

Perceived effectiveness of different interview modalities for pharmacy student admission

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Pharmacy



INTRODUCTION

- Pharmacy schools have diverse ways of conducting interviews for their admissions process with no standard interview format used across the United States.¹
- However, all interviews are based on the requirements set forth by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) to ensure that the minimum standards can be achieved for professional education.¹
- Interviews offer the opportunity to evaluate qualitative parameters such as communication, integrity, empathy, or leadership when selecting candidates for admission into pharmacy programs.²
- Four different interview modalities have been used in the past four years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes with the R. Ken Coit College of Pharmacy (RKCCOP) admissions process.
- Understanding the characteristics and reliability of different interview modalities from student perceptions can help determine the efficacy across all interview formats used in the RKCCOP admission process.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify themes across the four admissions interview modalities based on student cohort experience and perspectives.
- Assess the perceived effectiveness of each interview modality used in the PharmD admissions process at the RKCCOP.

METHODS/ANALYSIS

- For methodology, this study incorporated a standard qualitative focus group format with a set of questions to gather information about student's views, thoughts, and perception of their admission interview for RKCCOP.^{4,5}

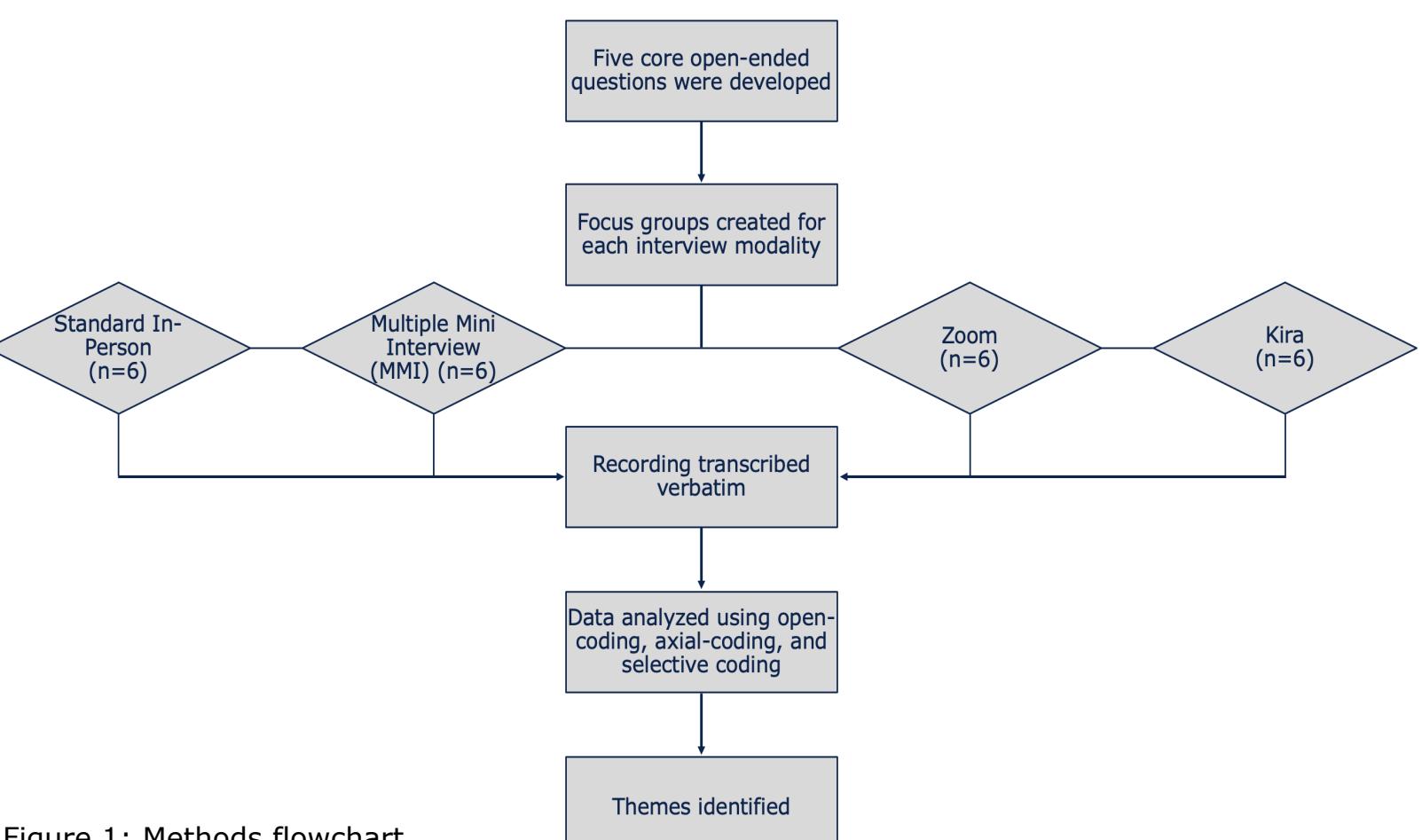


Figure 1: Methods flowchart

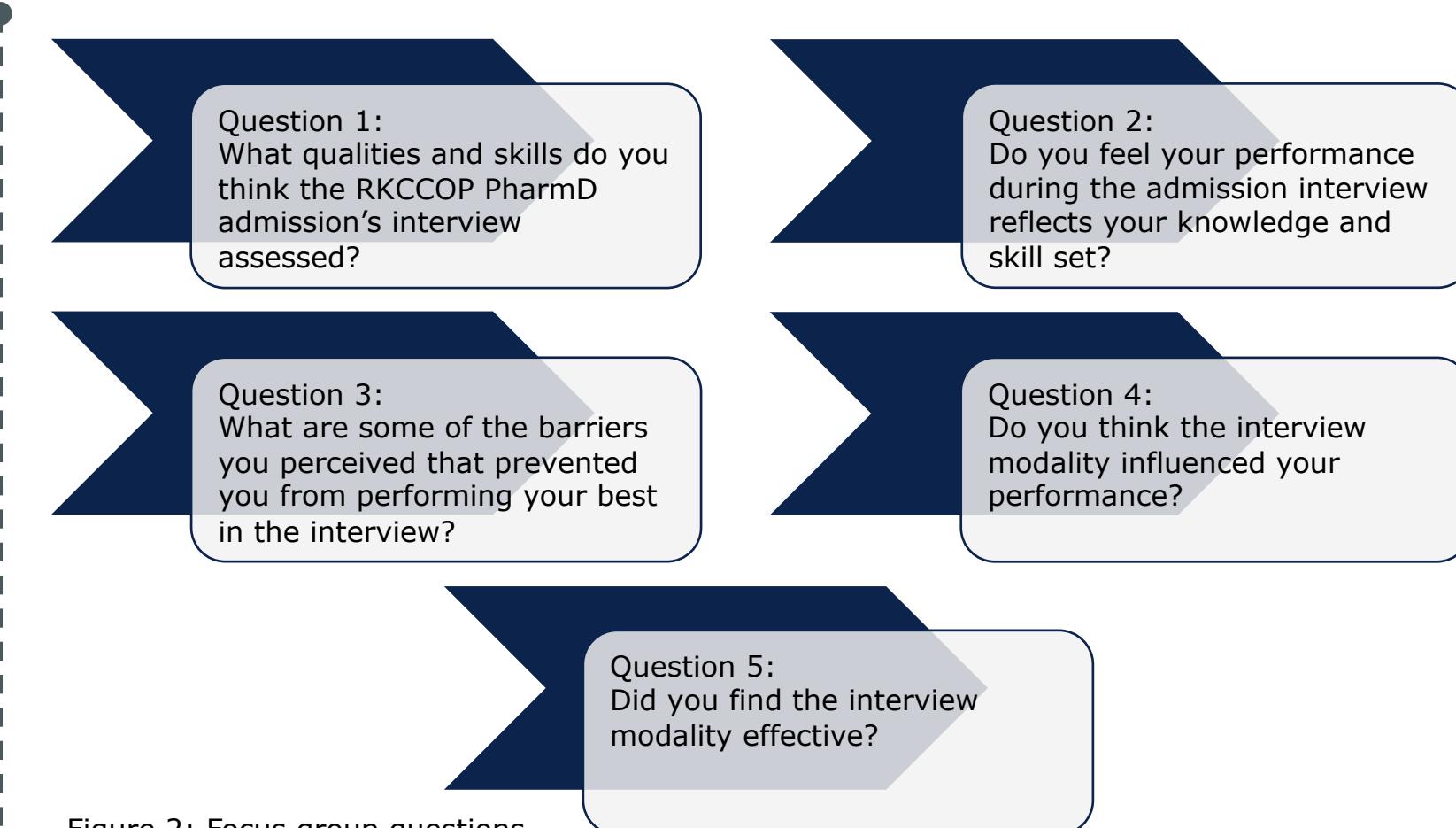


Figure 2: Focus group questions

Analysis Process:

- (1) Open Coding: Two researchers read the transcript then reviewed and compared with the handwritten notes of the assistant moderator. The most frequently repeated and emphasized points were noted.
- (2) Axial Coding: Same two researchers reread the transcripts. Each answer to a specific question was compared with others to find similarities and differences, which were noted, and the core themes were aggregated.
- (3) Selective Coding: Representative quotes reflecting the participants' ideas and personal experiences were identified. A central theme was developed based on the data aggregated. Any two separate interpretations of the data were compared. The differences were resolved through discussion with a third researcher.³

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics Questionnaire Results (N=25)

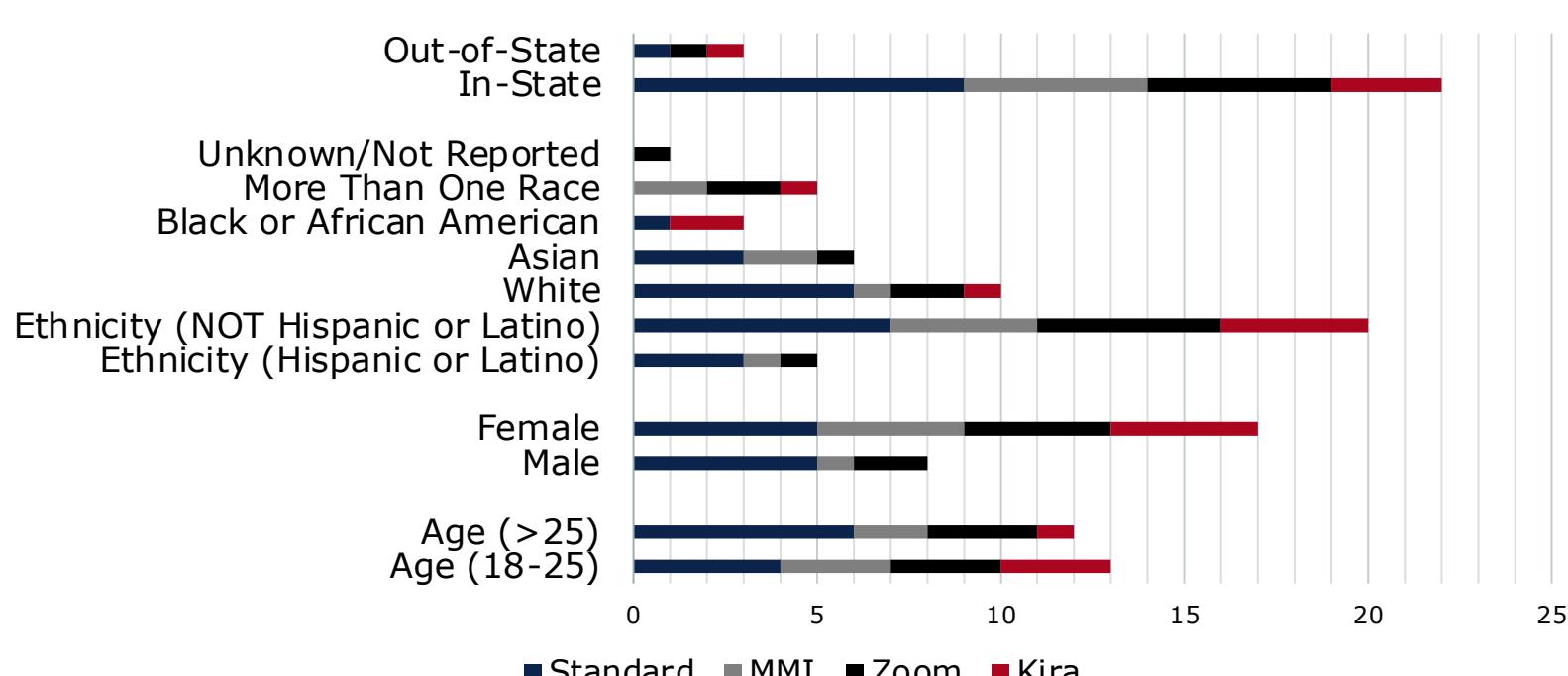


Chart 1: Participant demographics

RESULTS

	Standard	MMI	Zoom	Kira
(1)	Experience	Character	Experience	Thoughtful
(2)	Personable	Time Management	Indifferent	Indifferent
(3)	Anxiety	Pressure	Disconnect	Technology
(4)	Engagement	Personable vs Impersonable	Preparation	Impersonable
(5)	Positive Experience	Unbiased	Situation	Debatable

Table 1: Cohort themes

Standard: Personable

- "I thought that the questions give you the chance to both answer the question and also add like personal aspects in there. I think you can really tailor it to like your past experiences and like communicate more about yourself and like I guess again your journey to get there."

MMI: Time Management

- "I honestly think because we were timed. I feel like sometimes I didn't have enough time to fully answer questions. So, I feel like that was a little hard with our interviews specifically."

Zoom: Indifferent

- "I don't think I was able to show my knowledge and skills. Maybe not to the extent that I would like to, but enough to show pharmacy knowledge."

Kira: Indifferent

- "For me personally, I thought the questions did reflect my knowledge and skill set pretty well. Even though the interview was online and not in person I though the questions would be same either way, and so I still had prepare the same way for each type of question."

Figure 3: Example quotes from question 2

DISCUSSION

- Student perceptions of the standard interview modality was overall positive with discussion topics ranging from personable interactions to interview-day jitters.
- MMI interview topics discussion had a mix variety of impressions such as a fair and consistent interview format with different interviewers to issues with time management.
- The zoom focus group results found students feeling to be more indifferent and disconnected.
- The "indifferent" theme was also noted in the KIRA focus group, however, there were more positive notions in this group than zoom because of the flexibility of the overall modality.
- RKCCOP is now using KIRA and a virtual live interview with current PharmD students for their admission interview process.
- Limitations
- Although we interviewed about 10% of the students in each cohort, a limitation in our study was the small sample size.
- Our findings are not generalizable to other pharmacy programs.

CONCLUSION

- The focus group themes identified in this study highlights positive and negative aspects of each interview modality with the participant reporting more positive themes for standard interview modality.
- Further research is needed to address challenges reported in this study.

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DISCLOSURE

"Authors have no conflicts to disclose."