Pharmacy Education, 2020; 20 (1) 76 - 84

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Pharmacy students' and faculty attitudes regarding consumerism in academia

RAHUL GARG

BERNICE KOO

RUEL MENDOZA

THANH NGO

JOHN S. ESTERLY

AHMD AZAB https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6035-7587

MELANY PATRICIA PUGLISI* http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2823-9932

College of Pharmacy, Chicago State University, 9501 S. King Drive/DH 206, Chicago, Illinois 60628, USA.

Abstract

Objective: The objective of this study was to investigate the attitudes regarding student consumerism and academic entitlement among pharmacy students and faculty and the association of student consumerism with professionalism in the classroom.

Methods: The authors surveyed students and faculty at a college of pharmacy to measure attitudes for 'student as the consumer' and 'student as the product' of pharmacy education. The authors assessed the face validity, factor analysis, and Cronbach's alpha value to examine the validity and reliability of their newly developed scales. Further, they used ordinal logistic regressions to analyse the association of student consumerism with professionalism in the classroom among pharmacy students.

Results: The majority of student participants were female, had bachelor degrees, and were employed as pharmacy technicians or interns. The student survey scales exhibited high validity and reliability. Amongst pharmacy students, the authors found high levels of attitudes for students as both the consumers and the products of pharmacy education. However, most of the faculty believed that students are the products and not the consumers of pharmacy education. Further, the students who believed that they are the consumers of pharmacy education were more likely to be unprofessional in the classroom.

Conclusion: Although students had high levels of attitude regarding student consumerism, they still believed that the goal of their education is professional competence. It is important to curb student consumerism to curtail unprofessional behaviour in the classroom. Education and support should be provided to the faculty in their efforts to check consumerism among pharmacy students.

Keywords: *Academic Entitlement, Student Consumerism, Pharmacy Education, Student Consumer, Professionalism*

Introduction

An increase in demand for pharmacists in the last decade has prompted a steep increase in the number of pharmacy schools from about 80 in 2000 to 152 in 2014 in the United States of America (US) (Grabenstein, 2016). The rise in competition to admit students may be causing a shift in the focus of pharmacy education from an excellence in academics to a business based on financial profits, which can affect student professionalism (Holdford, 2014). Filling pharmacy spaces to bring in tuition can become a bigger priority than finding quality students in this competitive market. Professionalism is important to maintain with the evolving roles and contributions of pharmacists in providing more direct patient care than just dispensing medications (Hammer *et al*., 2003). The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) identifies professionalism as a key element of its accreditation standard of 'Personal and

*Correspondence: Melany P Puglisi, *College of Pharmacy, Chicago State University, 9501 S. King Drive/DH 206, Chicago, IL 60628, USA. Tel: +1 773 821 2163; Fax: +1 773 821 2595. E-mail: mpuglisi@csu.edu*

ISSN 1447-2701 online

Professional Development' (ACPE), 2015). According to the ACPE, a professional pharmacy graduate should be: *"able to exhibit behaviours and values that are consistent with the trust given to the profession by patients, other healthcare providers, and society*" (Fjortoft, 2016: p.2). The American College of Clinical Pharmacy contends that only after embracing the tenets of professionalism like altruism, honesty and integrity, respect for others, professional presence, and professional stewardship, will a pharmacy graduate be able to provide competent care to a patient (American College of Clinical Pharmacy, 2009). However, recent studies have suggested a growing change in students' attitudes which may conflict with the tenets of professionalism in pharmacy (Cain, Romanelli, & Smith, 2012; Cain *et al*., 2014; Holdford, 2014; Bunce, Baird, & Jones, 2017).

The rising cost of pharmacy education means that students and their families view higher education as an economic investment and expect good returns (Cain *et al.*, 2014). This attitude of getting value for their investment can lead to a sense of consumerism and entitlement among pharmacy students. The attitudes identified as 'student consumerism' and 'academic entitlement' have been found to be significant threats to professionalism in pharmacy education (Cain *et al*., 2012; Hall & Ashcroft, 2011; Holdford, 2014). Student consumerism is the belief that since the students are paying for their education, they deserve to be treated as customers (Cain *et al*., 2012). With this attitude, education is seen as a commodity and the students expect to be catered to. However, some researchers have argued that the purchase of an everyday commodity comes with no expectations or obligation to use it (Holdford, 2014). On the contrary, when a student 'purchases' pharmaceutical education, the student is held accountable for meeting the expectations both legally and professionally (Cain *et al*., 2012). Hence, education should not be seen as a commodity and students should not be defined as the consumers of pharmacy education.

Student consumerism can lead to an attitude of academic entitlement, which is defined by the following perceptions: 1) knowledge is a right, rather than a privilege; 2) teachers are responsible for students' learning, not the student; 3) problems in learning are the result of inadequate faculty, course content, or the education system; 4) effort more than performance should be rewarded while grading; and 5) aggressive behaviour towards faculty is acceptable if the students' expectations are not met (Dubovsky, 1986; Holdford, 2014). Student consumerism and academic entitlement can cause unreasonable expectations and unprofessional behaviour from the students and can cause dissatisfaction among faculty. Student consumerism and academic entitlement can take the students' focus away from the patient to themselves and can compromise professional education (Cain *et al*., 2012). This shift in the attitude from patient being the consumer to student as the consumer can affect the quality of education, competency of the pharmacist, and ultimately, patient care.

There is a need to assess the attitudes of students and faculty regarding student consumerism. Although, previous studies have examined the attitudes regarding consumerism among students, similar attitudes among faculty were not measured. The recent increase in competition to admit students and cater to students' needs might be affecting faculty's attitudes as well. In addition, the association of student consumerism with professionalism in the classroom will help in designing future interventions to reduce the attitudes of entitlement and unprofessional behaviour amongst pharmacy students. The authors conducted this study to explore the attitudes regarding student consumerism and academic entitlement among students and faculty at a college of pharmacy. The authors assessed the following two attitudes among students, alumni, faculty and preceptors: 1) Student as the consumer of pharmacy education; and 2) Student as the product of pharmacy education. Further, the authors analysed the association of these attitudes of student consumerism with professionalism in the classroom among pharmacy students.

Methods

The authors conducted a cross-sectional survey among the students, alumni, faculty and preceptors at a college of pharmacy during November 2015 to January 2016. The study was conducted at a state college in the Midwest region of the US, after approval by the University Institutional Review Board. The pharmacy class size is typically around 75 students, with a majority of African American students (60-70%). Although, there is some research component to the retention and promotion of faculty, the university is primarily a teaching-focused institution. The authors surveyed the students from the classes of 2016, 2018 and 2019 in the classroom. The authors also emailed recently graduated alumni to participate in the survey. Students from the class of 2017 were excluded because they were already well familiar with the paper by Holdford (2014). The class of 2017 was asked to thoroughly read and summarise the paper by Holdford for a class assignment and it could have affected their responses to the survey. The authors did not anticipate the students from other classes or alumni to be well aware of the study. Students were given paper-based questionnaires and the answers were obtained using Scantron sheets. Identical surveys were offered electronically to the alumni and responses were recorded by using the Qualtrics Research Suite 2015 (Qualtrics, 2013). The faculty and preceptor surveys were conducted during October 2016 to November 2016. The authors invited the teaching and research faculty and clinical pharmacist preceptors by email and word-of-mouth to participate in this survey. Faculty pharmacists completed the survey on paper-based questionnaires while preceptors, who were external participants, completed it online by using Qualtrics. All survey responses from the paper-based questionnaires were manually entered into Qualtrics to consolidate the data.

The authors developed two separate survey questionnaires – one for the students and alumni and another for the faculty and preceptor participants. The student and alumni questionnaire consisted of the following three sections: 1) Demographics; 2) Students' attitudes regarding consumerism in their education; and 3) Students' attitudes regarding professionalism in the classroom. The demographic section included questions on students' gender, age, race/ethnicity, graduation year, highest level of education before joining the college of pharmacy, and past and current employment (Table I). For section two, the survey questions on student consumerism were developed based on the article titled 'Is a Pharmacy Student the Customer or the Product?' (Holdford, 2014). Holdford described the differences in educational processes when the student is considered the primary customer of pharmacy education instead of being the product. For example, Holdford stated that the goal of pharmacy education is 'student satisfaction' when student is the customer instead of 'professional competence' when student is the product. These statements were used to develop two survey scales to measure students' attitudes regarding 'student as the consumer' and 'student as the product' of pharmacy education. The survey scale for 'student is the consumer' included nine survey items and the scale for 'student is the product' included eight survey items. To measure students' attitudes regarding consumerism, a brief summary of the article by Holdford (2014) was presented to the participants. After presenting the summary, the authors assessed participants' level of agreement with the survey questions in which pharmacy students are perceived as the consumers or the products of pharmacy education.

For section three on professionalism, the authors were interested in measuring student professionalism from the faculty's perspective. Focus groups were conducted among the faculty and student authors of this study to identify common student behaviours which may be unprofessional in the classroom. The authors used the themes from these focus groups to develop a survey scale with six items to measure students' attitudes regarding professionalism in the classroom.

Table I: Demographic characteristics of the student and alumni participants

Variables	Total N=237 (%)	Class of 2019 N=73 (%)	Class of 2018 N=83 (%)	Class of 2016 N=67 (%)	Alumni N=14 (%)	*p*-value
Gender						0.96
Female	58.2	58.9	56.6	58.2	64.3	
Male	41.8	41.1	43.4	41.8	35.7	
Age in years						<0.001
20 or younger	1.7	4.1	1.2	0	0	
21-24	26.6	41.1	24.1	19.4	0	
25 - 27	32.0	21.9	39.8	38.8	7.1	
28-34	30.4	17.8	27.7	37.3	78.6	
35 or older	9.3	15.1	7.2	4.5	14.3	
Race/Ethnicity						0.18
White	21.1	26.0	13.2	20.9	42.9	
African American	40.1	41.1	44.6	35.8	28.6	
Asian/Pacific Islander	32.1	23.3	37.3	37.3	21.4	
Hispanic/Latino	6.7	9.6	4.8	6.0	7.1	
Highest Level of Education						<0.001
Some College/A.A	31.0	47.9	24.1	25.4	7.1	
B.A/B.S	59.1	50.7	65.1	62.7	50.0	
M.A/M.S	6.9	1.4	9.6	8.9	7.2	
Pharm. D	3.0	0	1.2	3.0	35.7	
Prior Employment						0.58
Lab Technician	7.6	6.8	9.6	7.5	0	
Nursing/Physician Assistant	5.9	8.2	3.6	4.5	14.3	
Pharmacy Tech/Intern	53.1	54.8	50.6	50.7	71.4	
Pharmacist	1.3	0	1.2	3.0	0	
Unemployed	32.1	30.1	35.0	34.3	14.3	
Current Employment						<0.001
Lab Technician	2.5	0	6.0	1.5	0	
Nursing/Physician Assistant	2.5	5.5	2.4	0	0	
Pharmacy Tech/Intern	52.8	54.8	50.6	62.7	7.1	
Pharmacist	7.2	0	2.4	4.5	85.7	
Unemployed	35.0	39.7	38.5	31.3	7.2	

Table II: Demographic characteristics of the faculty and pharmacist preceptor participants

Variables	Total N=42 (%)
Gender	
Female	40.5
Male	59.5
Age in years	
25-35	47.6
36-42	21.4
43-50	11.9
51 or older	19.1
Race/Ethnicity	
White	64.3
African American	11.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	21.4
Hispanic/Latino	2.4
Highest Level of Education	
BSc. in Pharmacy	7.1
Pharm.D.	66.7
PhD	23.8
MD	2.4
Current Employment	
Full time faculty	31.0
Adjunct faculty	7.1
Clinical pharmacist preceptor	45.2
Retail pharmacist preceptor	14.3
Unreported	2.4
Graduation year	
2010-16	42.9
2005-09	19.0
2000-04	9.5
1990-99	16.7
1989 or earlier	11.9
Experience working with pharmacy students (years)	
5 or less	50.0
6-10	26.2
11-20	11.9
20 or more	11.9

The faculty and preceptor survey included two sections - 1) Demographics; and 2) Faculty's attitudes regarding student consumerism in pharmacy education. The demographics section included questions on faculty's gender, age, race/ethnicity, year of graduation, highest level of education, current employment level, and years of experience working with the pharmacy students (Table II). For section two on student consumerism, the authors modified survey questions from the students' questionnaire to measure faculty's perspective on consumerism in pharmacy education. For example, the survey item 'The goal of my pharmacy education is professional competence' was modified to 'The goal of students' pharmacy education is professional competence'. All survey items in the student, alumni, and faculty questionnaires were asked using a five point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). For both the student and the faculty surveys, a survey score of two or less indicated lower attitude while a score of four or more indicated higher attitude regarding 'student as the consumer' and 'student as the product' of pharmacy education. Due to reverse wording of questions, a score of two or less on the scale of 'professionalism in the classroom' indicated a higher attitude while a score of four or more indicated a lower attitude regarding professionalism in the classroom. A score of 3 indicated a neutral attitude on all the survey scales.

We analyzed the face validity and reliability of our newly developed survey scales. We assessed the face validity of our survey items with the pharmacy faculty and students who were involved in conducting this study. Face validity is a subjective measure of relevance and appropriateness of survey items in measuring the underlying concept (Drost, 2011). All of the study's researchers, which included pharmacy faculty with diverse levels of experience and students from different classes, participated in developing the survey items. After developing the initial set of items, the study authors had group discussions and modified the survey items according to the authors' feedback.

The authors also conducted the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of their scales to examine the underlying factors or concepts being measured (Costello & Osborne, 2005). EFA uses eigenvalues to extract the underlying factors from the measured variables. Eigenvalue represents the amount of variance accounted for by the underlying factors, with an acceptable value of 1 or more for each extracted factor (Costello & Osborne, 2005). The authors used the 'Principal Components with Iterations' method to extract the factors. Two types of rotations (orthogonal and oblique) are possible in the EFA to simplify the associations between individual survey items and the extracted factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005). Orthogonal rotation produces the factors, which are uncorrelated while the oblique rotation allows the factors to be correlated. The authors conducted EFA with oblique (Promax) rotation to allow the factors to be correlated. The Cronbach's alpha value was calculated to determine the reliability of the newly developed scales. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of the extent to which all the items on a survey scale are measuring the same underlying concept and are inter-related to each other. Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of a scale and varies from 0 to 1 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Cronbach's alpha value of >0.70 is considered acceptable for a reliable scale (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Descriptive statistics of frequency (%) were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants. The authors used Chi-square tests to analyse the differences in demographic characteristics between alumni and students from the classes of 2016, 2018, and 2019. Since a Likert scale is measured on an ordinal scale, the median scores were used to analyse the participants' responses to the survey scales (Sullivan & Artino Jr, 2013). Further, the authors used ordinal logistic

regressions to analyse the association of the attitude of student consumerism with professionalism in the classroom (Sullivan & Artino Jr, 2013). All analyses were conducted with SAS 9.4 software (Insititute, 2012).

Results

The authors offered surveys to 250 pharmacy students in the classroom and emailed 33 recently graduated alumni from the classes of 2012-2015 to participate in the survey. A total of 237 students and alumni completed the survey with the response rate of 83.7%. Table I summarises the demographic characteristics of the student and alumni participants. Of the participants, 31% of the participants were in the class of 2019, 35% were in the class of 2018, 28% were in the class of 2016, and 6% were recently graduated alumni. The majority of student and alumni participants were female (58%), had a Bachelor of Arts (BA)/Bachelor of Science (BSc.) degree (59%), and were previously or currently (53%) employed as a pharmacy technician or intern. The alumni and students of classes from 2016, 2018, and 2019 had significant differences in their age, highest level of education, and current employment. Alumni and the class of 2016 had a higher proportion of students within the age of >28-34 years and who were employed at the time of the survey as compared to the more recent classes of 2018 and 2019. Table II summarises the demographic characteristics of the faculty and preceptor participants. The authors invited 50 faculty and preceptors to participate in this survey and received a total of 42 completed surveys with the response rate of 84%. Contrary to the student participants, the majority of faculty and preceptor participants were male (59%), white (64%), and had a highest education level of Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) (67%).

Table III: Student and alumni participants' responses to the survey scales on student consumerism in pharmacy education

	1. Student is the Consumer	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
	Survey Items			**N=237 (%)**		
1	I am entitled to the time and resources of the faculty and administration of the college of pharmacy	4.6	7.2	19.4	35.9	32.9
2	Grades are intended to provide feedback on effort	9.7	8.4	17.7	38.4	25.3
3	The outcome of pharmacy education is a degree	6.7	17.3	17.3	33.8	24.5
4	The ultimate goal of pharmacy education for the students is attainment of a job	10.5	12.7	20.2	30.0	26.6
5	The role of faculty members is to serve the student	9.3	15.6	21.9	30.4	22.8
6	The faculty is a product or service that I have acquired in the process of paying the pharmacy education tuition	6.8	19.8	27.9	27.4	18.1
7	Pharmacy education is a 'right' that comes from paying tuition	18.1	21.5	26.2	18.6	15.2
8	The goal for the instructor is student satisfaction	18.1	20.3	26.2	21.9	13.5
9	I feel that I am the consumer of pharmacy education	7.6	11.0	27.0	38.0	16.0

	2. Student is the Product	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1	The goal of pharmacy education for the students is a career where one can make a difference by serving others	4.2	2.5	10.1	31.2	52.0
2	The role of faculty is to teach the students	4.2	3.0	15.2	33.3	44.3
3	The education process should be modeled as a collaboration between faculty and students	5.5	2.1	8.4	36.7	47.3
4	The role of faculty and students is to co-create the educational experience	5.9	6.3	16.5	35.9	35.4
5	Grades are intended to provide feedback on academic performance	10.5	5.5	18.6	38.0	27.0
6	Students should be held accountable for the results of their academic work	7.2	3.4	11.8	40.9	36.7
7	Pharmacy education is a privilege	7.6	7.6	12.7	35.9	36.3
8	The intention of pharmacy education is professional competence	5.1	2.9	14.8	35.9	41.3

Table IV: Student and Alumni responses to the survey scale on professionalism in the classroom

	Survey Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		N=237 (%)				
1	'Building and facility policy' should consider allowing students to eat in the classroom	12.7	13.5	22.8	31.2	19.8
2	I should have the choice not to participate in 'active learning' workshops	19.0	26.2	18.6	20.7	15.6
3	Attendance to scheduled classroom lecture should be at my discretion	11.0	11.0	23.6	20.7	33.3
4	Punctuality in the college of pharmacy should not be a concern (e.g., arriving on time and returning from break in a timely fashion)	35.9	21.9	15.2	14.8	12.2
5	I should have the freedom to converse with my colleagues willingly while an instructor is conducting a lecture	40.1	22.8	13.9	13.5	9.7
6	I think that it is acceptable for my electronic devices to have audible alerts while a lecture is being conducted	60.8	18.6	6.3	7.6	6.8

Table V: Faculty and preceptors' responses to the survey scales on student consumerism in pharmacy education

	Student is the Consumer	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Survey Items	N=42 (%)				
1	Students are entitled to the time and resources of the faculty and administration of the college of pharmacy	7.1	14.3	33.3	33.3	9.5
2	Grades are intended to provide feedback on effort	7.1	21.4	19.1	40.5	11.9
3	The outcome of pharmacy education is a degree	14.3	31.0	16.7	26.2	11.9
4	The ultimate goal of pharmacy education for the students is attainment of a job	2.4	31.0	33.3	26.2	7.1
5	The role of faculty members is to serve the student	11.9	28.6	21.4	23.8	14.3
6	Pharmacy education is a 'right' that comes from paying tuition	47.6	28.6	21.4	2.4	0
7	The goal for the instructor is student satisfaction	0	47.6	31.0	19.1	2.4
	Student is the Product	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1	The goal of pharmacy education for the students is a career where one can make a difference by serving others.	0	2.4	2.4	52.4	42.9
2	The role of faculty is to teach the students.	0	2.4	7.1	57.1	33.3
3	The education process should be modeled as collaboration between faculty and students.	0	4.8	11.9	54.8	28.6
4	The role of faculty members and students is to co-create the educational experience.	0	7.1	9.5	57.1	26.2
5	Grades are intended to provide feedback on academic performance.	0	4.8	7.1	66.7	21.4
6	Students should be held accountable for the results of their academic work.	2.4	2.4	2.4	31.0	61.9
7	Pharmacy education is a privilege.	2.4	0	9.5	42.9	45.2
8	The intention of pharmacy education is professional competence.	0	2.4	0	45.2	52.4

Table III presents the results from the student and alumni survey on consumerism in pharmacy education. The EFA indicated a single underlying factor for all the student survey scales with eigenvalues of 2.40 for the 'student is the consumer', 3.38 for the 'student is the product', and 1.87 for the 'professionalism in classroom' scales. Further, all of the survey scales had high reliability with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.75 for 'student is the consumer', 0.85 for 'student is the product', and 0.72 for the 'professionalism in classroom' scales. The median survey score for the 'student as the consumer' scale was four, which indicated high levels of

students' and alumni's attitudes that pharmacy students are the consumers of pharmacy education. The median scale score for 'student as the product' was 4, which indicated high levels of students' attitudes that pharmacy students are also the products of pharmacy education. Table IV presents the student and alumni responses to the survey scale on professionalism in the classroom. The median scale score for the survey was 2.5, which indicated a neutral attitude towards professionalism in classroom among the students. From logistic regression analysis, the authors found that students and alumni who had higher attitudes regarding 'student being the consumer' of pharmacy education were significantly less likely to have higher attitudes regarding professionalism in the classroom (Adjusted Odds Ratio=0.472, 95% CI =[0.323, 0.691]). The authors did not find a significant association between the attitude of 'student as the product' of pharmacy education and professionalism in the classroom.

Table V includes the results from faculty and preceptor surveys on consumerism in pharmacy education. The EFA of the faculty versions of the survey scales indicated single underlying factors with an eigenvalue of 1.63 for 'student as the consumer' and 1.32 for 'student as the product' of pharmacy education survey scales. However, the two scales had low reliability with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.62 for 'student as the consumer' and 0.40 for 'student as the product' survey scales. The survey reliability did not improve after deleting some of the survey items. Hence, the authors decided not to analyse the survey scale scores and only reported the faculty's responses to the individual survey items. In general, the authors found lower attitudes among faculty and preceptors that students are the consumers of pharmacy education as compared to the students' responses. Further, it was found that an overwhelming majority of faculty and preceptors believed that students are the products of pharmacy education (Table V).

Discussion

Rising cost of pharmacy school means that pharmacy students may increasingly view themselves as the consumers and not the products of pharmacy education (Cain *et al*., 2014). This study examined the attitudes of academic entitlement and consumerism in education among pharmacy students, alumni, faculty and preceptors at a college of pharmacy. Interestingly, the authors found that pharmacy students view themselves both as the consumers and the products of pharmacy education, which has not been found before. Also, as opposed to the students' attitudes, the faculty and preceptors believed that students are the products and not the consumers of pharmacy education. These findings indicate that the attitudes of being the consumer and the product of education may coexist among the pharmacy students. Even though the students have high attitudes of academic entitlement and consider themselves as the consumers, they may still want to be a professionally competent product of pharmacy education and provide the best possible care to the patient. The authors also found that academic entitlement and student consumerism might be associated with unprofessional behaviour in the classroom, which can hinder a student's path to becoming a professional care provider.

Overall, a majority of students believed that they are entitled to the time and resources of the faculty and administration, the faculty's role is to serve the student, and about half of the students viewed pharmacy education just as a degree and a means to get a job. As stated by Cain and collegues, pharmacy education should not be treated like a typical consumer good (Cain *et al*., 2014). Although, it is the students' right to have access to all the physical and human resources necessary to succeed in the programme, (Cain *et al*., 2014) the students should not treat the faculty and college resources as commodities. It is important for the students to understand the values and responsibilities associated with the pharmacy profession in order to distinguish it from just a 'degree'.

An innovative finding of this study was the coexistence of students' attitudes regarding student being the consumer as well as the product of pharmacy education. The majority of students believed that the goal of their pharmacy education is professional competence and to make a difference by serving others. These results are inconsistent with some of the previous studies conducted among students in non-healthcare programmes (Saunders, 2015; Bunce, Baird, & Jones, 2017). Further, the authors found that the majority of students understood the importance of collaborating with the faculty during pharmacy school. Jeffres *et al*. (2014) suggest that pharmacy students can only succeed if they work with their faculty in understanding the course content. It is not only the professor's responsibility to provide the students with educational materials and do whatever it takes for the students to achieve their desired grades. The students should also assume their responsibility in partnering with the professor to learn. A majority of students in this study also agreed that the course grades are intended to provide feedback on their academic performance and the students should be held accountable for their work. This is a significant finding as it can avoid a conflict when the students are not satisfied with their grades because of low academic performance.

The study analysed the students' attitudes regarding professionalism in the classroom. The students were strongly in favour of some aspects and against the other aspects of classroom professionalism. Professionalism in the classroom is important not only for the faculty to give the lecture effectively but also to allow the students to learn. Some students may not be able to focus if other students are constantly disruptive. The results indicate that the majority of pharmacy students had positive attitudes regarding punctuality and non-disruptive behaviour in the classroom. On the contrary, about half of the student participants agreed that they should have the freedom to eat in the classroom and attendance to a

scheduled lecture should be at students' discretion. It is usually a faculty's preference of whether to allow students to bring food in the classroom or to require mandatory attendance. Some faculty consider students' eating in the classroom as disruptive for other students. Also, some courses require active participation in the classroom for effective learning while others do not. Multivariate analysis demonstrated an association between student consumerism and students' professional behaviour in the classroom. To the authors' knowledge, this is a novel finding. As healthcare providers, pharmacists are held to high standards of professionalism in the clinical settings. The attitudes of student consumerism may be one of the factors that can cause unprofessional behaviour in the classroom and can be targeted to increase professionalism among future pharmacists.

The authors found that a majority of faculty believed that students are the products and not the consumers of pharmacy education. However, about half of the faculty and preceptors believed that the grades are intended to provide feedback on effort. Further, nearly 40% of faculty believed that the role of faculty members is to serve the student, and students are entitled to the time and resources of the faculty and administration of the college of pharmacy. About a third of faculty believed that the outcome of a pharmacy education is a degree and the ultimate goal for the student is to get a job. Previous research has found that some faculty may tend to cater to students as their customers to receive good course evaluations (Cain *et al*., 2012). Further, most pharmacy colleges are struggling to fill their full quota of student enrolment. Hence, some faculty may feel pressured to treat students as consumers to increase future student enrolment. Nevertheless, it is important to put the patient and not the student at the centre of pharmacy education. Faculty need to bear the responsibility of instilling the values of the pharmacy profession in the students, right from the first year of college. Faculty should also receive the support of administration while making curricular or educational decisions to increase students' accountability for their learning (Cain *et al*., 2012).

These study findings should be interpreted in the context of some limitations. The authors conducted their survey among the students and faculty at a state college of pharmacy, which may have different demographic characteristics than other colleges of pharmacy. Further research among students from colleges of pharmacy across the US is needed to shed more light on consumerism in pharmacy education. The authors did not measure the construct and content validity of their scales measuring consumerism attitudes and professionalism. Further, exploration of attitudes regarding consumerism with more valid scales is suggested. The authors utilised both paper and internet-based surveys in their study, which may have impacted the results. However, previous studies have found no differences in survey results between paper and internet modes (Carini *et al*., 2003; Knapp & Kirk, 2003). The faculty and preceptor surveys for academic entitlement among pharmacy students did not show acceptable reliability. It might be due to the differences in attitudes between faculty and preceptors regarding consumerism and entitlement among the students. The study also had a small sample size for the faculty and preceptor participants which may have resulted in low survey reliability. Further research is needed to investigate the faculty's attitudes regarding student consumerism in pharmacy education. The strengths of this study include the inclusion of currently enrolled students from different years of pharmacy school and those who had recently graduated. Hence, these study findings indicate attitudes of consumerism among pharmacy students with diverse levels of education and experience. The study also adds a novel finding on the coexistence of attitudes regarding student as both consumer and product of pharmacy education, which has not been studied before.

Conclusion

The study found high attitude levels for academic entitlement and consumerism among pharmacy students. The majority of pharmacy students believed that they are both the consumers and the products of pharmacy education, which indicated that these attitudes can coexist among the students. On the contrary, faculty and preceptors believed that students are the products and not the consumers of pharmacy education. Some faculty believed that the goal of faculty is to serve the students, students are entitled to the time and resources of faculty, and that the outcome of pharmacy education is just a degree to get a job. Students with high attitudes of consumerism were more likely to have negative attitudes regarding professional behaviour in the classroom, which stresses the importance of addressing academic entitlement and consumerism among pharmacy students. There is a need to support and equip the faculty with the knowledge and skills to address entitlement behaviours in the classroom.

References

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education [ACPE]. (2015). Accreditation standards and key elements for the professional program in pharmacy leading to the doctor of pharmacy degree (online). Available at: https://www.acpe-accredit.org/pdf/Standards2016FINAL.pdf. Accessed 1st July, 2019

American College of Clinical Pharmacy. (2009). Tenets of professionalism for pharmacy students. *Pharmacotherapy: The Journal of Human Pharmacology and Drug Therapy*, **29**(6), 757-759. doi: 10.1592/phco.29.6.757

Bunce, L., Baird, A., & Jones, S.E. (2017). The student-as-consumer approach in higher education and its effects on academic performance. *Studies in Higher Education*, **42**(11), 1958-1978. doi: 10.1080/03075079.2015.1127908

Cain, J., Campbell, T., Congdon, H.B., Hancock, K., Kaun, M., Lockman, P.R., & Evans, R.L. (2014). Pharmacy student debt and return on investment of a pharmacy education. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **78**(1), 5. doi: 10.5688/ajpe7815

Cain, J., Noel, Z., Smith, K.M., & Romanelli, F. (2014). Four rights of the pharmacy educational consumer. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **78**(6), 115. doi: 10.5688/ajpe786115

Cain, J., Romanelli, F., & Smith, K.M. (2012). Academic entitlement in pharmacy education. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **76**(10), 189. doi: 10.5688/ajpe7610189

Carini, R.M., Hayek, J.C., Kuh, G.D., Kennedy, J.M., & Ouimet, J.A. (2003). College student responses to web and paper surveys: Does mode matter? *Research in Higher Education*, **44**(1), 1-19

Costello, A.B., & Osborne, J.W. (2005). Best practices in exploratory factor analysis: Four recommendations for getting the most from your analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, **10**(7), 1-9

Drost, E.A. (2011). Validity and reliability in social science research. *Education Research and Perspectives*, **38**(1), 105

Dubovsky, S.L. (1986). Coping with Entitlement in Medical Education. New England Journal of Medicine, **315**(26), 1672-4. doi: 10.1056/NEJM198612253152609

Fjortoft, N. (2016). The challenge of the accreditation council for pharmacy education's standard four: Identifying, teaching, measuring. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **80**(5), 73. doi: 10.5688/ajpe80573

Grabenstein, J.D. (2016). Trends in the numbers of US colleges of pharmacy and their graduates, 1900 to 2014. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education,* **80**(2), 25. doi: 10.5688/ajpe80225

Hall, J., & Ashcroft, D. (2011). What characterises professionalism in pharmacy students? A nominal group study. *Pharmacy Education*, **11**(1), 65-70

Hammer, D.P., Berger, B.A., Beardsley, R.S., & Easton, M.R. (2003). Student professionalism. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **67**(3), 96

Holdford, D.A. (2014). Is a pharmacy student the customer or the product? *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **78**(1), 3

Insititute, S. (2012). SAS 9.4 for windows. SAS Institute Inc., Cary, NC, USA.

Jeffres, M.N., Barclay, S.M., & Stolte, S.K. (2014). Academic entitlement and academic performance in graduating pharmacy students. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, **78**(6), 116. doi: 10.5688/ajpe786116

Knapp, H., & Kirk, S.A. (2003). Using pencil and paper, internet and touch-tone phones for self-administered surveys: Does methodology matter? *Computers in Human Behavior*, **19**(1), 117-134. doi: 10.1016/S0747-5632(02)00008-0

Qualtrics, I. (2013). Qualtrics. com. Provo, UT, USA.

Saunders, D.B. (2015). They do not buy it: Exploring the extent to which entering first-year students view themselves as customers. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, **25**(1), 5-28. doi: 10.1080/08841241.2014.969798

Sullivan, G.M., & Artino Jr, A.R. (2013). Analyzing and interpreting data from likert-type scales. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, **5**(4), 541-542. doi: 10.4300/JGME-5-4-18

Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, **2**, 53-55. doi: 10.5116/ijme.4dfb.8dfd