

PHARMACY COUNCIL OF INDIA

(Constituted under the Pharmacy Act, 1948)

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Speed post

- All Universities / Examining Authorities conducting Degree course in Pharmacy

Sub: Survey report on current scenario of Pharmacy Education in India- IPA Students Forum

Sir/Madam

With reference to the subject cited above, please find enclosed with a copy of survey report on current scenario of pharmacy Education in India. In this connection, I am directed to inform that subject cited issue was considered by Executive committee of the PCI in its meeting held in February 2014 which decided to forward the survey report to all the universities for reference and placing in their "Board of Study" in order to ensure that B.Pharm curriculum is as per the latest developments in the field Pharmaceutical Sciences and placement effective.

In view of above, it is requested to ensure that B.Pharm curriculum is as per the latest developments in the field of Pharmaceutical Sciences and placement effective.

Yours faithfully

(ARCHNA MUDGAL)
Registrar-cum-Secretary

OBJECTIVE OF THE SURVEY

The Indian Pharmaceutical Association-Students' Forum (IPA-SF) is a national body of pharmacy students under IPA. It is a platform to promote increased student interactions and activities bringing more co-operation at a national level. IPA-SF will also link the pharmacy students in India with the rest of the world through memberships and alliances with international organizations. The IPA-SF will serve as a unifying factor for the pharmacy students' community in India bringing them under one umbrella and thus benefit the profession and health care services in India.

In India, for the past few years, the demand for Pharmacy Education is increasing. There are tremendous changes observed in the Educational system. But there is also a growing dissatisfaction among the students of this profession for various reasons. Hence this survey is an attempt to find out the reason for the same and to provide you with the statistical representation of the students' opinion from all over the country.

Indian Pharmaceutical Association Students' Forum (IPA-SF) has come forward to raise the "Voice of the Student", and to make it heard loud and clear, to try and initiate the necessary changes to ensure that the profession will continue to inspire more and more students into the field of pharmacy.

SURVEY RESULTS

Question No. 1

Are you provided with the quality education and laboratory training in your college?

Ans: YES 29.81%

NO 70.19 %

In some colleges, laboratories are not fully equipped, and if equipped, majority of the instruments are not always in working conditions. Also, practical experiments are often conducted in groups where each group is given limited chemicals to perform the experiment due to which many cannot get hands on experience.

These days, M.Pharmacy is being offered by numerous colleges where the student need not attend classes but can directly appear in the exams, to increase occupancy of the seats. While quantity of the post graduate pass outs is increased, their quality is greatly compromised.

Question No. 2

Do you really utilize the opportunities provided by your institution to excel in the field of pharmacy?

Ans: YES 68.02%

NO 31.98 %

There might be the following reasons:

- 1) Students failing to utilize the opportunities provided by the institution due to lack of awareness regarding the importance or due to negligence.
- 2) Disinterest of the institution in organizing career oriented programs/workshops.

Question No. 3

Do you think the curriculum is out dated and need to be re- designed/modified to enhance the quality of education?

Ans: YES 81.54%

NO 18.46%

Today, information is being generated at lightning speed. New concepts, theories, inventions and discoveries are coming into being in very short intervals, making it a herculean task to constantly upgrade the syllabus to meet the needs of the industry.

But it is essential to make changes at fixed intervals, say every 5 years, which will bridge the gap between the academics and industry. It will surely improve the quality of education according to the current needs.

Question No. 4

Do you wish to have industrial and/or Hospital training as a part of the academic curriculum?

Ans: YES 98.29%

NO 01.71%

While academic knowledge is important, exposure to industries and health care organizations right from the first year of college gives the students a perspective of the profession. Continually engaging with various training programs even helps the students to identify their area of interest from a career point of view.

Question No. 5

Do you think implementation of Institution-Industry interaction can show an impact in the Recruitment process?

Ans: YES 96.31%

NO 03.69%

Industry institution interaction plays a pivotal role in helping students gain an understanding of how theory gets applied practically. It helps the students to recalibrate their inquisitive lens and equips them with the technical know-how of the industry. This makes the students more confident in facing job interviews.

Question No. 6

Do you think the paradigm shift from "No vacancies of seats in pharmacy colleges" to "No classes, No attendance, No internals, directly University Exams" is due to low pay scale and limited career options for pharmacy graduates?

Ans: YES 66.47%

NO 33.53%

The root cause for this problem is the mushroomed growth of pharmacy colleges across the country. The number of seats in colleges are more than the number of students taking up the courses. Colleges are giving these "incentives" to lure students to fill up the seats in their colleges. The main reason is commercialization of the education sector where earning money has become more important than imparting knowledge.

Question No. 7

Do you agree with the point that excelling in the pharmacy profession depends on individual efforts rather than effective system?

Ans: YES 23.29%

NO 76.71%

While individual efforts are essential in the holistic development of any professional, an effective system provides a platform to excel. A structured system always keeps the individual motivated to perform better.

Up to date syllabus, effective teaching techniques, equipped labs and placements at the end of the course, in a fair and transparent manner will pave way for production of quality professionals, rather than today's system which is haphazard and demotivating.

Question No. 8

Is "Reference" playing a key role in obtaining a job?

Ans: YES 80.69%

NO 19.31%

Yes, it is. Today, the scenario in the job market in the pharmacy- industry is "who you know" but not "how much you know". The reason given for this deeply rooted system of reference is it that a refereed candidate can be completely trusted while an unknown person cannot be, no matter how qualified the person is. It is as if the candidate's integrity is proved when someone can vouch for them. But it is impossible for every single student to find a reference each, for getting placed.

Question No. 9

Do you agree with the statement "I am a Pharmacist - a health care professional" in the current scenario?

Ans: YES 49.14%

NO 50.86%

The survey poll speaks it all. While most of the people consider pharmacists as shopkeepers who sell drugs instead of groceries, there are also people who approach the pharmacist directly for prescribing drugs for common ailments.

In the process, the true role of a pharmacist is not realized. A pharmacist is the person who knows everything about drugs, right from its fetal stages to the post marketing stage. A pharmacist should be the person who actually can make interventions/dosage adjustments based on the patient's condition rather than blindly dispensing the drugs prescribed to patients based on the diagnosis by a registered medical practitioner. As long as the rights are not handed over to pharmacists in their entirety, the above statement doesn't hold good.

Question No. 10

In the western world, the role of pharmacist shifted from "Product to Patient". Do you prefer the same to happen in India?

Ans: YES 92.61%

NO 07.38%

In the West, pharmacy education is patient-oriented while in India pharmacy education is industry-oriented. And less percentile of jobs are available in health care system. Tremendous developments in drug discovery, Increase in number of diseases, complexity in treatment regimen and increasing population demands for the shift in the role of clinical pharmacist from "Product to Patient".

Question No. 11

To enhance the patient care, a new course known as "Doctor of Pharmacy" has been introduced. Do you think a Pharm D graduate can improve the clinical services in a community set-up?

Ans: YES 75.86%

NO 24.14%

Pharmacy council of India has introduced a six year "Doctor of Pharmacy" course. The curriculum of Pharm D is well designed to meet the needs of the current health care system. It emphasizes on role of a clinical pharmacist in providing the pharmacy practice and clinical pharmacy services and the students of Pharm D undergo a continuous and intensive training in clinical services. The career options for Pharm D personnel are diversified.

Few objectives of this program include Medication safety, Disease state management, Pharmaceutical care, reducing the incidence of Adverse Drug Reactions, enhancing the therapeutic outcome through possible interventions and enhancing medication adherence through patient counseling.

Question No. 12

Now-a-days, pharmacy profession is less opted. What might be the reasons according to you?

1. The general notion that the "Pharmacist is a shopkeeper".
2. Lack of career opportunities
 - As reference is playing a vital role in obtaining a job in industry
 - The recruitment of B.sc and M.sc graduates in pharmacy industries instead of pharmacy graduates.
 - Limited number of openings in the industry.
3. Low pay scale
4. Lack of Industry- Institution tie up
5. Increase in the no. of colleges and this diluted the profession
6. Lack of efficient staff in colleges and Low quality of education.
7. Dual control of pharmacy education by PCI & AICTE

Question No. 13

Pen down your views regarding the professional reforms that can be implemented to improve the status of pharmacy profession.

- 1) Approval to set up a college should be done after a strict inspection
- 2) Regularly upgraded syllabus
- 3) Efficient faculty should be recruited
- 4) Proper Hospital and Industry Training
- 5) Strong Institution-Industry interaction
- 6) Campus placements
- 7) Improving career opportunities
- 8) Post of clinical pharmacist to be introduced in all hospitals
- 9) Basic salaries should be provided
- 10) Liaison between Public and Private sector
- 11) Strict implementation of Drugs & Cosmetics Act
- 12) Co-ordination of PCI with MCI

CONCLUSION

India has the potential to become a pharmaceutical hotspot. There is a lot of potential that is left untapped. The students are enthusiastic, and waiting for opportunities. This online survey was conducted from November 25th to December 10th 2013 and we are glad to review the responses of 562 people from all over India. The results clearly had shown the dissatisfaction among pharmacy graduates and students DUE TO THE LACK OF A STRUCTURED SYSTEM AND OPPORTUNITIES. The "Voice of student" is an attempt to provide a platform to the students to voice their concerns and fears regarding their future in the profession. We hope this attempt become the stepping stone to a bigger movement , and pave way for a lush green career path to the budding pharmacists.

"WE HOPE THAT THE SOUND OF THIS VOICE WILL HELP MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE"