

Book Review: Innovation and Culture in Public Services The Case of Independent Living

Steven Demello & Peder Furseth, 2016

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Introduction

Public service is very important for any society development. One can see the role of the mature governments innovation in creating what is called developed and developing nations. Therefore, innovation and management of change experts see that this innovation starts with addressing cultural dynamical needs. The scope of this dynamic need or challenge that was defined by Demello and Furseth (2016) is the capacity to support “Independent Living”. This innovation requires also a deep understanding the essence of public service development needs through linking the keywords that reflects the standard of living with the changes in demographics and socio-economic challenges.

“Innovation and Culture in Public Sector” targets to address a growing trend toward innovation in public services and thus to establish specific points of integration between public and private entities that would ensure unique delivered outcomes. The book aims to improve the ability to innovate successfully in large-scale public/private endeavors that would create governments that targets to create inspiration waves for its targeted communities, Buheji (2016).



Innovation of Constrained Systems

Choosing innovation capacity in relevance to independent living is itself an innovative choice that we need to be very selective about. The authors of ‘Innovation and Culture in Public Services’ shown that current development doesn’t help in managing the rapidly ageing world in the future. Therefore, systems of today are considered to constrained if it continues to focus on internal organization strategy, operations and design of the customer experience. Thus focused innovation that address the foresighted future and creates waves of socio-economic inspiration would help to overcome constrains.

Role of Cultural Analysis in Addressing Societal Values

Demello and Furseth (2016) believes that the more we do effective cultural analysis the more we’ll understand how technologies can be employed, accepted, or not accepted by the beneficiaries. This analysis might lead to effective integration between practical and operational strategy that would enhance public service key success factors. This analysis should help in understanding also the societal differences and values. The broad external factors of culture and societal values are likely also to be contributors to attract more application of technology solutions for critical societal issues, as addressing the ‘independent living’ needs.

Specifying the Disruptive Innovation of Public Sector

There are variety of public services that can be innovated with disruption due to demand of higher needs of customization in this sector. This would help to create more different economic structures in the governmental services. This means we need innovative frameworks that would be resilient to meet the variety of future public services requirements and which can be developed only through series of parallel analysis.

Disruptive innovation in public sector (including those of technology) needs to respond to complex and dynamic

environment. The reviewer agrees with Demello and Furseth (2016) that disruptive innovation usually come from complex issue, as the global ageing. In this book the authors focus on the disruption that come from the socio-economic issues that are related to the case of ageing to health and social services provision. With such disruptive approach, demographic changes, spread of chronic diseases, challenges of retirement and the increase of the big data could be innovatively and holistically addressed.

The innovation of disruptive services can be embedded in the solid business models and the supportive public policy environment that ensure the integration and the acceptance of technology.

Need for Customised Solutions

With the rapid development of the different society sectors, the benefit from one size fits all technology is becoming limited. Technology solutions would only be successful or even meaningful if it is classified or stratified to address customized solutions, i.e. in the case of elderly it would be very complex and the solutions need to be hybrid.

The authors used the Service Analysis Triangle of Furseth and Cuthbertson (2016) framework to compare between the available default model that help organization to compete to deliver service to citizens, providers and governments and in-home care, or the customised services of ‘independent living’. The book looks for innovation that manage the complexity of customization through the alarming for the importance of readiness for what is coming up by 2050. In that year elderly people (65 years old and above) would start to be more than youth, for the first time in history and many developed countries in the world. Thus their expectation of the services would be more complex.

Mechanism of Measuring Innovation

The other challenge that book presents is the need for enhancing the mechanism of innovation measurement. Demello and Furseth (2016) brilliantly use the “Independent living” model as a mechanism to measure the capacity towards meeting public sector ‘disruptive platforms’. This mechanism is reflected in the rising demand of elderly caregiving while balancing the tensions of technological vs. human capital assets.

The level of the capacity to adopt to “cultural needs” is an indicator of the readiness of the innovation. Cultural factors have great effect on how innovation is valued. The authors have managed to collect rich data of four countries (UK, Norway, Japan and USA) that would help them to define and measure the nature of service innovation in relevance to socio-economic and socio-demographic needs.

The Importance of ‘independent living’ as Innovation Indicator

The Rising and demanding public services needs shows that ‘independent living’ would be a great source for disruptive innovation. The ‘independent living’ carries with it the challenges of innovative socio-economic model and addresses the meaning of radical innovation in public services. Choosing ‘independent living’ also test the proposed innovation models for its fitness for a dynamic culture that needs sophisticated customized services frequently. Therefore, it is thought that this book would create a good guidance of what and how to capitalize on opportunities which both this type of thinking and the amazing emerging technology would bring to the sustenance of our quality of life.

Conclusion

Demello and Furseth (2016) develop an underpinning theory of innovation, and extend it to address key issues in public/private collaboration that are highly needed for complex and challenging future. As an example, they explore the subject of ‘independent living’ for seniors and disabled people, with specific focus on USA, UK, Norway and Japan. The proposed model provides better understand the dynamics of innovation and the opportunities that would help improve its adoption.

This book is a good reference for those interested in innovation economy, entrepreneurship opportunities, beside those working for government future foresight. It is a simple innovation reference for post graduate researchers and partitions. It is also a reference for those interested in wellbeing, ageing economy and public services planning.

References

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