

**Investigating the triggers of innovation:
From the case of Bookstart Program Adoption in Taiwan¹**

“A parent told me that ‘library’ was one of the first words his child spoke. That made a lasting impression on me; libraries have become part of that child’s life.”

— Chen Hsi-tung, director of the Shalu Shenbo Branch of the Taichung Public Library

Abstract

This study examines the critical factors in initiating innovation within public-sector organizations in Taiwan by exploring the experience of the Shalu Shenbo Branch of the Taichung Public Library (TPLSSB) implementing the Bookstart program, an initiative encouraging parents to start interactions with their children by reading books together. The initiative was first originated in the United Kingdom then exported to many countries in the world, including Taiwan. The TPLSSB was the first Taiwanese public library to undertake this program. In-depth interviews were conducted on the basis of an analytical framework comprising Rogers’ five factors of innovation diffusion (relative advantages, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability) with the pioneer of Taiwan’s Bookstart program, Chen Hsi-tung, and individuals who assisted in its implementation. The data were analyzed to determine how the TPLSSB, despite limitations in scale and manpower, adopted Bookstart ahead of other public libraries in Taiwan. The results indicated that relative advantages, compatibility, and trialability were critical factors for the adoption of the program. However, in terms of the program’s implementation at the TPLSSB, these three factors differed from Rogers’ ideas.

This research intends to depart from the TPLSSB case. Researchers attempt to extend understanding of Bookstart in Taiwan by interviewing key persons who organize and promote the Taiwan Bookstart.

1. Background

1.1 Bookstart in the United Kingdom

In 1992, BookTrust launched the Bookstart program in the United Kingdom with a pilot project involving 300 babies. The organization commissioned local libraries and health institutions to undertake research into the effects of reading on young

¹ Yi-jung Wu, Associate Professor, Department of Public Policy and Management, Shih Hsin University, Taipei, TAIWAN

Tsuey-ping Lee, Professor, Department of Political Science, National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, TAIWAN

children's learning in later life. The study confirmed that reading to babies had a demonstrable positive effect; consequently, the Bookstart program was implemented in libraries across the United Kingdom (Book Trust, 2017b). Since 2000, the UK government has fully subsidized the Bookstart program to promote the program, thereby heightening parents' awareness of reading and providing them with an understanding of how early exposure to books enhances children's personal and intellectual development (Hsin-Yi Foundation, 2017).

According to a report published by BookTrust (Wade & Moore, 1993), the Bookstart program originated from an observation made by the BookTrust Children's Foundation (BTCF) that local health departments typically provided a handbook for parents with newborns with standard health-related information, but it lacked guidance on children's mental and personal development. The BTCF considers children's growth and reading habits to be closely related. Parents reading to their children (parent-child reading) can help nurture important familial relationships; moreover, reading is not only a source of knowledge but also allows parents and children to interact, share values, develop thinking skills, and improve their trust in one another. Thus, parent-child reading allows children to develop social skills, which play a crucial role in personal development. To this end, the BTCF launched initiatives in Birmingham, in collaboration with Birmingham Library Services and local health authorities, to ask local health officials to give parents-to-be or parents with newborns who live in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas a Bookstart baby pack. This pack contained books and nursery rhymes tailored to children aged 0–12 years and instructions on the use of these resources (Book Trust, 2017a).

Since 2000, 92% of local libraries in the United Kingdom have implemented the Bookstart book-gifting program because of its solid intellectual foundation and numerous promotion campaigns. Moreover, endorsed by the UK Department for Education and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, between 2001 and 2004 Bookstart built partnerships with publishing houses to provide free books to infants, toddlers, and preschoolers; since then, Bookstart has operated on a small governmental budget and gone on to become one of the major reading-promotion programs in the United Kingdom. The program continues to receive support and promotion and has now been implemented in many other countries.

1.2 Bookstart in Taiwan

Bookstart's presence in Taiwan began in the suburban district of Shalu in Taichung, central Taiwan, in 2003, when Chen Hsi-tung—inspired by an article he read in *Commonwealth* magazine regarding the Bookstart program in the United Kingdom, *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, and his work as a public library manager (he is

the current director of the TPLSSB)—recommended the program for implementation through the Council for Cultural Affairs’ ongoing initiative to improve the spatial and operational conditions of public libraries. Subsequently, a proposal was made by the Cultural Affairs Bureau of then Taichung County² to pioneer the first such program in Taiwan (陳錫冬, 2006). Under the program, the TPLSSB works with health authorities to gift two books to parents when their babies undergo health checkups at 7–9 months old, and they ask healthcare professionals to explain the benefits that reading to children can provide. The Hsin-Yi Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting reading to children in Taiwan, has been in partnership with Bookstart since the end of 2005 and has advocated the program across the nation. In 2006, the Taipei Public Library and the Taichung City Government also collaboratively promote the Bookstart program, and the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Taichung City Government implemented the program across Taichung.

The work of Chen Hsi-tung has led to a regular Bookstart study group at the TPLSSB that allows parents with children aged 0–12 years to read and spend time together. With the Hsin-Yi Foundation continuing to promote the Bookstart program, (教育部, 2009) launched a program in 2009 to encourage reading and reconstruct reading friendly spaces; the program involved establishing innovative services in public libraries (an initiative that ran from 2009 to 2012), asking public libraries to implement the Bookstart program, offering free books to first-grade children across Taiwan, publishing a parent–child reading handbook, providing resources and activities, and instructing parents and children to read together (Ministry of Education, 2009). To accompany the newly introduced 12-year compulsory education system, in 2014 the Ministry of Education introduced Bookstart into reading programs tailored for new students at elementary and junior high schools to provide parents, teachers, and students with a well-equipped environment conducive to reading education.

In summary, Bookstart was initiated in Taiwan by the TPLSSB, and the Hsin-Yi Foundation encouraged sponsorship for the implementation of the program nationwide. To facilitate parent–child reading, (信誼基金會, 2017) provided books to libraries across Taiwan, created book-selection teams, implemented volunteer training, and asked instructors to host reading seminars (信誼基金會, 2017). Libraries that promoted the Bookstart program followed suit by fulfilling the three beliefs espoused by the (信誼基金會, 2016): (a) children should be able to read good books regardless of race, sex, or socioeconomic status; (b) it is never too early to read, and children can read, should read, and like to read; and (c) The Bookstart program is a whole-society care plan for children, involving the government, businesses, libraries, families, and

² Taichung County and Taichung City merged in 2010, with all government organizations in Taichung County incorporated under Taichung City Government.

publishers (信誼基金會, 2016).

1.3 Research Questions

In this study, data were collected through in-depth interviews and an archive analysis to explore the TPLSSB's motivation in implementing Bookstart, establishing itself as the first public library in Taiwan to embrace the program. Innovation-related studies have tended to focus on the adoption or execution of creative ideas rather than on the conception of the ideas (Lee(2016)). Considering this, the present study analyzed the website of the TPLSSB, the printed information the library provided, and the data collected through interviews with key figures involved in the development of Bookstart in Taiwan to investigate (a) the environmental factors that motivated the TPLSSB, despite its lack of resources, to implement the Bookstart program; (b) the role of Rogers's five factors of innovation diffusion in the adoption of the Bookstart program; and (c) the difficulties implementing innovation-related projects in Taiwan.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Basis

Public-sector organizations in Taiwan rarely entertain and execute innovative ideas. Innovation refers to a person or organization's conscious adoption of a new idea, practice, or object (Rogers, (2003); the "newness" inherent in the idea encompasses five stages: updating of knowledge, persuasion by a new idea, decision to adopt the idea, implementation of the idea, and confirmation of change.

Innovation has received considerable attention in the field of public policy. However, the acceptance of innovation-related affairs and decisions varies across organizations, conditions, and contexts. Rogers (2003) proposed several considerations, according to organizational characteristics, for adopting innovations following the "persuasion" stage:

2.1 Relative advantages

Relative advantages concern whether an innovation is better than the idea it replaces. Whether an innovation is superior to the idea it replaces is typically determined in economic terms, although it can also be measured in terms of social convenience and satisfaction. The greater the relative advantage an innovation is perceived to have, the sooner it is adopted. This idea is consistent with the differences of innovation proposed by Makse and Volden(2011), which also examine the advantages of adopted innovations.

Rogers classified relative advantages into two categories: (a) overadoption (encompassing innovations that are otherwise rejected but are nevertheless widely adopted) and (b) preventive innovation (comprising innovations adopted

to prevent something or achieve a desired development). These advantages, together with motives for adoption, increase the chances of an innovative idea being adopted.

According to the TPLSSB director, the relative advantages of Bookstart included its promotion of the parent–child relationship and child development. However, further examination is required to determine whether these advantages were the critical factor behind the implementation of Bookstart at a public library, and whether they influenced innovation within the inherently conservative public sector.

2.2 Compatibility

Innovative ideas that correspond with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of the interested party tend to be adopted. Thus, to encourage adoption of ideas without these characteristics, the related values should first be promoted. However, changing a value system is particularly challenging; one must work within the culture and beliefs of a society or organization, but these are frequently the hardest elements to compromise on. Lundvall (2016) suggested that perceiving the advent of an innovation is only the first step in its adoption, and the adopter should search for information to ascertain whether the innovation has any implications for and is compatible with the organization in which it is to be adopted. If the innovation aligns with the values of the interested party, its adoption can be facilitated by the existing personnel and knowledge system; consequently, the innovation is more likely to be adopted (Bućl & Divjak, 2010).

The Bookstart program did not contradict any existing values in Taiwanese society; in fact, many Taiwanese people hold reading in high regard, and the presence of public libraries can be said to indicate an emphasis on reading in Taiwan. However, the extent to which Bookstart agreed with social values in Taiwan—for example, the relationship between children and parents—was a crucial factor affecting the program’s implementation.

2.3 Complexity

Complexity refers to the extent to which an innovation is easy to understand and use. People tend to remain in their comfort zones and often resist innovative ideas. If an innovative idea is highly complex and takes considerable effort to understand, then it is unlikely to be rapidly adopted. Even simple concepts will be rejected if they are difficult to execute.

Although complexity is less important than relative advantages or

compatibility, if an idea is complicated it can often prevent rapid and successful implementation.

Bookstart is not a difficult program to implement, only requiring local health departments to reach families with newborns and provide them with book bags. However, some local libraries that adopted Bookstart either were unable to keep the program running or simply discontinued it.

2.4 Trialability

When an innovative project can be tested for its feasibility, it is more likely to be adopted. This kind of project must be highly mobile, inexpensive, or implemented on the basis of an existing policy framework. Trialability affords potential users a sense of security; public policies implemented at pilot sites are examples of this type of project. The testing of an innovative project inevitably entails risks. Because the project is only being tested, full effort may not be exerted. If the project fails because of the restrained effort input, it can be dismissed as infeasible, which closes the window of opportunity for innovation.

Bookstart is a program that primarily revolves around gifting book bags and is thus relatively simple; book-bag gifting can even be conducted on a small scale (e.g., by reducing the number of book bags given). Thus, the program is highly mobile and easy to implement. Nevertheless, its implementation depends on whether libraries have adequate budgets or funding.

2.5 Observability

Whether the outcomes of implementation of an innovative project can be observed is also a consideration for its adoption. If the outcomes are readily observable to the interested party, then adequate information can be obtained as a basis for its continuance. Information circulated among adopters of a project may allow it to be noticed and assessed, drawing more potential adopters (Lundvall, 2016). Moreover, in a performance-oriented culture, serious attention is paid only if implementation outcomes can be observed and quantified.

The implementation outcomes of an innovative project are typically observed through quantitative, hard data (e.g., hardware facilities or quantifiable results) and qualitative, soft data. Compared with hard data, which are easy to quantify, soft data provide less concrete implementation outcomes. Therefore, an innovative project whose implementation outcomes can only be observed using soft data is considered less observable and is less likely to be adopted.

The effects of reading take time to manifest themselves. Thus, the implementation outcomes of Bookstart are not observable—unless the same

sample of participants in the program is examined longitudinally. However, longitudinal investigations require considerable time and monetary resources, and they are difficult for local libraries to conduct.

3. Research Method

Because this study examined the factors involved in initiating an innovative project, seven in-depth interviews were conducted with the individuals involved in launching Bookstart in Taiwan. The TPLSSB began to implement Bookstart in 2003, which spread across Taichung several years later and then to other regions in Taiwan. Although some libraries either discontinued Bookstart or terminated it years after implementing it, the TPLSSB has continued to run the program; therefore, this Taichung-based library was chosen as the object of this study. Additionally, the current director of the TPLSSB, Chen Hsi-tung, has advocated for Bookstart since 2003. He has been involved in Taiwan's Bookstart program since its inception, helping to commence, adopt, and run the program. Therefore, this study employed an index-case approach (a purposive sampling strategy) to interview Chen Hsi-tung. After learning about the study, Chen invited a colleague to the interview who had participated as a parent in the TPLSS's Bookstart program and later worked for the library on a contractual basis.

Chief Executive of the Hsin-Yi Foundation Chang Hsing-ju and Chief Editor, Liao Jui-wen, who have worked to promote reading to children and collaborated with government organizations on the Bookstart program, was also invited to the interview. Both the TPLSSB and the Hsin-Yi Foundation are prominent advocates of the Bookstart program in Taiwan. The foundation was established in 1977 and is the longest-running organization in Taiwan promoting preschool reading education.

Using snowball sampling, four more Bookstart advocates known to the Hsin-Yi Foundation were also interviewed. Among the four participants, two worked in the public sector (Ju Yan-mei, director of Jin Jhen Library in Chiayi, and Tsai Jing-huei, former director of the Department of Library and Information at the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Taichung County Government) and the other two volunteered for the Bookstart program (Wu Shu-chuan, a pediatrician at Luodong Bo-ai Hospital, and Wang Yi-yun, assistant professor at Yuan Ze University).

Table 1 presents the study framework and the interview outline, the latter of which was designed on the basis of Rogers's five factors of innovation diffusion. Interviews were conducted in a semistructured manner to allow the researcher to ask questions and participants to state their opinions as freely as possible. Each interview spanned between 60-90 minutes and was voice-recorded after receiving informed

consent from the participant. All recordings were transcribed for analysis by qualitative analysis software, Atlas.ti.

Table 1
Study Framework and Interview Outline

Warm-up question: What led you to implement (any key moment or figure), and how did you start planning this program?	
Rogers's five factors of innovation diffusion	Outline and questions
Relative advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it would add any resources (including manpower, financial resources, and facilities) to the library? ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it had been previously implemented in an advanced country? ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it would add to the appeal of the library?
Compatibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it met the mainstream values of Taiwanese society? ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether the library had previously conducted a similar project? ● Was the library looking to change the status quo when this program was adopted?
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it seemed too complex? ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it was more difficult than the library's routine activities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Did you encounter any setbacks after adopting the program?
Trialability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether it could be implemented for a trial by phases? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Did you consider running the program long term or test-running it phase by phase? ● When you adopted this program, did you consider the influence of its success or failure on the library?
Observability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether its implementation outcomes were concrete and observable? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What did you expect the program to achieve, and has the program achieved it?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What was the biggest success you achieved while running the program? ● When you adopted this program, did you consider whether its implementation outcomes would be easy to understand? ■ How did you promote the program?
<p>Concluding question:</p> <p>Do you have any advice to offer to other libraries that are considering implementing this program?</p> <p>Is there anything you think is important that was not mentioned in this interview?</p>	

4. Research Findings

4.1 Relative advantages

Relative advantages concern whether an innovation is better than the idea it replaces and whether it has put the institution in a better position than before. In this study, Bookstart does not replace any program. Rather, it adds in another important element to parent-children co-readership. The general public usually recognizes the direct benefit of reading to the reader him/herself. However, the core to Bookstart is to promote positive parent-children relationships and interactions through the co-readership.

B : Our mission is to help parents know the right way to use the books. Bookstart cannot go smoothly without having the appropriate guidance. So our task is to help them know how to take advantage of the library and use books to interact with children.

E: If we consider ourselves simply from the aspect of an advocator, it's been a very rewarding experience. Picture books are interesting. It's good for child development and leads to positive interactions between parents and children.

Moreover, Bookstart indeed has put institutions to a better position than before. This can be discussed from two aspects. One is from Hsin-Yi Foudation's aspect, and the other is from libraries' aspect. Hsin-Yi has been started to promote baby-reading (0-3 year-old) in early 1990s. Before then, reading is never encouraged to 0-3 year-olds, resulting in no books for this population on the shelves. Starting in 1990s, as Hsin-Yi intends to introduce baby reading, specially designated books for children age between 0-3 year-old start to draw the public attention.

B: Since we are dedicated to child education and development, the initiation of Bookstart are inspired by the profession and the mission we long for.

E: ...the publication industry has been booming in the 0-3 year-old group in recent years. However, in the early stage, Hsin-Yi is the forerunner in the field. So now readers have plenty

choices in the market. Hsin-Yi has played an indispensable role in the innovative effort of Bookstart.

As Hsin-Yi becomes the leader and coordinator of Bookstart efforts, libraries have more resources to execute this innovation. The implementation of Bookstart helps the library heads/librarians to re-examine and re-position the role of libraries for the public.

F: We have found the most successful point to be the change along the way of Bookstart innovation. We take the opportunity to re-examine our 57-year-old library and improve our spatial design for attracting more readers...also, all the government organizations welcome fame and aurora around them. If organizations can work and share credits (Bookstart) together, this will be a win-win situation.....we would also expect our volunteers to strengthen their professional skills by group discussing after courses. We will also participate in the annual Hsin-Yi training and exchange.

G: Bookstart can draw more readership to the libraries. They can be from all walks of life...such as grandparents, parents who are in disadvantaged social economic status. These are the populations who truly need to be enriched and embraced by books from the libraries.

4.2 Compatibility

Since innovative ideas that correspond with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of the interested party tend to be adopted. The researchers separate the concept of compatibility into “endogenous” and “exogenous” compatibility. For endogenous compatibility, it is about the value the individual believes. In this case, the individuals refer to professionals in Hsin-Yi Foundation, public servants and volunteers who are highly involved and supportive to the innovative efforts; for exogenous compatibility, it is about the socially constructed value which is acknowledged by the general public.

4.2.1 Endogenous Compatibility

In terms of endogenous compatibility, researchers find that people who are dedicated to Bookstart are the ones who have already firmly believed in the power of reading. Because of this belief, they are able to provide their extra working hours and efforts to not only initiate the project but to assure the effort to be maintained.

A: I happened to have my first kid born that year... This (Bookstart) is a concept to be promoted and spread out. We need to give kids the inspirations from reading since they were firstly born. This is a scientific finding from neuro-science. If we can persuade parents with this idea, the

implementation of Bookstart will be much easier.

B: I believe one of the important purposes is parent-child interactions. Once the positive interactions are cultivated, it becomes a great help in terms of children's development to language, emotional, sense of security, the habit of reading, and the assurance of love. The development is a positive cycle as a whole.

G: If you believe in prenatal education, why don't you believe that we need to read to new-born babies?

In a sense, these people can be recognized as the policy champions (Kingdon, 2003) in the beginning of promoting Bookstart. As time passes by, the Bookstart Program is widely promoted as the one of the routinized program in public libraries. These people become the policy brokers (Kingdon, 2003) who are willing to invest in their own resources to continue the program. Furthermore, since they are familiar with the implementation of Bookstart, they are able to provide necessary assistance or consultation to the new participative libraries.

D: because I am a pediatrician. I know a U.S. program named "reach-out and read (ROR)..." This fits into our professional mission and reading is prescribed as a prescription as child development....now I have co-work with Hsin-Yi (Foundation) for a period of time and have opportunities to share the experience with pediatricians in other cities....they all grant the idea a professional support once they hear about the program.

E: It is important for us as instructors to lead parents know about this concept. It is normal to see children tear the books apart or not pay attention to the book long enough....Our mission is to give them tips on helping parents and children to stay on the same page longer and enjoy the moments of reading....

4.2.2 Exogenous Compatibility:

Reading has been a socially recognized activity which does not require lots of effort to explain. The only tip for promoting Bookstart efforts is to help parents believe that even a new born baby can read. Fortunately, this is not a difficult barrier to overcome. Once the concept is accepted by parents, they are willing to join Bookstart activities and bring kids to participate. As a result, libraries play the role as a community and family connector. This will also help children develop their cognitive ability and interpersonal relationships.

A: Libraries should be a place for the public to read books, not just for students to study, the elders to read newspapers, people to walk in in summer for air-conditioners. It should be a place for everyone to read and be enriched by books.

F: We want to position our library as a family oriented library. We want everyone come in as a family and feel like home. As we see kids grow up and keep coming to the libraries, or even visit us again with his/her next generation, we feel a great sense of achievement. This is should be the purpose of libraries.

4.3 Complexity

Complexity refers to the extent to which an innovation is easy to understand and use. People tend to remain in their comfort zones and often resist innovative ideas. In this case, since Bookstart is a joint effort by Hsin-Yi Foundation, Ministry of Education, local libraries, and volunteers, the complexity arises from these different stakeholders. For the public sector, if an innovation involves too many roles, the distribution of tasks and resources, the hierarchical span of control, the shared performance all refer to a highly complicated working relationship.

B: We think a set of coupling strategy is very important. Take Taichung county as an example, the important key players were officers at the local level, including head of culture department, the director of library and information, head of local libraries, township chiefs all worked together as a collaborative team to make Bookstart happen.

A: Many libraries found our Bookstart a successful program, they started to call me for experience sharing. However, as they understood the effort involved in the process, they all backed up and decided not to implement it.

D: Years ago, I have suggested that Ministry of Education to include nursery room in hospitals to be a place for distributing Bookstart information. This is a place every parent would take the time and pay attention to nurses and pediatricians' advices.....but since Bookstart is an effort coordinated by local department of cultural affairs, they sometimes feel reluctant to ask for help from public health system. Along the same line, the public health system would feel awkward to be asked for the assistance.

If an innovative idea is highly complex and takes considerable effort to understand, then it is unlikely to be rapidly adopted. Even simple concepts will be rejected if they are difficult to execute.

4.4 Trialability

When an innovative project can be tested for its feasibility, it is more likely to be adopted. This kind of project must be highly mobile, inexpensive, or implemented on the basis of an existing policy framework.

For the head of TPLSBB, trialability is never questionable to him since Bookstart has been widely promoted and implemented in libraries world-wide.

Therefore, he sees this as a new discovery to the field of child development and a new mission to public libraries.

A: Bookstart has been adopted by so many countries. This indicates that it is definitely a workable project. We should just do it.

Moreover, trialability is an important determinant for the public sector because agencies are not able to afford too much cost on policy failure. In the case of Bookstart, Hsin-Yi Foundation and TPLSSB has already executed for several years and set up a solid foundation for it. As a result, the existing program helps MOE observe the positive policy outcomes. Professionals in Hsin-Yi Foundation also deliver a proposal to MOE explaining the implementation and the principles of Bookstart. These actions all work together to achieve the grand implementation of Bookstart.

B: I didn't expect and plan to have Bookstart be promoted to such a great scale. I just wrote an executive summary to MOE, telling the officers why and how we did Bookstart.....and the efforts was highly recognized by the head of lifelong learning department at that time. So we are able to start Bookstart in Taipei City along with the support from the head of Taipei City Library System. It is easier to start from Taipei because it's a relatively more resourceful city.

E: Each county would have its own approach to implement Bookstart. For counties which are at remote areas, libraries will work with township chiefs for books and information delivery. Sometimes they will also work with past participants to market Bookstart by words of mouths or cooperate with pediatricians to promote the idea of parent-children co-readership. These contingency strategies would increase the trialability of Bookstart.

For the public sectors, adopting Bookstart neither involve too much risk-taking nor require too much innovative effort. Even though Hsin-Yi is no longer so active as a Bookstart front-liner, it is still an important coordinator, offering the platform for resources sharing and coordination. This gives the public sector a subtle assurance in further implementing the program.

4.5 Observability

Whether the outcomes of implementation of an innovative project can be observed is also a consideration for its adoption. If the outcomes are readily observable to the interested party, then adequate information can be obtained as a basis for its continuance.

In Bookstart, results are not easily observable due to the nature of reading.

Therefore, many local libraries experience the ups-and-downs of the innovation since Bookstart will never under the spotlight. Reading is “plain”; it is not considered something “special.” In the beginning, due to the lack of knowledge on parent-children co-readership, the relevant activities are not aware or acknowledged by parents and potential participants. The participative rate is low in the beginning which may deteriorate the drop-out rate of participated volunteers or parents.

A: In the beginning, there were not many participants so we would try every effort to market the program. We originally had 20 volunteers to call potential participants. After a while, they all get tired out because the turnout rate was low...Once we see things didn't go as planned, we would adjust the way we implement our program based on participants' response.

C: We always try to get the feedback from participated parents and see how we are doing. Sometimes we would be able to see children's reactions toward book reading and this gives us a clue to adjust what we have been doing.

F: We would meet after every activity and see if something could be done better. We want our volunteers to be stronger and stronger in terms of sense of belonging and tutoring ability.

Fortunately, even though frustrations are inevitable, there are always some passionate heads of libraries and volunteers who firmly believe in the power of reading. They are the ones who attempt to protect this value from loss and eventually are able to see the positive result bloom.

D: The application of Bookstart is not just giving out books. It's about attracting people to libraries and it increases the possibility of readers to read more books. New readers also come in and apply for library cards... The age for library card application is open to any age group, rather than 4 years old and up.

F: We have long time volunteers who used to be our participated parents and now still work with us voluntarily. Their children may be already graduated from Bookstart, but they see the importance of the program to families and recognize library professionals' efforts.

G: We see people come in to the library to take part in Bookstart Program. Things excite me the most is to see the whole family come in and enjoy reading as a family activity.

5. Conclusion:

This research attempts to apply the five aspects of Rogers (2003) to investigate the innovation effort of Bookstart in Taiwan.

The aspects of relative advantage and compatibility go hand-in-hand in the case of Bookstart. Since reading is a welcomed concept among the public, Bookstart is able to promote more reading activities. Once parents are persuaded by the benefit

and importance of reading from age zero, the recognition of children development can go further and the result can be tangible. In other words, children who are able to receive the inspiration from reading starting day one, they are may be put in a better position to grow better cognitively and emotionally. In addition, the innovation of Bookstart helps libraries extend their social impacts and self-examine their professional mission. This also leads to re-position of local libraries missions. Some local libraries take this opportunity to recognize their unique niche to serve the public better.

From the aspects of complexity, Bookstart is certainly complex because it is an effort which cannot be achieved by one single party. In the public sector, innovations involve inter-disciplinary or inter-agency collaboration are not so welcomed even though it is an important service. The hierarchical chain of orders, the wide span of control, the unwillingness to share the successful result all contribute to the difficulty in collaboration. Not even to mention that Bookstart is an effort which also involves the private and not-for-profit organizations, this increases the complexity of innovation.

In regard to trialability, it is never been questioned much by the public sector. Since Bookstart is a program initiated long ago by many countries, the issue of trialability is been tested by many initiators world-wide. Moreover, the government sees the performance from the several forerunners of Bookstart, this gives them the sense of certainty to invest in the program.

Last, in terms of observability, although Bookstart has never been evaluated longitudinally, many of the facts (such as children's development, children's love toward reading, positive family interactions, etc.) has become a great source of sense of rewarding to the professionals.

It is acknowledged by all the involved professionals that future research should be employed to draw deeper and more applicable conclusion to relevant policy applications.

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