Reviewer’s report

Title: Why (We Think) Facilitation Works: Insights from Organizational Learning Theory

Version: 2
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Reviewer: Michael P Kelly

Reviewer’s report:

I enjoyed reading this paper. It deals with aspects of social scientific theory, only some of which, I am completely familiar. However, in its own terms, the arguments are internally consistent and logical, it has a theoretical and epistemological coherence, and will help to advance theoretical discussion.

I have just a few suggestions for discretionary amendments. First, I can see in the way the paper is constructed, strong resonances with structuration and social practice theory, both of which articulate similar kinds of ideas about the nature of organisational change to those advanced here. The authors might wish to acknowledge that. Second, as far as the health care systems of the UK and USA are concerned, one of the great problems is that hospitals in particular are very poor learning organisations, and indeed the unintended consequences of many improvement programmes as been either to make no difference, or to make matters worse. Again I wonder if the authors might want to acknowledge that the beast with which they are dealing has many structural properties which will counteract the principles elaborated in the paper. Given the task the authors have set for themselves, I don’t think that is a criticism of their work; but an acknowledgement that the empirical world is an obdurately awkward place at times, might not go amiss. Finally to a British ear, the term health care industries jars. Personally I would prefer health care sector.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare I have no competing interests.