Facilitating implementation of the International Child Development Program

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Introduction

For years, researchers have tried to provide insight into change dynamics that might guide organizations to successfully implement innovations. But the fundamental nature and causes of change is still not completely understood. A broader organizational dimension of change and the concept of process facilitation were addressed when exploring the implementation of the International Child Development Program (ICDP) in Västerbotten County. The attempt is part of a larger initiative aiming at developing, increasing and coordinating strategies for parenting-support.

Purpose/methods

The purpose was to increase knowledge regarding factors that could influence and challenge organizational changes in order to improve understanding of contributors to adoption and sustainability of practical changes when implementing the ICDP. A holistic, action-oriented, iterative research approach was used. Data was collected through interviews, observations and questionnaires. The views of employees, managers and process facilitators regarding the implementation process were analyzed in terms of if, how and by whom, factors perceived as likely to affect the implementation process.

Results

This study covers an initial phase of the implementation of the ICDP. It provides a holistic model, covering factors of importance when implementing the ICDP, including areas where adequate attention was lacking. The most significant discrepancies between perceived levels of importance and perceived level of prevalence were found regarding; “comprehensive plan of action”, “hands-on support”, “anchoring on relevant organizational levels”, “networking” and “systematic follow-up”. Factors described as present were; “motivation” and some features of the “innovation” (e.g. potential for reinvention).

Conclusions

A lack of process-management was obvious and reported by all respondent categories. It is therefore notable that the factor “motivation” seemed to be present to a high degree. Results from this study in terms of the holistic model might be used as a basis for defining roles and division of responsibilities for those deciding upon change initiatives. In an ongoing follow-up study, the actual impact of initiatives on working routines related to parenting support is investigated.