Innovations have been regarded by researchers and practitioners to be the drivers of
global competitiveness and organizational growth. Historically, innovations have been
studied in the context of innovations in manufacturing firms, with extensive focus on
product innovations. Since the last two decades, however, an emerging literature in
innovation research has exclusively focussed on service innovations. Service innovation
studies, till date, have focused extensively on management techniques of innovation
within firms, drivers of innovation, roles of organisational leaders and employees, impacts
of innovation, and adoption and diffusion of innovations among customers. All these
themes of service innovation research, however, exclusively focus on the firms’
perspective and scarcely shed light on the consumers’ perspective of understanding
service innovations. This study attempts to address this research gap by investigating
service innovations as a consumer experienced phenomenon. The empirical research
data is based on a phenomenological study conducted in August 2012 using BBC news
app for a week long exercise where the participants of the study were requested to
record their usage experiences in an ‘app diary’. The participant narratives, as
self-recorded in app diaries, form the empirical base for this paper. The findings indicate
that consumer experiences of service innovations are not restricted to the benefits or
outcomes (‘What’) of innovations but also include the process (‘How’), temporal (‘When’)
and spatial (‘Where’) aspects of app experience. Also, the findings revealed several
unintended consequences (unintended from the firms’ perspective) of BBC app usage in
consumers’ lifeworld. Characterizing smartphone apps as service innovation, this is one of the few studies which investigate consumer perspective on service innovation, going beyond studying innovation ‘for’ consumers, to investigating innovation ‘as’ consumers’ experienced phenomenon. Also, the study contributes to the synthesis approach of researching service innovation by examining it as a consumer experienced phenomenon, independent of the product versus service innovation dichotomy.