Unfortunately it is also designed to deal only with observations and ignore all other experiences. What is studied is only what people see from the outside. It excludes objectives and in this sense presents a serious difficulty. Objectives are at the heart of social innovation so ignoring them is contra-productive. This suggests that a modified form of research or an alternative like evaluation is needed to achieve what is wanted. Attempts to fill this need are presented in this contribution; they are part of the two projects, EP and MD⁷.

The initial aim of the paper was to summarise what the literature contributes about social innovation and how it may be linked to evaluation and research. The result was intended to provide a context to a report of the results of the two projects. During the literature review much confusion was encountered concerning the difference between evaluation and research. It seemed that simply reporting these confusions would not be satisfactory. This suggested attempting to try and cut through the Gordian knot that the literature appeared to present and to provide additionally a review of the issues involved, i.e. when to evaluate and when to do research.

1.2 Structure of the paper

The paper consists of five sections, of which the present section is the first. The next section (Section 2) contains a review of the literature. Various definitions of social innovation are presented and compared. No definitive operational definition appears to have been agreed upon yet as authors still struggle to decide what it should include. Terms such as 'need' and 'social' and 'cooperation' are popular, but they and their use still appear fuzzy – as fuzzy as that of social innovation itself. Still, a number of attempts can be reported to improve recognition of social innovation as well as identify its objectives and what benefits attract those who implement it.

In the third section (Section 3) social innovation is interpreted as a two-part activity. This interpretation dates back to Greek antiquity but has been re-formulated a number of times (Reichenbach, 1935; Lakatos, 1978). The first part refers to the act of construction. The aim of the second part is to justify and evaluate the results of the construction. Both parts obviously need to be explored together to study social innovation. It is suggested, however, to focus on one part if the other proves difficult. In this section the evaluation part is emphasised. The section includes a discussion of 'Dynamic Evaluation', an approach introduced especially for the two projects.

In the fourth section (Section 4) the complementary path is explored to identify what internal support individuals require to contribute to social innovation – i.e. in a process like research (not as research, as this focuses on the external). The individual objectives

⁷ Attempts to deal with the values involved tend to focus only on the outside view, like research. It has been attempted, for example, to fixate the objective of social innovation, e.g. by some outside authority, and to derive the implications for those who wish to contribute (Maskin, 2009).

will differ if no outside external authority dominates. They constrain or 'bracket'⁸ those of others, therefore, rather than determine them. Next, what is bracketed may stabilise or become a resource. This suggests searching for combinations of constraints or instructions that support social innovation. Certain forms of instruction are identified as stories.

In the fifth section (Section 5) the results of the previous sections are compared. Helping to achieve changes that are recognised as social innovation and that prove beneficial beyond the interests of those contributing to its implementation remains difficult – more difficult, in fact, than helping to achieve technical innovation (Van der Leeuw, 2012). Still, the present review appears to have contributed new insights into how to systematically support social innovation. This appears less of a mystery than before – even though its magic (i.e. its less than systematic appearance) continues to pop up.

Section 2 Social innovation

2.1 Introduction

In November 2013 NESTA (a UK based charity whose mission is to 'help people and organisation to bring great ideas to life'⁹) and partners organised a 'Social Frontiers' conference to bring together workers in social innovation as well as researchers. While various lines of study were opened up, links between them remain unclear – including whether a single definition might actually help develop the field. It was advised to organise additional meetings to discuss such fundamental issues as well as improve support to social innovation and identify a research agenda (Mulgan, 2013).¹⁰ Creating a research community often seems to help speed up developments.

The potential for such a research community is highlighted by the fact that a Google search returns about 488,000,000 results for 'social innovation' and 25,000,000 for 'technological innovation' (on 23 December 2013). Returns for books total 179,000,000 and 7,700,000, respectively. While these numbers may be explained in various ways, it is tempting to interpret them as signs of development, i.e. larger numbers suggest more discussions and less agreement. While one hesitates to add to the numbers, therefore, one also is challenged to help developments forward. The latter is attempted in this section, starting from some of the available information¹¹.

2.2 Definitions

A quick search of the literature shows that definitions of 'social innovation' abound, but that they have their own flavour and focus dependent on what field the authors are in or what background they have. This suggests exploring a selection of definitions, by

⁸ The term 'bracket' is inspired by Hegel (1807) and borrowed from Husserl (1973). It is strongly linked to the notion of operator as used by Von Foerster (see Müller & Müller, eds. 2014) and hence to the notion of 'eigenvalue', something approaching Hegel's 'absolute knowledge'.

⁹ <http://www.nesta.org.uk>.

¹⁰ <http://www.nesta.org.uk/event/social-frontiers>.

¹¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_innovation

answering the question: what forms of social innovation are discussed in what areas? Two main areas are relevant to the present contribution.

a) Business and social enterprises

In 2013, a trans-European consortium for social innovation incubators (BENISI, funded through FP7) was formed which intends to contribute to social innovation through social enterprises; it 'expects the transfer and scaling of many innovative social enterprises to address one of Europe's most pressing needs: to enhance economic growth and create new and meaningful jobs for a new generation of young people, who are in need of employment.'¹²

This definition relates to a possible reason for an interest in social innovation. It focuses on economic issues. In another quote BENISI emphasises more general social issues, i.e. ways to improve on the ability to perform certain actions (including innovation): A social innovation can be defined as a new idea, product, service or model that simultaneously meets social needs and creates new social relationships or collaborations. Social innovations are not only important for the new specific solutions to societal needs, but they can furthermore impact on society's capacity to innovate.'

Both quotes lack in clarity. The notion of 'new' has already initiated many serious debates. What is 'new' may be just as important on a local level ('new' here and now) as on a global level ('new' in the history of this nation or of the world). Apart from this fuzziness, the quotes also show an important similarity. They are oriented towards the future – in terms of new tools or ideas but, most importantly, in terms of the capacity of organisations to change their actions. The former may be called short-term, as what is 'new' before an innovation soon will be 'old'. The latter is long-term, as it refers to changes relatively far into the future.

While new ideas and new tools may be the product of individuals, the reference to organisations takes innovation to a collective level. This is reflected in the way BENISI intends to achieve its objective. It will target organisations by identifying the 300 most promising projects where jobs are created and to offer a 'scaling up' network to support others, i.e.: ... to provide the tools and create the conditions for the social innovations to be transferred and adopted in other European localities. This will expand their reach and impact, and simultaneously generate positive cascading effects across Europe on many key social and environmental challenges the European Union is facing today.'¹³

Both the intention (increase the capacity) and the method (provide examples) are interesting. If the examples are to have the intended effect, one might expect them to have been analysed in terms of their shared elements – so the latter would be more important than the examples and would suggest some form of theory. This would be rather worrisome, however, as it implies that the direction of the intended innovations is taken to be independent of examples and hence that the latter are seen as mechanisms that work. The possibility of failure is not discussed. Paraphrasing Fowler (2013), the BENISI does not intend to 'change the game, but maybe the rules'.

¹² <http://www.benisi.eu/project-summary>

¹³ <http://www.benisi.eu/project-summary>.

It seems useful to contrast this approach with one where directions and values are taken to matter, called 'connecting values' (Regeer, Mager and Van Oorsouw, 2011). The aim is to provide the means for growth as well as a 'licence to grow'. Those involved are instructed to search for alternative value perspectives, and in particular to pay ample attention to intangible values as they are indispensable for tangible output and structural change (Regeer et al, 2011, p. 27). Innovation is conceived in terms of a space of possibilities that depends on participants' values and objectives. Its dynamics help the process of innovation unfold. This method is argued to be superior to the use of the traditional control model (Regeer et al., 2011, p. 28).

b) Policy, governance and social orientation

The relation of social innovation to values (or objectives, or non-observational experiences) tends to be emphasised even more in areas other than business and enterprises. This may be a collective 'need'. One aims for what is considered 'good for society' – presumably defined in terms of what political parties want or of cultural orientations.

1. "Social innovations are new solutions (products, services, models, markets, processes etc.) that simultaneously meet a social need (more effectively than existing solutions) and lead to new or improved capabilities and relationships and better use of assets and resources. In other words, social innovations are both good for society and enhance society's capability to act."¹⁴

It is also claimed that the result of a particular method ('meeting social needs', etc.) is 'better' than the results of other approaches (the 'philanthropic approach'). This type of comparison does not necessarily depend on effect-measures. It may also be based on means-measures, i.e. on whether the resources can be reduced to achieve the same result (e.g. preventing 'social exclusion').

2. "Social innovation refers to innovation in meeting social needs of, or delivering social benefits to, communities – the creation of new products, services, organizational structures or activities that are 'better' or 'more effective' than traditional public sector, philanthropic or market-reliant approaches in responding to social exclusion."¹⁵

Some authors prefer to interpret the notion of 'capacity to act' on an individual rather than on a collective level - but the link to the latter is still emphasised. Individuals are expected to help themselves by answering to social demands (achieve 'social ends') and to do so socially ('social means').

3. "Social innovation can be defined as the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations. It represents new responses to pressing social demands, which affect the process of social interactions. It is aimed at improving human wellbeing.

¹⁴ The Young Foundation (2012) Social Innovation Overview: A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research, p.18)

¹⁵ The International Handbook on Social Innovation, Moulaert, 2013, p. 1.

*Social innovations are innovations that are social in both their ends and their means. They are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance individuals' capacity to act.*¹⁶

It is also emphasised that the aim of social innovation is not that individuals contribute to the realisation of an externally defined collective goal. The latter should be co-determined, not determined by powerful individuals or cultural traditions. The focus should be on individuals, collective goals support individuals to identify or create the resources that are needed to avoid personal losses. Such mutual support depends on interaction, i.e. on moves and countermoves. It may develop accidentally, as in the past, but the main problem is to find ways to develop such moves systematically.

*4 '...social innovations as original or inventive individually or collectively driven initiatives – intended to alter the rules of the game, or the game itself – that are played out in the institutions that co-determine not only a society's trajectory and sustainability, but also its winners and losers.'*¹⁷

*... [S]ystemic innovation is an interconnected set of innovations, where each influences the other, with innovation both in the parts of the system and in the ways in which they interconnect (p7).*¹⁸ ...

*'Systemic change [...] is the ultimate goal of social innovation. Systemic change usually involves the interaction of many elements: social movements, business models, laws and regulations, data and infrastructures, and entirely new ways of thinking and doing. Systemic change generally involves new frameworks or architectures made up of many smaller innovations. Social innovations commonly come up against the barriers and hostility of an old order. Pioneers may sidestep these barriers, but the extent to which they can grow will often depend on the creation of new conditions to make the innovations economically viable. These conditions include new technologies, supply chains, institutional forms, skills, and regulatory and fiscal frameworks. Systemic innovation commonly involves changes in the public sector, private sector, grant economy and household sector, usually over long periods of time.'*¹⁹

The aim of social innovation is defined as groups or collectives of people getting constructed that support each other in contributing to some task. This means that the effects of the support remain local, i.e. part of the world of the individuals involved. They cannot be generalised to others elsewhere, i.e. to anybody, as in the case of research. If individuals increase their capacity to act, this becomes part of the actions of a collective – but this does not necessarily impact on a wider level ('innovation cascade'). For that to happen a second process is needed ('adoption').

*5. By innovation, we refer to the processes through which new artefacts are conceived, designed, produced and integrated into patterns of use. These processes necessarily involve the construction of new patterns of interaction among agents, and hence transformations in the organization of what we may call agent space.*²⁰

"At the micro level, social innovation consists of projects, each initiated by a group of social innovators. Projects, if they lead to anything, induce an innovation cascade. As the

¹⁶ Guide to Social Innovation, European Commission DG Regional and Urban Policy, 2013, p. 6.

¹⁷ Fowler, 2013.

¹⁸ Mulgan, 2013 Systems Innovation discussion paper.

¹⁹ NESTA (2010).

²⁰ Lane et al, Emergence by Design Full Proposal (MD B ed.) 2011.

cascade evolves, it will induce a series of transformations in social organization – new patterns of interaction among social agents.

... What makes the innovation “social” is that social innovators’ primary aim is to generate positive social effects through the adoption of their innovations.’²¹

It has been noted that the difference between the roles of the first and the second process (or any additional process) is not due to a difference in content. Ideas and artefacts that develop in art may ‘impact’ on the role of the military; changes in religious organisations may impact on notions of social work (e.g. social helping and adult education).

‘[I]nnovations from within the ‘social’ are not exclusively driven by new ideas and products to satisfy unmet ‘needs’. Exploration of human imagination and potential seen in the arts and cultural expressions are also drivers of people challenging and changing society with systemic outcomes. By ‘inventing’ and spreading Afrobeat and its lyrics, deceased Nigerian musician Fela Kuti is credited with a political impact that abetted the end of the country’s military rule. Innovation through social entrepreneurship of belief – such as Ron L. Hubbard’s founding of the Church of Scientology – has, in many countries, constitutionally challenged what is understood as a legitimate religion, leading to interpretations with systemic consequences. Here, social innovation did not stem from need, per se, for a new musical genre or for an additional belief system.’²²

c) Research and social innovation

The literature on social innovation differs in terms of content (see the previous points a and b), but also in terms of the role of research. The latter usually is considered rich enough to provide a clear understanding as well as ways to support social innovation. Interestingly, if this is correct, one wonders why studies of social innovation have not been successful enough not to require projects like the present one. This difficulty merits some reflection, as it seems due to the difference between what social innovations require and what research is able to offer. It is exacerbated by the fact that one can find many definitions of research (as well as of innovation) – ranging from those of physics to forms like action research, statistics and grounded theory²³.

Not all definitions are alike, however, as most have been developed to serve a specific purpose. Still, when one focuses on empirical research, sufficient similarities can be found to constitute a class (named research). Each element refers to sense data in the form of reports – of what individuals have seen or have experienced. It is attempted next to find statements that link to the reports. All persons may prefer a different link. If sufficient²⁴ numbers of people accept some link as replacement for their personal links, it is considered high quality. High quality is possible only if the set of reports is closed. If it includes reports of present future events it supports prediction.

These similarities may seem unfamiliar, but they easily translate into familiar ones. Statements are also referred to as ‘theories’ or ‘models’. Differences between the links of

²¹ Lane (2013).

²² Fowler (2013).

²³ See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research> for an overview of research approaches and definitions.

²⁴ Methods of statistical inference help in this case (Wilcox, 2010).

individuals before they accept a high quality link are called 'biases'. The aim of research is to 'reduce' them. A necessary condition for finding a 'high quality' link is that the set of reports is closed, i.e. it has a boundary that is independent of any statement. If it is closed, one may find 'causal chains', i.e. links of sufficient quality to 'know' what to change to initiate preferred changes. The many discussions in the literature on social innovation suggest that no boundary has been found yet.

Indeed, in the case of social innovation no such boundary may ever be found – as has been argued for all cases where preferences are involved²⁵. This may be unavoidable: to produce something new, one has to step out of the old, i.e. out of anything that has a boundary that appears to need modification. Modifications obviously may change the set of reports at any time therefore and hence makes it impossible to find high quality links. Few people seem indeed willing to replace their personal taste by a general or common taste²⁶. To study innovation it seems best to assume that the set of reports has no boundary, but is open (Bertalanffy, 1968).

The literature contains many proposals to deal with such open sets of reports, which their authors hope also belong to the class of research. Instead of linking to 'statements', they link to linguistic forms like preferences, stories or commands²⁷. Instead of 'sets of reports of observations', one considers 'sets of reports of preferences', etc. An example is 'action research'²⁸. Its set is open in that it often refers to the individual experiences of being disadvantaged. To find a high quality link, it is attempted to close that set by linking it to a general preference like 'empowerment'. This often proves difficult to achieve, however. Those involved tend to accept only a temporary and approximate replacement of their personal preferences.

2.3 Assessment

It would seem, looking back over the reviewed literature, that social innovation starts with events that usually are recognised only later as the introduction of a new artefact, idea, product, service, process, skill, market or model. A sizable amount of interpretation is usually added, for example that the event is linked to frameworks like a problem, a need, demand or national advantage. The process of construction starts individually, when someone is not satisfied by what he or she can do and hence wishes to jump out of the 'old order' and initiate new activities. Help consists of engaging and modifying other people's experience – not of agreeing on collective goals.

The core objective is that an individual's capacity increases via the construction of a collective within which the exercise of that capacity leads to new resources. In other words, changes in such capacity are not meant to go beyond that group; the latter is the horizon of the change. A second process has to be initiated, therefore, to ensure that the expression of the increased capacity reaches or 'impacts' a wider audience. Responsibility for the management of that process may be left to the members of the group, or may be

²⁵ Arrow (1950) has shown that, under quite general conditions, when preferences and objectives are involved *no* general preference or objective (i.e. statements) can be found that links with high quality to individual preferences. See also Maskin (2009).

²⁶ Paraphrasing a Roman saying: 'One can convince others of facts, but not of tastes'.

²⁷ For stories see (Van den Berge et al, 1980); for commands see (Von Wright, 1963).

²⁸ See Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice (Reason & Bradbury-Huang, 2013)

taken over by others, for example policy makers. Only if the second and next processes are successful will innovations become 'game changers'.

It seems difficult to overestimate how devastating the lack of a closed set of reports is to research. It implies that one cannot find high quality links to statements, but only links like those in daily life. An example is a concept like liberation (often part of innovation). It is relatively easy to use that concept to name reports of events. It is difficult to identify what reports should not be named. The boundary between the named and not named is open as it tends to change dependent on who is studying it and when. Still, many authors seem tempted to deal with open sets as if they are closed. This means that the possibility of bias is increased rather than reduced.

Attempts to avoid this difficulty take two paths. In the case of evaluation one tries to bypass the use of open sets by closing them temporarily, for example by referring to moments in time such as an end or intermediate state or by accepting that some sets can relate only to some preference (see Section 3). Following the other path one will try to close the set of relevant reports as part of the process of research, i.e. via the constraints imposed by the organisation in which innovations take place. To take this context into account, narratives and instructions are considered rather than statements. This path is referred to as the acquisition of knowledge (see Section 4).

Section 3 Evaluation

3.1 Introduction

Our review of the literature on social innovation and on research leads to two conclusions. The first is that since the 1960s²⁹ the term 'social innovation' has become popular as referring to something valuable. The term is used loosely, however – and ranges from new artefacts (computers) to life-changing new ideas (participation). The second is that it still proves difficult to deal with innovation systematically, i.e. such that one knows when an event is or is not a social innovation. One reason appears to be that the sets of reports of individual experiences in innovation are open. Dealing with such sets is not part of the forms of research that tend to be used to study them.

This difficulty has led many authors to focus on the evaluation of social innovation rather than on its study. The basis of the 'logic of evaluation', following Owen (2007), is to approximate the open set of reports concerning the construction by a closed set. This is achieved by restricting attention to such a set, for example the one at the end of an innovative construction (in a summative evaluation). It may also come at other moments (in a formative evaluation). Most authors distinguish two types of approximations. Firstly, one or more individuals are invited to initiate social innovation. Secondly, the resulting activities are monitored via diaries and interviews.

Both types help to select open sets of reports to which a preference or other value is to be assigned. They are referred to as the evaluand³⁰. If only reports are included that have

²⁹ Precursors include Robert Owen (1813), who emphasized social cooperation and Schumpeter (1942), who focused on the economic role of innovation.

³⁰ Saunders (2011); Owen (2007).

been collected at the end of a project, what is assigned may consist of a judgement whether or not participants consider it to be socially innovative or not. This obviously limits the evaluation to the experiences of a particular group and may explain why some authors link the set to the solution of some problem (see § 2.2a), thus reducing social innovation to problem solving. Alternatively one may try to avoid defining what is assigned and evaluate impacts in the next, subsequent process (§ 2.2b).

Another approach would be to identify a number of evaluands, each referring to the reports that are available at a series of moments after the initial invitation. What is to be assigned may consist of a summary or name of the reports up to that moment. If these are communicated to the participants, they may change their activities (and hence their reports). This way the (formative) evaluation becomes a tool to manipulate participants from the outside, for example to structure their project according to what the evaluators define as social innovation or to impose external constraints that restrict innovation to what is economically valuable (Schumpeter, 1942).

The literature dealing with evaluation is quite varied. For example Owen³¹ distinguishes 5 forms of evaluation: proactive, clarificative, interactive, monitoring and impact. Each is linked to key approaches to ensure that evaluands approximate closed sets. They include defining roles for the participants of a project. The evaluator may take the role of external judge or facilitator/consultant. There also are roles for stakeholders (those affected by the evaluation), e.g. to define what may be assigned. Owen is careful to emphasise that assignments to open sets of reports must have high quality – just like the links between statements and observations³².

3.2 Dynamic Evaluation

Patton (2011; 2012) identifies Developmental Evaluation as a suitable form to evaluate social innovation. The evaluator is on site and contributes through standard forms of evaluation feedback for the participants. This form of evaluation does not aim to improve what it evaluates. The approach is considered formative (see § 3.1)³³. It is frequently advised that the evaluator becomes a member of the process to be evaluated to ensure that he or she shares the same experience. Owen (2007) criticises this approach by comparing it to the role of organisational development consultants, who rather than share tend to restrict assignments to evaluands to their personal values.

Dynamic Evaluation has been designed as a way to include formative improvements into social innovation (MD, 2010). This type of evaluation is related to approaches like ‘fourth’ generation evaluation – as described by Guba and Lincoln (1989). It is again assumed that the evaluand consists of an open set of reports from the members of a project. An approximation to its closure is achieved by providing participants with feedback about progress towards what they have been invited to do as part of their project. This feedback may refer to changes in the pattern of interaction, observable changes in participants’ motivations and aspects of efficiency and effectiveness.

³¹ Owen (2007); Saunders (2011); Tavecchio (2010, 2012).

³² Owen, 2007. p. 221-227.

³³ Preskil, H. and Beer, T, 2012, p. 6.

The intended benefit of Dynamic Evaluation lies in accessing the 'generative potential' of people, i.e. increasing the effectiveness of attempts to modify their motivations to engage with others. Of special interest to include in the feedback are visible signs of success such as whether the collective actions lead to effects that participants accept as personally positive. This type of approach derives from the definition by Lane et al. (2011)³⁴. These authors emphasise the need to provide feedback on the impact that participants in an invited process of innovation have on second, third and additional processes, i.e. in terms of their contributions to non-participants.

While Dynamic Evaluation clearly extends Developmental Evaluation, it also raises questions as to the nature of the feedback. An innovation process that is being evaluated will differ substantially from another type of change process, for example gardening groups and other forms of collective activity. Such groups provide closure of their set of reports by self-organising meetings and initiating individual changes. The results may not appear innovative by themselves, but by discussing for example whether 'soaking sweet peas in water before sowing is necessary' and other issues, such groups have considerable impact on life styles in the UK³⁵.

3.3 Assessment

Evaluation has been introduced as a way to deal with the difficulty that sets of reports (or data) are open, in particular when those involved prove able to step out of their 'old order'. There are many cases where it has proved successful, for example when it is possible to assign the difference between what is achieved and what is expected to a set or project. In this case the assignment closes the set. Other forms of evaluation are less static (§ 3.1) and focus on closure via the process of evaluation itself, i.e. by providing feedback on progress – whatever that progress is. This can be expected to help initiate and support increases in capability in collective contexts (see § 2.2b).

There are drawbacks to evaluation in support of social innovation. The obvious one is that it is introduced when another approach (research) runs into difficulties. This limitation became especially apparent when closure of the open sets of reports was approximated by attempts to link them to general values, such as 'needs' and 'problems' and hence by restricting innovation to 'need satisfying' and 'problem solving'. Dynamic Evaluation was designed to avoid the use of such general values. It replaces them by feedback about anticipated progress. This implies that such feedback depends partly on (externally defined) aims.

In the case of the Educational Pioneers' project such aims would be part of the invitation extended to the teacher, i.e. the future pioneers. It does not appear to matter whether the Dynamic Evaluator is part of the process or not. What matters is that he or she appears to be able to 'nudge' participants (via feedback) to prefer one type of result to another (John et al, 2013). This implies that innovations may be limited to such a person's imagination and hence that the quality of the links involved depends on an external

³⁴ See Section 2

³⁵ See Leadbeater, C. (2012). The Systems Innovator. In: *Systems Innovation*, Mulgan & Leadbeater, NESTA, 27 & 31.

source. In other words, choosing to evaluate social innovation rather than to study its construction (see Section 4) may restrict its contributions considerably³⁶.

Section 4 Construction³⁷

4.1 Introduction

While evaluation may help to support social innovation (e.g. when sets of reports resist efforts for closure), it also appears easy for it to lose its advantages (§ 3.4). When this happens one may prefer to revert to the study of the process of construction. The Educational Pioneers' project provides a useful clue for this. It started by inviting and instructing potential innovators, e.g. teachers in primary schools. This part seems vital. People were instructed to explore leaving the 'old order' and preparing for the 'new', but were not told what was envisioned. This suggests a form of research that focuses on links with invitations and instructions rather than with statements.

Searches for links to invitations and instructions appear less frequent as well as less well known than searches for links to statements. Reports about them are not absent from the literature, however. The most well known are searches for new methods in research; without them one would have to rely on accidental discoveries. The notion of instructions is also used widely in daily life – wherever values play a role. This includes the creation of art, education, the regulation of traffic, the organisation of social and cultural life. That there is a wide spread interest is shown by the proliferation of synonyms like heuristics, guides, manuals, advices and recommendations³⁸.

4.2 Instructions and constraints

To explore methods to acquire high(er) quality links to instructions, a simple example may help such as 'take care'. It is frequently used and can be assumed to add something, presumably more than less popular ones. That extra apparently includes an increased ability to recognise and select the resources that help to deal competently with events – preferably threatening ones that cannot be predicted. In this sense instructions contribute the opposite of statements. While the latter are expected to help predict events, it does not advise how to act when they occur – unlike instructions.

The context of instructions is also important. When someone enters a wood to catch butterflies, an instruction like 'take care' may help on a general level: avoid anything that appears to be dangerous. Adding 'there may be bears' suggests what 'things' to bring such as guns, but also what 'experiences' to access as resources such as one's wit – or one's fear, or even one's will to live. The additional instruction to look out for 'bears' stimulates

³⁶ Chess playing comes to mind. Chess players will be both participant and evaluator – but will thereby impose limitations on the quality of the game.

³⁷ MD website (<http://www.insiteproject.org/activities/research-lines/dynamic-evaluation/>): '[d]iscovering new patterns of interaction, and the generative relationships to which they give rise, emerging potentials, unforeseen transformations in social organization and values, and similar unpredictable innovations must be a primary goal of evaluation – as they are a primary goal of such projects – and no a priori choice of measurement parameters can capture these emergent features.'

³⁸ Collective impact measurement suggests that it is possible for stakeholders to 'agree' on indicators that surpass the individual levels (Kania and Kramer, 2011)

awareness of a possible context to 'taking care'. It is the set of reports of experiences. It is open as it not only includes bears, but possibly also wolves, human gunmen, etc.

These considerations hint at an important result of our search for high(er) quality links to instructions: the instruction 'take care – there may be bears' exemplifies a 'double instruction'. It links the open set of reports of experiences (itself the result of an instruction to look for such reports) to the instruction 'take care'. This allows one to talk about 'high quality instructions' when one means 'high quality links to instructions'. The link in the example may or may not help to recognise what is needed to avoid dangers in the wood. This suggests searching for a link that is of higher quality, for example by interviewing experienced visitors (Fischhoff, 1992), etc.

Some care should apparently be taken when improving double instructions. The above might suggest that one can simply add specifications – for example that snakes are involved, that they can be found only in certain places, etc. This is not sufficient. If it would be possible to add specifications in this way, the contextual set would no longer be open and the instruction 'take care' would reduce to a prediction of threatening events. The direction of 'taking care', given a set of such events, would thus be lost. High quality instructions should focus on what addressees may do, not on predicting what may trigger their actions.

The Educational Pioneers' project may illustrate these comments. A number of teachers were invited and instructed to initiate a social innovation. They set out to link to people who might help. Collectives developed (serving as sets of reports) that tried to implement one or more self-set tasks (serving as the instruction to innovate). Other members of the schools had to deal with the changes. As the changes implied going from the 'old order' to the 'new', they could indeed be interpreted as double instructions. Participants' experiences were reported to change towards feelings of ability and satisfaction given the open set of reports.

When searching for methods to develop and improve double instructions one also has to determine whether such a search can be called a form of research, i.e. a systematic way to increase anyone's ability to deal with unknown (unpredicted) dangers (going into a wood where bears or wolves may roam, etc.). The argument that they do depends on an equivalence: will the description of research not change when one replaces statements by instructions and vice versa or the closed set of reports of observations by the open set of reports of experiences, links between the set and statements by double instructions, etc. It seems easy to see that this is the case.

One may further argue that, although there are similarities on a general level, the differences on a detailed level must also be developed. It is possible, for example, that implementing a double instruction over- or undershoots, i.e. that more or fewer resources are selected than needed for the implementation. Adding instructions to reduce this kind of deviation helps increase its quality in the same way one deals with biases, albeit with the necessary care³⁹. It can also be seen that implementing a high

³⁹ An example of an evaluation that supported the creation and use of resources effectively and efficiently used linguistic modelling of the type 'if (observation a), do (action b)'. Participant experiences were created, ordered and changed to improve their own practices (Vahl, 1998).

quality double instruction is irreversible. Double instructions have no permanent meaning unlike statements. They get their meaning at this time and at this place⁴⁰.

4.3 Narratives

While instructions seem to be ubiquitous in research and in daily life, the form in which they appear is not always easy to recognise. One may consider again the double instruction 'take care – there may be bears'. The contextual part (the link to the set – 'there may be bears') is often left out as something that speaks for itself. When doubled by its directive part ('take care'), the double instruction introduces an extra: it tells a story or narrative, like a hero story. The self-sacrifice of the hero takes place in the context of the imprisoned maiden. It instructs how to perform deeds that can be called heroic even if they have nothing to do with maidens⁴¹.

Typical examples of stories are anecdotes. They usually have four parts. The first sketches a situation (the old order). The second refers to what might be changed, for example someone feeling threatened or unsure about how to escape negative consequences (the new order). The third identifies a way to act (the doubling). The fourth describes and evaluates the effects of the action, i.e. that after the action feelings of being threatened have disappeared or that a problem has been resolved. Many anecdotes appear to be designed to have a surprising or humorous effect. They appear to be effective tools to transfer ideas on how to innovate⁴².

This is not to say that stories do not face problems. They may be constructed using the reports of those engaged in one-off social innovation projects, but this may only lead to stories of unknown quality (if one does not consider that they make use of experiences in some actual situation). This implies that to improve their quality, a process separate from their construction is needed, for example interviewing people faced with the need to innovate and using their responses to add and delete parts of the stories. The resulting stories should help readers or listeners to be clear about how to engage others and implement social innovation.

4.4 Assessment

The link between double instructions and stories appears to be well recognised. Lane & Maxfield (2005) describe their proposal for ways to support social innovation as, for example, "an alternative theory of action in which narrative replaces analysis of future consequences in orienting individual actors towards the future. [...]: actors [...] must act in terms of stories whose structure is familiar from their past experience, and then they follow narrative logic, enacting their role in the story." (Lane & Maxfield, 2005, p. 11). Stories are expected therefore to identify which parts of the 'old order' experiences one should bracket and link to which parts of those of the 'new order'.

Unfortunately, while the link between stories and instructions appears to be generally accepted, its relevance seems often to be misunderstood or insufficiently recognised. Some authors refer to 'sayings' as a special kind of story, but interpret these as single instructions rather than double ones. An example is the interpretation of a saying like

⁴⁰ This second constraint has been labelled the 'ethical universal' (Kierkegaard, 1843).

⁴¹ Stories, narratives and double instructions can be said to serve as synonyms in providing 'models for' action – rather than descriptions or 'models of' closed sets of reports.

⁴² Van den Berge, F., W. Bossewinkel, S. Groeneveld, M. Muis, H. Wildschut (1980).

'you can lead a horse to the water, but can't force it to drink' as 'nudging'⁴³, i.e. the implementation of step-by-step instructions to achieve externally defined objectives. Previous steps are recognised as starting points, but they are not linked either to open sets of reports or to any directive part

The same can be claimed to hold for 'inscaping'⁴⁴, i.e. attempts to engage people's experiences via the experiences of external guides (e.g. the researcher). While the approach is presented as close to a form of research, this suggests confusion. It seems to refer only to the instructions to identify the set of open experiences and hence does not serve as a double instruction or a story. Other authors, who study stories and narratives⁴⁵ without necessarily considering their relation to innovation, also focus only on identifying the set of open reports (i.e. the context to the direction of a story).

There also appears to be a high risk of forgetting that the way stories help to close open sets of reports only consist of approximations. Assuming that they completely close such sets would suggest that sequences of events implied by stories are 'causally convincing'⁴⁶ and help to suggest acting in certain ways rather than others – even when it appears difficult to accept that a necessary and sufficient cause might be involved. Stories and narratives as forms of double instructions advise or inform or possibly even 'convince', but they are not meant to push addressees to prefer certain acts.

The risk of pushing seems widely felt. It is often claimed that stories refer to the way individuals conceive their activities, without reference to those who share the stories⁴⁷. This may result in ascribing the result of innovation to individual skills, for example to a person's creativity, or to subjective reports of phenomena, in terms of 'events, thoughts [and] feelings'. This refers again to a possible confusion: such reports do not instruct, but only describe. If intended to describe, what is described will be relatively constant. If intended to bring together, they may be conceived as varying drastically over time, and across circumstances⁴⁸.

Section 5 Conclusions

5.1 Summary

When starting this literature review on social innovation, it was expected that this would be straightforward: collect references, summarise the major debates in the area and identify the work that needs to be done to move forward. Unfortunately, it soon became clear that there was nothing straightforward in this endeavour. There was and is no convergence as to how to operationalise social innovation. It also proved difficult to identify what models might be best to model with. Nothing seemed to be under development, not even modelling in terms of complex adaptive systems⁴⁹.

⁴³ Langlois (2013); John (2013).

⁴⁴ Nilsson and Paddock (2014).

⁴⁵ Maxson (2012).

⁴⁶ See MD website: <http://www.insiteproject.org/activities/research-lines/narrative/>

⁴⁷ Andrews et al. (2013).

⁴⁸ Müller and Müller (2014)

⁴⁹ Mitchell (2009).

This meant thinking long and hard about what the papers in the review were about. Why was modelling innovation with NK systems⁵⁰ so difficult? Calling this difficult does not mean that the models were difficult, but that there was a problem in the modelling itself. What was to be modelled: the old or the new - the world or the person working in the world? And how would one represent knowledge about innovation: as a recipe or as something subtler, such as hints, tips, instructions, sayings, stories? Answering these questions led to further uncertainties, for example what stories are or how they contribute?

It proved a major struggle to deal with the difference between evaluating some interventions (e.g. instructing people to 'innovate!') and studying what type of knowledge or experience might enable 'future users' to speed up their attempts at social innovation. Proposals like those of 'fourth generation evaluation' (Guba and Lincoln, 1989) include interventions feedback to the innovators and hence raise the question to what extent the process of evaluation itself is sufficient to enable others (policy makers, governments) to control the process of social innovation?

This possibility was deemed a danger. The line between research and evaluation appears to be thin – although clear considered in the light of the above. Evaluation provides an attempt to approximate closure of open sets of reports – via interventions of the evaluator. That implies that only some people determine what goals to realise while others are restricted to their realisation. Evaluations may fail, however. In this case it is necessary to engage in systematic explorations of instructions, i.e. double instructions or stories. This makes it possible to support the implementation of individual goals via goals that develop only through the interaction of the individuals.

A partial solution of the 'problem of values' earned Kenneth Arrow his Nobel Prize. He showed that no interaction between people would make it possible to identify a collective preference, given the members' individual preferences, such that all members would permanently accept that preference over their own – and all that under a very general set of conditions (Arrow, 1952). This result is of course devastating for any choice theory (for example voting systems), but it is also devastating for any attempt to deal with preferences in the same way researchers tend to deal with observations.

Unfortunately, authors who tried to operationalise social innovation had to include some form of collective preference (what the government suggests or what seems 'best') as well as note that its realisation would depend on individual preferences. If the collective preference was not accepted, resistance might arise. Any model that introduced a general preference or goal would have to gear up to smash such resistance or accept a form of negotiation. This approach would imply, however, that social innovation would be possible, but that it could not be supported through research.

The only option left would be to allow people to innovate, either on their own initiative or through incentives, and to evaluate the results. This might lead to some knowledge for example about what might induce the least resistance. Many authors have expressed serious doubts about the type of innovation this might lead to and considered the result

⁵⁰ See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NK_model

as seriously limited. The saying that 'you can lead a horse to the water, but can't force it to drink' still seems applicable (§ 4.3). One cannot expect the 'best' (in an appropriate sense) to happen when it is forced through a process of formative evaluation.

5.2 Assessment

It seemed appropriate, as part of this contribution, to spend effort and disentangle the difficulties presented by the elucidation of social innovation and identify where the results link to ongoing discussions. This elucidation had to include how social innovation is defined (Section 2), what evaluation has contributed or may contribute (Section 3) and what type of research may help to speed up social innovation. The latter would require that one recognises the difficulties that arise when the focus is on observations and stops continuing along the lines of traditional research (Section 4).

The results of this effort refer to a framework where preferences are not understood as related to individuals but to depend on their interaction. This understanding has been emphasised by many philosophers⁵¹. Their plea is that traditional forms of research leave out important parts of human experience and hence have to be modified to include the latter. This involves retreating from traditional distinctions between the subjective and the objective and from exploring how individuals relate to environments in which other individuals operate. It also involves operating 'on-line' and retreating from knowledge as 'off-line'.

When one tries to summarise this result it is noted, firstly, that it does not seem too difficult to recognise social innovation historically or in daily life. It often takes some time, however, before one notices that things are no longer done as previously and that those involved in this change tend to consider it advantageous – because impediments in social life have been removed, because one is able to achieve things more efficiently and effectively than before and because the new way seems logical and well thought out. People report feelings of enthusiasm and vibrancy⁵².

Where social innovation gets into trouble is, secondly, when it is attempted to emulate successful projects and to learn from the experience. This is where talk becomes replete with terms like 'accidental' and 'lucky'. At the same time it tends to prove difficult for people to identify what they consider enticing. They refer to feelings of freedom and shaking off chains. What they do not talk about (as in the case of the Educational Pioneers' Project) is how others may learn from them. While it does appear possible to provide 'tips' and 'suggestions', there is no 'pattern' to reproduce.

New terms arise, thirdly, when it is attempted to overcome this kind of trouble. Distinctions are being made to disentangle what seems to be entangled in daily life. It is noted that what people experience inside a process is not the same as what they see when outside. It is also noted that experience and observation are not the same. And it is noted that innovation is about going from the past to the future and not about the past and the future. It is about a process for change. It involves much more than just observations – a form of becoming or travelling rather than arriving or starting.

⁵¹ Hegel (1807); Husserl (1973, 1900); Merleau-Ponty (2005, 1945) "Nothing determines me from outside, not because nothing acts upon me, but, on the contrary, because I am from the start outside myself and open to the world."

⁵² LOOK forthcoming Research Report Onderzoeksverslag Onderwijs pioniers

These difficulties suggested, fourthly, that a modified form of research is needed to support social innovation. It was argued that it is possible to improve instructions rather than statements. Doing so would consist of two parts, the first a process of variety-generation or construction: what happens when one brings people together and allows them to interact. The second concerns the selection or evaluation of what happens to interactions that develop in the midst of other interactions and hence impact on them. Both of the latter show that social innovation is like Darwinian evolution.

This may be argued by considering social innovation as a kind of 'species' that produces varieties of individual processes, each geared to a particular context. The species are not invariant, however. Variations may develop and survive, become dominant and replace old species as if new species. Becoming dominant depends on the properties of the species' environment. The changes involved usually take place without external intervention, but some level of support is possible. It is hoped that varieties of social innovation that develop under breeding conditions may survive not only in daily life but also in the 'wild'.

Bibliography

- Andrews, M., Squire, C. & Tamboukou M. (Eds) (2013). *Doing Narrative Research*, London, Sage
- Anzoise, V. & Sardo, S. (2013). *How to create space for change? Rediscovering the power of community*, Poster, Informed Cities Forum 2013 & In Context Final Conference
- Arrow, K.J. (1950). A Difficulty in the Concept of Social Welfare, *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 58, No. 4. (Aug., 1950), 328-346
- Barder, O. (2009). *Beyond Planning: Markets and Networks for Better Aid*, Working Paper 185. Washington, D.C.: Center for Global Development.
- Bertalanffy, L. von (1968). *General System Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications*. New York: George Braziller
- Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA). (2011). *Empowering people, driving change. Social Innovation in the European Union*. Luxembourg: European Communities
- Boss, S., (2011). Amplifying Local Voices. Global Giving's storytelling project turns anecdotes into useful data, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 67-68
- Bund, E., Hubrich, D.K. Schmitz, B., Mildenerger, G. & Krlev, G. (2013). *Report on innovation metrics – Capturing theoretical, conceptual and operational insights for the measurement of social innovation*. A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research
- Christie, C.A., Montrosse, B.E. & Klein, B.M.(2005). Emergent design evaluation: A case study, *Evaluation and Program Planning* 28, 271–277
- Cucuzzella, C. (2011). Why is Fourth Generation Evaluation Essential for Sustainable Design?, *Design Principles & Practice: An International Journal* . 2011, Vol. 5 Issue 1, p239-251
- Daiute, C. and Nelson, K. (1997). Making Sense of the Sense-Making Function of Narrative Evaluation, Oral Versions of Personal Experience: Three Decades of Narrative Analysis. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, Vol. 7, 1997, 207-215
- Design Council, Danish Design Centre, Aalto University & Design Wales (2013). *Design for Public Good*, London, Design Council
- Dozois, E., Langlois M., & Blanchet-Cohen, N. (2010). *DE 201: A Practitioner's Guide to Developmental Evaluation*, The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and the International Institute for Child Rights and Development
- Emergence by Design (2011). 7th Framework Full Proposal n°284625, Venice, Università Ca' Foscari
- Emergence by Design (2013). Midterm Report, Venice, Università Ca' Foscari, European Centre for Living Technology
- Europe, J.P. (2011). *Social Experimentation. A methodological guide for policy makers*, Luxembourg: European Commission
- European Commission DG Regional and Urban Policy (2013). Guide to Social Innovation, Brussels: European Commission
- Fischhoff, B. (1992). Giving advice: decision theory perspectives on sexual assault. *American Psychologist*. 47(4), pp. 577-588
- Fowler, A. (2013). *Social Innovation: New Game, New Dawn or False Promise*, The Knowledge Programme, HIVOS

- Fuller, T., Warren, L., & Argyle, P. (2012). *Value creation and change in social structures; the role of entrepreneurial innovation from an emergence perspective*, Paper presented to RENT conference, EM Lyon, France, November 2012
- Glänzel, G., Krlev, G., Schmitz, B., & Mildemberger, G. (2013). *Report on the feasibility and opportunities of using various instruments for capitalising social innovators*. A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research.
- Guba, E.G & Lincoln, Y.S., (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*, Sage Publications Inc.
- Guijt, I. and Hecklinger, J. (2010). *Making Sense of Sensemaker®: Evaluating Development Initiatives through Micro-Narrative Capture and Self-Tagging in Kenya*. American Evaluation Association Conference presentation
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1807). *Phenomenology of spirit*, Accessed on 26 January 2014
<https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/21288399/Phenomenology%20translation%20English%20German.pdf>
- Husserl, E. (1973). *Logical Investigations*, [1900, second revised editions 1913], Findlay, J. N., trans. London: Routledge
- IBM (2013). *Game, set and perfect match. Wimbledon and IBM*. Portsmouth, IBM
- John, P. et al (2013). *Nudge, nudge, think, think. Experimenting with ways to change civic behavior*, London, Bloomsbury
- Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective Impact, *Stanford Social Innovation Review* 60
- Kierkegaard, S. (1843, 2014). Fear and Trembling. Accessed 26 January 2014
<http://www.religion-online.org/showbook.asp?title=2068>
- Lakatos, I. (1978). *Mathematics, Science, and Epistemology*. Cambridge University Press. Accessed 26 January 2014 <http://philpapers.org/rec/LAKMSA>
- Lane, D., Maxfield, R. (2005). Ontological uncertainty and innovation, *J Evo Econ* (2005) 15:3-50l
- Lane, D., Maxfield, R., Read, D.W., & van der Leeuw, S. E. (2009). From Population to Organization Thinking. In: Lane, D. et al (Eds.). *Complexity Perspectives in Innovation and Social Change*, Methodos Series 7, Springer Science+Business Media B.V.
- Lane, D., Pumain, D., Van der Leeuw, S.E., & West, G. (Eds) (2009). *Complexity Perspectives in Innovation and Social Change*, Methodos Series 7, Springer Science+Business Media B.V.
- Lane, D.A. (2009?) Complexity and Innovation Dynamics, xxx?
- Lane, D.A. (2013). *Towards an agenda for social innovation*, Manifesto, Venice, European Centre for Living Technology
- Lane, D.A. & Addarii, F. (20xx?). *Deliverable 2.1: Social Innovation and the Innovation Society*. INSITE
- Lane, D.A., Van der Leeuw, S., Sigaloff, C. & Addarii, F. (2011). *Innovation and Sustainability*. INSITE. Available online at
http://www.insiteproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/I-manifesto_innovation-and-sustainability.pdf
- Langlois M., Blanchet-Cohen, N., & Beer, T. (2013). The Art of the Nudge: Five Practices for Developmental Evaluators, *The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* Vol. 27 No. 2, 39–59
- Leadbeater (2012). The Systems Innovator. In: Systems Innovation, Mulgan & Leadbeater, NESTA, 27 & 31

- Maskin, E. (2009). *The Arrow Impossibility Theorem: Where Do We Go From Here?* Arrow Lecture, Columbia University
- Maxson, M. (2012). *The "Real Book" for story evaluation methods*, GlobalGiving Foundation
- McClintock, C. (2003/4). Using Narrative Methods to Link Program Evaluation and Organization Development *The evaluation exchange journal*. Volume IX, Number 4, Winter 2003/2004
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (2005). *Phenomenology of Perception*, (first published in 1945), London: Routledge
- Mierlo van, B., Regeer & et al. (2010). *Reflexive monitoring in action. A guide for monitoring systems innovation projects*, Communicatie en Innovatiestudies, WUR, Wageningen: Athena Instituut VU
- Mitchell, M. (2009). *Complexity. A guided tour*, Oxford University Press
- Moulaert, F. & Van Dijck, B. (2013). Framing Social Innovation Research: a sociology of knowledge perspective. In: Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A., & Hamdouch, A. (Eds). *The International Handbook on Social Innovation. Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*, Edward Elgar Publishing, 466-479
- Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., Mehmood, A., & Hamdouch, A. (Eds) (2013). *The International Handbook on Social Innovation. Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*, Edward Elgar Publishing
- Mulgan, G. & Leadbeater, C. (2013). *Systems Innovation*. Discussion paper, NESTA
- Müller, A. & Müller, K.H. (eds.) (2014). *The beginning of heaven and earth has no name*. New York: Fordham University Press
- Murray, R, Caulier-Grice, J, & Mulgan, G. (2010). *The Open Book of Social Innovation*, Nesta/The Young Foundation, Social Innovators Series
- Nilsson, W. & Paddock, T. (Winter 2014). Social Innovation From the Inside Out, *Stanford Social Innovation Review* 5
- Owen, J.M (2007). *Program evaluation. Forms and Approaches*, 3rd Edition, New York: The Guilford Press
- Owen, R. (1813). *A New View Of Society, Essays on the Formation of Human Character*. Accessed on 26 January 2014
<https://webspace.utexas.edu/hcleaver/www/368/368OwenNewViewtable.pdf>
- Patton, M.Q. (2012). *How to evaluate interventions in complex dynamic environments: Developmental Evaluation*, Webinar
- Patton, M.Q. (2011). *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*. New York: Guilford Press
- Piniewski, B, Codagnone, C., & Osimo, D. (2011). *Nudging lifestyles for better health outcomes: crowdsourced data and persuasive technologies for behavioural change*, JRC IPTS. Luxembourg: European Commission
- Preskil, H. & Beer, T (2012). *Evaluating Social Innovation*, FSG and Centre for Evaluation
- Preskil, H. & Mack, K. (2013). *Building a Strategic Learning and Evaluation System for Your Organization*
- Rasmusson, J. (2011). *The Agile Samurai*. Raleigh: The Pragmatic Bookshelf
- Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (Eds) (2013). *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*, second edition, London: Sage
- Reichenbach, H. (1935). Zur Induktionsmaschine. *Erkenntnis* 5: 172–173

- Reeder, N., O' Sullivan, C., Tucker, S., Ramsden, P., & Mulgan, G. (2012). *Strengthening social innovation in Europe. Journey to effective assessment and metrics*. Belgium, European Union
- Regeer, B., Mager, S., & Van Oorsouw, Y. (2011). *Licence to grow. Innovating sustainable development by connecting values*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press
- Saunders, M., Trowler, P., & Bamber, V. (Eds) (2011). *Reconceptualising Evaluation in Higher Education. The Practice Turn*, Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, McGraw Hill
- Schumpeter (1942). *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*
- Sillitto, H.G. (2010). *Design Principles for Ultra-Large-Scale (ULS) Systems*, INCOSE
- Social Innovation Europe (2011). *Strengthening Social Innovation in Europe: Road Map for Effective Assessment*, Social Innovation Europe
- Suppes, P. & Zinnes, J. (1963). Basic Measurement Theory. In: D. Luce (ed.), *Handbook of Mathematical Psychology*. Chichester, John Wiley & Sons. Accessed 26 January 2014. <http://suppes-corpus.stanford.edu/article.html?id=43>
- Tavecchio, L. (2010). Openbare les: 'Systematisch én Flexibel. Methodieontwikkeling in het spanningsveld tussen evaluatie en beleid, *Pedagogiek* (30) 2 2010, 154-174
- Tavecchio, L. & Gerrebrands, M. (2012). *Bewijsvoering binnen praktijkgericht onderzoek. Methodologische en wetenschapstheoretische reflecties op de onderbouwing van professionele interventies*, Boom/Lemma
- The Young Foundation (2012). *Social Innovation Overview: A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe"* (TEPSIE), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research
- Vahl, M. (1998). Fundamental research as a practical intervention. In: Boog B, Coenen H, Keune L and Lammerts R (eds). *The complexity of relationships in action research*. Tilburg University Press, Tilburg, 129-138
- Van den Berge, F., Bossewinkel, W., Groenewold, S., Muis, M., & Wildschut, H. (1980). *Flikkers en agressie. Verslag leeronderzoek*. Amsterdam, UvA, Subfaculteit Andragologie
- Van der Leeuw, S. (2012). For every solution there are many problems: the role and study of technical systems in socio-environmental coevolution, *Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography* Vol. 112, No. 2, November 2012, 105–116
- Villani M., Bonacini, S., Ferrari, D., Serra, R., & Lane, D. (2007). An agent-based model of exaptive processes, *European Management Review* (2007). 4, 141–151
- Von Wright, (1963). Practical Inference. *The Philosophical Review* 1963
- Wilcox, R.R. (2010). *Fundamentals of Modern Statistical Methods: Substantially Improving Power and Accuracy*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC

Copyright information

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.⁵³ With this licence you must provide the name of the creator and attribution parties. We kindly ask you to use this literature reference:

Vahl, M. (2014). *Social innovation, evaluation and stories: where do they meet?* Amsterdam: Kennisland. Licensed under CC-BY.



The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n°284625.

About Emergence by Design

This paper is part of deliverable 3.2 (Case Study: Education Pioneers) in the project Emergence by Design ("MD", grant agree no: 284625, ICT-2011.9.1)⁵⁴. MD is a spinoff from the EU-funded INSITE project.⁵⁵ Deliverable 3.2. is produced by Kennisland (MD participant number: 5). It reports about the practice and outcomes of an experiment with Dynamic Evaluation in a project with 20 social innovators (teachers) in the field of primary education in the Netherlands. The deliverable is connected to deliverable 3.4.1. (Feed Forward Platform⁵⁶), which constitutes a website to generate narratives to facilitate social innovation practice. The Feed Forward Platform is developed and tested by Factlink (MD participant number: 7) and Kennisland as part of the MD-storyboard tool (all MD-partners).

About Kennisland

Kennisland (Amsterdam, Netherlands) is an independent action-oriented think tank, founded in 1998 with a public mission to make societies smarter. Predominantly focused on the Netherlands and Europe, Kennisland designs and implements innovative interventions to strengthen our knowledge society to provide new approaches for societal challenges. Kennisland connects different levels and sectors to create new strategies, concepts, ideas and structures that work. Kennisland currently works in the fields of educational innovation, smart government, creative economies, cultural heritage and copyright.

About the author

Martha Vahl is a community development professional with an MA in Andragology (University of Amsterdam) in the discipline of social innovation, social work and adult education. Her main topic is the role of stories in support systems. She is a member of the Centre of Innovation and Cooperative Technology, an organisational offshoot of the Support, Survival and Culture research programme at the University of Amsterdam.

⁵³ <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/>

⁵⁴ <http://emergencebydesign.org/>

⁵⁵ <http://www.insiteproject.org/>

⁵⁶ Link to platform: <http://feedforward.me/>

During her work with the Centre for Systems Studies at Hull University (UK), and the University of Lincoln (UK) she combined her interests with the field of Community Operational Research. As a research consultant she supports and advises on research projects. She has undertaken many evaluation projects in social and community practices, in the UK and in the Netherlands. Email: martha@cict.demon.co.uk.

Contact details

Kennisland
Keizersgracht 174
1016 DW Amsterdam
+31205756720
www.kl.nl