

Exploring a model of innovation implementation: Cancer prevention and control trials in community clinical oncology program research bases

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ISBN

9780542066733, 0542066734

Abstract

Researchers of organizational innovation identify the implementation process—that is, activities and events that bring an innovation into currency among intended organizational users—as persistently troublesome: a stage where many innovation efforts come to grief and where researchers have yet to articulate a model suited to the perspective of the manager or leader. Research has been conducted, but primarily in the form of single-case studies or cross-sectional surveys, usually examining voluntarily adopted innovations, such as new manufacturing technologies.

The present study explores the applicability of an implementation model developed in manufacturing. The study capitalizes on the accumulated data of the Community Clinical Oncology Program (CCOP) III evaluation to present in-depth qualitative case studies of four CCOP research bases; these are cooperative groups of research and community organizations providing cancer care and joining together to conduct cancer treatment, control and prevention research. The innovation is cancer prevention and control research, which the National Cancer Institute mandated for CCOP in 1987. The case studies narratively assess the roles of *management support, innovation champions, values fit, implementation climate, implementation policies & practices, resource availability and rival activities*. The study objective was to determine the extent to which the constructs emerged in the cases and if the data are consistent with the hypothesized relationships. Across all four cases, the model was largely consistent with the data; *management support* and *values fit* in particular appear to be key factors in driving effective implementation. At the same time, several emergent themes, including the role of early implementation successes, and the relationship between *implementation policies and practices* and *implementation climate*, suggest ways in which the model might be revised.

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School location

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Degree

Ph.D.

Source type
Dissertations & Theses

Language of publication
English; EN

Document type
Dissertation/Thesis

Publication / order number
3170453

ProQuest document ID
305393925

Document URL
<http://libproxy.lib.unc.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/305393925?accountid=14244>

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