

Influence of Internships in Determining Career Prospects for Undergraduate Pharmacy Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: Pharmacy, as a profession has greatly transformed compared with that in 1990s. Being the 3rd largest group in healthcare profession, pharmacist have diverse career aspects. This study is aimed to assess the influence of internships during the PharmD program in making career choices for undergraduate students.

Objective: To evaluate the student's perspective on influence of internship in selecting their career.

Methods: A survey was conducted with 5th year and 4th year pharmacy students in University of Karachi considering their views on importance of internships in selecting a career discipline.

Results: A total of 343 candidates (34 male & 309 Females) participated in the study. Out of which 328 candidates believed that internships are an integral part of pharmacy profession and greatly aids in career selection. Almost every candidate had completed or were involved in hospital internship while only 56 students had industrial internship exposure. Students having both hospital and industrial exposure were more certain of the best career field compared to students having no industrial internship exposure.

Conclusion: The study concludes that vast possibilities in developing a career for pharmacists has confused the fresh graduates in determining the career. The learning process obtained from internships is vital for students in building practical application of their theoretical knowledge. Academic institutes should collaborate with industries, hospitals, research organization & community pharmacies in providing equal opportunities for students in availing internships. This will also lead to more specialized and trained fresh graduates to meet the career demands.