



Original Research

Identifying relationships between the professional culture of pharmacy, pharmacists' personality traits, and the provision of advanced pharmacy services

Meagen Rosenthal, Ph.D.^{a,c}, Nicole W. Tsao, M.Sc., Ph.D.(c)^b,
Ross T. Tsuyuki, M.Sc., Pharm.D.^a, Carlo A. Marra, Pharm.D., Ph.D.^{b,*}

^aEPICORE Centre, University of Alberta, Suite 4000, Research Transition Facility (RTF), 8308-114 Street, NW, Edmonton, AB, Canada T6G 2V2

^bFaculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of British Columbia, 2405 Wesbrook Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z3

Abstract

Background: Legislative changes are affording pharmacists the opportunity to provide more advanced pharmacy services. However, many pharmacists have not yet been able to provide these services sustainably. Research from implementation science suggests that before sustained change in pharmacy can be achieved an improved understanding of pharmacy context, through the professional culture of pharmacy and pharmacists' personality traits, is required.

Objective: The primary objective of this study was to investigate possible relationships between cultural factors, and personality traits, and the uptake of advanced practice opportunities by pharmacists in British Columbia, Canada.

Methods and materials: The study design was a cross-sectional survey of registered, and practicing, pharmacists from one Canadian province. The survey gauged respondents' characteristics, practice setting, and the provision of advanced pharmacy services, and contained the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP), a measure of professional culture, as well as the Big Five Inventory (BFI), a measure of personality traits.

Results: A total of 945 completed survey instruments were returned. The majority of respondents were female (61%), the average age of respondents was 42 years (SD: 12), and the average number of years in practice was 19 (SD: 12). A significant positive relationship was identified for respondents perceiving greater value in the OCP factors competitiveness and innovation and providing a higher number of all advanced services. A positive relationship was observed for respondents scoring higher on the BFI traits extraversion and the immunizations provided, and agreeableness and openness and medication reviews completed.

Conclusion: This is the first work to identify statistically significant relationships between the OCP and BFI, and the provision of advanced pharmacy services. As such, this work serves as a starting place from

^c Current address: Department of Pharmacy Administration, School of Pharmacy, University of Mississippi, P.O. Box 1848, University, MS, USA. Tel.: +1 38677 1848, +1 662 915 2475.

* Corresponding author. School of Pharmacy, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Health Sciences Centre, 300 Prince Philip Drive, St. John's, NL, Canada A1B 3V6. Tel.: +1 709 777 6571; fax: +1 709 777 7044.

E-mail address: cmarra@mun.ca (C.A. Marra).

which to develop more detailed insight into how the professional culture of pharmacy and pharmacists personality traits may influence the adoption of advanced pharmacy services.

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Introduction

Health legislation is changing around the world to allow pharmacists to provide additional health services to patients.^{1–3} In British Columbia, Canada, pharmacists now have the ability to adapt prescriptions, provide immunizations, and conduct medication reviews.¹ Moreover, pharmacists are now being paid by the government to provide these services.^{4,5} While progress has been made with respect to the integration of some of these services into practice, implementation has been far from complete.^{6–9} In fact, a recent longitudinal study found that almost half of pharmacist respondents from the US were not providing clinical, or counseling services.⁹ With the advent of these new abilities, renewed and increasingly urgent, calls have been made for all pharmacists to integrate these services into their daily practices, so that the value to the larger health system can be formally assessed.^{10–13}

Indeed, evolving and transforming how pharmacists' practice has been a preoccupation of the profession since the 1970s.^{14,15} In that time, many studies have examined why substantial and sustained change has not taken place within the profession.^{16–19} Some of the most frequently mentioned barriers to change include a lack of time, payment, support, and resources.^{9,16–19} While these barriers are important, they represent just one dimension explaining the overall lack of change within the profession of pharmacy.

Professional culture

An examination of the change management literature suggests that understanding organizational culture,²⁰ or the manner in which group members come to conceptualize, and therefore enact, their role,²¹ is of key importance to understanding how those group members approach change. The Promoting Action on Research Implementation in Health Services (PARIHS) framework, which is from the implementation science literature, also echoes the importance of culture.²² The PARIHS framework's "context" demands

gaining insight into, not only leadership roles and monitoring systems, but the prevailing *culture* of the groups wherein the change is to take place.²³

Traditional examinations of culture in the change management literature have largely treated it as an all-encompassing entity into which participants are enveloped. As empty vessels, new members essentially have the culture "poured" into them.²⁴ By extension, this perspective demands the assumption that the culture is preexisting, and more than likely developed by the founding leaders of the organization.²⁴ Furthermore, this culture is developed at one particular point in time, to meet the needs of founding members.²¹ Taking this perspective to the study of culture, therefore, means that changing culture becomes very difficult, as it exists outside of the influence of individual members.²⁴ As such, this perspective to the study of culture is not conducive to leveraging knowledge of a culture to making changes.

An alternative perspective on culture suggests that it is possible, and even likely, that individuals belong to multiple cultures simultaneously.²¹ For example, consider a community pharmacist working in a small rural town. From even this limited description, it could be suggested that this pharmacist belongs to the professional culture of community pharmacy, as opposed to that of a hospital pharmacy, to a rural culture, as opposed to an urban one, and to the culture of their particular province, as opposed to that of any other Canadian province. However, this list is not exhaustive, and it is possible that the exemplar pharmacist belongs to other cultures as well. Further to this, it is unreasonable to expect that this pharmacist would be able to "turn-off" what it means to be from a rural setting when they enter the pharmacy to care for their patients.

The acknowledgment that participants are multicultural beings, not simply empty vessels waiting to be filled, means that it must be expected that these other cultures help to inform behavior of participants in any given environment. Making this shift in the approach to the study of culture means that the manifestation of culture within a

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