



Modeling the Use of Innovations in Private Treatment Organizations: The Role of Absorptive Capacity

Hannah K. Knudsen & Paul M. Roman

Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 2005; 26:51-59

Few studies have identified the organizational characteristics that are associated with the transfer of research-based treatment techniques into practice. One potentially fruitful concept is absorptive capacity, referring to an organization's ability to seek and utilize information, which may be positively associated with the use of innovative treatment techniques. This paper examines the associations between an additive measure of innovation use and three measures of absorptive capacity: environmental scanning, collection of satisfaction data, and the level of workforce professionalism. Data from a nationally representative sample of 322 privately funded substance abuse treatment centers indicate that treatment organizations use a greater number of innovations when they engage in more environmental scanning, survey referral sources, and third party payers for satisfaction, and have a more professional workforce. These results indicate the importance of absorptive capacity in predicting organizational innovativeness.