

Sustainability-Oriented Service Innovation, value co-creation and business results: Evidence from Spain

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In an age of polycrisis, the interaction between sustainability and innovation has become a central challenge for organisations, governments, and society. In environmentally conscious markets, service firms are expected not only to remain competitive but also to contribute to social and environmental well-being. Therefore, this study examines the role of value co-creation with external stakeholders as an antecedent of Sustainability-Oriented Service Innovation (SOSI) and analyses its effect on business performance. It also evaluates whether these relationships differ between hotels and retail establishments.

Data were collected from 450 managers of Spanish hotel and retail establishments.

The findings show that co-creation with customers and business partners supports SOSI, which positively influences business performance. While customer co-creation operates similarly in hotels and retail, collaboration with business partners plays a stronger role in hotels, where stakeholder interdependence appears especially relevant for translating sustainable innovation into business results.

The study shows that sustainable innovation is not only a firm-level managerial challenge, but also a collaborative ecosystem process. The findings suggest that public policies and institutional support can strengthen responsible innovation ecosystems by encouraging sustainability-oriented investment, cross-sector partnerships, and incentives that help service organisations respond to evolving societal and environmental challenges.

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