Role of Nonprofit Organizations in the Policy Process: The Experience of the Promotion of Hospice and Palliative Care Policy in Taiwan.

Abstract

Due to the ageing population, the hospice and palliative care for terminal patients have become increasingly essential in Taiwan over the past decade. However, the promotion of those services is encumbered by the traditional culture that regards the discussion of death publicly as taboo. Accordingly, one of the keys to encouraging citizens to utilize the hospice and palliative care service is changing the policy image through refining policy narratives. This paper aims to analyze the role nonprofit organizations play in promoting the hospice and palliative care policy in Taiwan, as well as compare different patterns of the promotion strategies among the government, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations through text mining. To this end, we first utilize web scraping to collect data from online newspapers from 1990 to 2016 and related nonprofit organizations’ Facebook pages. Through simple statistics and sentiment analysis, we can know the process of the promotion of the hospice and palliative care. We further use word segmentation, word frequency and tf-idf techniques to differentiate between different purposes on conveying policy images of government, hospitals, and third sector through vocabulary used in each online newspaper reports. As for Facebook pages, we can understand how third sector convey policy images through the same analysis above. The results demonstrate a significant difference among the government, hospitals, and third sector in terms of conveying policy images: while the narratives of government and hospitals concentrate on the introduction of the policy and the content of services, the narratives of nonprofit organizations pay more attention to modifying citizens’ stereotypes toward the hospice and palliative care and creating positive social construction of the policy. Our findings contribute to the broader literature on the role of the third sector in the policy process.
Keyword

hospice and palliative care; nonprofit organization; policy process; narrative policy framework; social construction