

The Dilemma of Pharmacy Practice and Research in Pakistan

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It is unfortunate that even after the creation of Pakistan 67 years ago, the pharmacy practice in Pakistan as a community service for the health of the people remains in infancy. Although 52 schools of pharmacy are cultivating the faculties of the younger generation to produce qualified graduates having Pharm D degree. But after earning the degree, the majority of the students opt for pharmaceutical industry jobs and less so in hospital pharmacy and very few in community pharmacy. The community of pharmacy is mostly run by pharmacy attendants as has been seen and pointed out by many authors pointed out in their research publications. Therefore, the current status of community pharmacy practice is awkwardly below standard and does not match with the professional requirements. It is a need rather than a desire to involve more pharmacists at the community level to develop awareness programs to counter patients' routine drug issues and reducing the burden of disease from society. It is argued that the regulatory compliance of majority of the drug stores rather than pharmacy is in operation having inadequate experiences. There is a dire need to improve the storage practices of drugs by complying with the regulatory standards/laws as specified by the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan. Both education and research in pharmacy practice

can strengthen pharmacist-provided services, builds the evidence base for developing and commissioning new services, improves patient care and contributes to health service knowledge. Additionally, the importance and benefits of incorporating 'stakeholders' into research from beginning to end have been increasingly recognized the world over is of value to incorporate research into their pharmacy practice. The school of Pharmacy should direct attention that undertaking graduate studies that involve research components, can increase understanding and the potential role of pharmacists to build better pharmacy practices as well as enormous potential for research to value-add to careers. Research can expand pharmacy practice scope and allow them for the competitive job market. Good research with compelling findings can add an extra element of career satisfaction. By incorporating research into current pharmacy practice pharmacists will benefit, with the ultimate aim of improving patient care and access pharmacy services for better promise of tomorrow in health care.