



# HRD domain in the service science discipline: developing interdisciplinary professionals

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to identify critical components for service science curricula that address the unique competency needs of the service sector.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The method for this investigation included a comprehensive review, analysis, and synthesis of service science, as well as service science management and engineering (SSME) related literature. As human capital is of unique importance in this business sector, particular emphasis was placed on examining the need for human resource development-related content in service science curricula.

**Findings** – Expansion of the services sector globally has been unprecedented. “Some analysts predict that by 2020, services will account for 50 percent of world trade” (Downe *et al.*). Yet a global shortage of graduates with the skills needed for success in service sector jobs has been forecast. Compounding this talent shortage is the relatively small number of degree programs available to prepare professionals for service sector jobs. Because the growth in the service sector has outpaced improvements in productivity, quality, and innovation, and there is a lack of skilled talent to address these challenges, increasing attention is being placed on service science curricula.

**Originality/value** – Given the economic importance of, and current deficiencies in, the service sector it is poised to make a significant impact by improving service science education.

**Keywords** Service, Service economy, Human capital, Service science management and engineering knowledge, Innovation, Services

**Paper type** Literature review

## Introduction

A growing proportion of the gross domestic product (GDP) in most nations comes from service sector businesses. It is common today for even manufacturing sector businesses to generate significant revenue from the service component of their product offerings. For example, General Electric and IBM are major manufacturers of goods, yet they generate more than one-half of their revenues from services (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2000). The current economy is often referred to as the service economy, emphasizing the mounting importance of the service sector in most nations.

Definitions of what constitutes a service are wide ranging and include:

- “Anything of economic value that cannot be dropped on your foot” (Poole, 2007, para. 10).

