

Effects of Professional Commitment
and Organizational Context on the
Professional Development of
Canadian Occupational Therapists

A. Rivard
Occupational Therapy
University of Alberta
October 27, 2010

Overview

Introduction & Context
Problem
Study Purpose
Design & Methods
Results & Analysis
Discussion

Introduction & Context

Continuous Change in Health Care in Canada

- Evolution in health knowledge and technology
- Constant organizational changes:
 - Management structures – patient-centered, inter-disciplinary care
 - Practitioner accountability for patient outcomes
- Economic imperatives – Budget constraints
 - Flattening reporting structures
 - More with less

Licensed health care providers have
statutory accountability
for their practice and competency.

Professional Development – Mission Critical

Enhances:

- ability to respond appropriately to changing environments
- patient care planning and outcomes
- more effective contribution to multidisciplinary teams
- assertiveness and autonomy in practice
- problem-solving abilities
- awareness of professional and organizational issues
- evidenced-based practice capacity

Gryzb et al., 1998; Nolan et al., 1995; Townsend et al. 2006;
Umble and Cervero, 1996; Waddell et al., 2001;

The Problem

Occupational therapists are reporting concern and difficulty in
the enactment of professional development
in current health and social care organizations.

Dowswell et al. 1998; Lawton & Wimpenny, 2003;
Lysaght et al., 2001; Rappolt & colleagues, 2002;
Rivard et al. 2005; Youngstrom, 1998.

The Problem (cont'd)

Contributing to this situation is the personal responsibility approach regarding professional development management taken by many employers.
(Maurer & Shore, 1995)

In this context, professional development (PD) shares some characteristics with a construct referred to as citizenship behaviour.
(Organ & colleagues)

Study Purpose

Given the current health care environment, and the empirically demonstrated benefits of professional development for patients, organizations, and individual professionals:

I explored the personal and contextual factors that might induce occupational therapists' professional development.

Research Question

In keeping with the occupational therapy view that occupation reflects the complex interactions between persons and their environments:
(PEO - Law et al., 1996)

What are the effects of the interactions between professional commitment and organizational context on the professional development of Canadian occupational therapists?

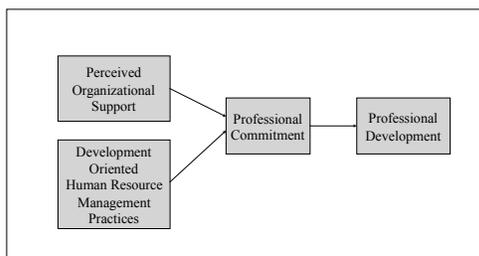
Theoretical Framework

Commitment theory
(Meyer & colleagues)

and

Organizational support theory
(Eisenberger & colleagues)

Proposed Model



Design & Methods

Quantitative Design

Cross-sectional Data Collection

Self-administered Questionnaire

Design & Methods

Study Measures

- Professional development
- Professional commitment
- Perceived organizational support
- Development-oriented human resources management

Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated the validity of the 5-factor measurement model.

Analytic Strategy

Correlation

Hierarchical regression

Responses to the open-ended question were analyzed using a pre-assigned coding scheme based on the variables and hypotheses being examined. (Creswell, 2009)

Results

Response rate = 29%

Sample Description

- 94% - female
- 86% - Diploma/Bachelors
- Age range: 22 – 72; mean = 36.4; SD = 10.5
- Professional tenure: 1 – 48; mean = 12.3; SD = 9.6

Chi Sq – demonstrated no significant difference between sample and population characteristics

Results

Professional commitment explained the **greatest amount of variance (5%)** in **professional development behaviours**, and **mediated the effects** of perceived organizational support and tangible support (funding and time release) on professional development.

Results

Performance management and feedback **did not correlate** with professional commitment nor professional development.

Discussion

The new and most important finding in this study is the **important contribution of profession commitment** professional development behaviours.

This has implications for: **policy makers, employers, professional bodies, academic institutions, and individual occupational therapists.**

Implications

Policy makers
Employers
Regulatory bodies
Academic institutions
Professional associations
Individual occupational therapists

Future Research

- How does professional commitment develop?
- Inclusion of professional commitment in studies that relate to professional development
- Relationship between organizational support and professional development
- Consideration of professional commitment on the selection of occupational therapists by employers
- Selecting students into academic programs based on personality characteristics that are known to correlate with commitment.

QUESTIONS/COMMEMTS