National Survey of Pharmacy Leadership at Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia: Working Environment

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Abstract

Objective: To explore the national survey of pharmacy leadership at the Ministry of Health with emphasis on pharmacy Working Environment. **Methods:** It is a ninety days cross-sectional national survey of pharmacy leadership practice at Ministry of Health. The survey modified from self-assessment of 360 leadership and with pharmacy leadership literature. The electronic format of the survey through the survey monkey system and distributed through emails. All analysis is done through the survey monkey system. The survey divided into several parts for analysis, and discussion. Part one: practice management, part two: planning and organizations, part three: communications strategies, part four: problem-solving and decision making, part five: performances management, part six: working environment, and part seven: professional development. The study explored the part number six: National Survey of Pharmacy leadership: Working Environment.

Results: The survey distributed to one hundred hospitals, the response rate, was forty-two hospitals (42%) with seventy-pharmacy leaders. The gender distribution of responders was Male 43 (63.24%) and female 25 (36.76%) while the nationality was Saudi 69 (98.57%) and non-Saudi 1 (1.43%). The majority of pharmacy leadership described the current environment as work culture A 24 (38.1%) and work culture C 23 (36.5%). The most of them preferred work culture B 20 (31.25%) and Work culture A 19 (29.69%). The average score Cultural Awareness skills were 2.48 (82.65%) with the highest score was Full respect for people who are not sharing the same region 2.73 (90.99%). The majority of pharmacy leaders agreed the higher Management within the organization recognizes strong job performance 31 (46.27%), the Employees proactively identify future challenges and opportunities 33 (53.23%), and Employees in my organization willingly accept change 31 (47.69%). Most of the pharmacy leaders (70%) though that is the maximum time should become pharmacy leader at his or her position four to five years. **Conclusion:** The pharmacy leaders had some challenges with workplace environment. Targeting to review pharmacy workplace and implement the new model of the culture environment is required. Also, further with another a detail investigation of pharmacy workplace environment is highly recommended at healthcare organizations in Saudi Arabia.

Key word: Pharmacy leadership, Working environment, Ministry of health, Saudi arabia.

INTRODUCTION

The American Society of Health-System pharmacist and pharmacy societies provide to the pharmacy leaders very comprehensive educational courses, annual conferences of pharmacy leaders and several publications through the Journal American Journal of Health-System Pharmacist.^[1-4] Most of them discussed the tools and skills of pharmacy leaders including the working environment. Few studies investigated the workplace environment with pharmacy leadership.^[5-6] It very hard to find an investigation of pharmacy leadership including working environment in Saudi Arabia or Gulf and Middle East counties. The objective of the study to explore the national survey of pharmacy leadership with emphasis on the working environment.

METHODS

It is a ninety days cross-sectional national survey of pharmacy leadership practice at MOH hospitals. The survey modified from self-assessment of 360 leadership and with pharmacy leadership literature. It consisted of a demographic section, leadership pathway, and fifty-three leadership

questions. It contained selected eighteen leadership skills of 360 leadership self-assessment.^[7] Of The leadership skills included Achievement, Goals, Flexibility, Feedback, Excellence, Empowering Others, Emotional Intelligence, Decision Making, Developing Others, Cultural Awareness, Continual Improvement, Communication Skills, Coworker Development, Leading the Change Needed, Attitude, Analytical, Administrative Skill, and Action. The questions consisted of open and closed questions. The 5-points or 3-point Likert response scale system used. This survey distributed to all leadership at MOH hospital pharmacies in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It included general director of pharmacy at MOH and regions, the directors of pharmacy and supervisor at MOH hospital pharmacies. The electronic format of the survey through the survey monkey system and distributed through emails. A reminder e-mail containing a link to the website forwarded two weeks after. All analysis is done through the survey monkey system. The survey divided into for several parts for analysis, and discussion. Part one: practice management, part two: planning and organizations, part three: communications strategies, part four: problem-solving and decision making, part five: performances management, part six: working environment, and

part seven: professional development. The study explored the part number one; National Survey of Pharmacy leadership: Working Environment.

RESULTS

The survey distributed to the one hundred hospitals, the response rate, was forty-two hospitals (42%) with seventy-pharmacy leaders. Most of the hospital bed size (200-299) was 16 (24.24%) followed by nine (13.64%) bed size (300-399) and eight the (12%) more than bed size ($\geq$ or >600). The number of hospitals accredited by the Saudi Central Board of Hospitals Accreditation (CIBAH) was 36 (76.60%) while 22 hospitals (46.81%) accredited by USA International Joint Commission and CIBAH and

11 (23.40%) accredited by the Saudi Commission of Healthcare specialties. The gender distribution of responders was Male 43 (63.24%) and female 25 (36.76%) while the nationality was Saudi 69 (98.57%) and non-Saudi 1 (1.43%). Most responders were in the age range (25-34) years, 30 (55.12%) and (35-44 years) 26 (38.24%). The academic qualifications of responders were BSc. Pharm 44 (64.71%) followed by Mater degree 9 (13.24%) and Diploma Pharmacy 7 (10.29%). Of those, only 10 (14.93%) completed a residency program in pharmacy administrations, and four (4.16%) had completed board of pharmaceutical specialties. Most responders worked as a supervisor of the unit at hospital pharmacy 33 (50 %) or director of pharmacy 24 (36.36%). Of those they had experienced as pharmacist more than ten years 33 (47.14%) and had administrative work one to three years'

Table 1: Demographic information of pharmacy leaders.

Gender	Response N	Response %	Complete pharmacy residency	Response N	Response %
Male	43	63.24%	Yes	10	14.93%
Female	25	36.76%	No	57	85.07%
Answered question	68		Answered question	67	
Skipped question	2		Skipped question	3	
Nationality	Response N	Response %	Do you have Board of Pharmaceutical Specialty	Response N	Response %
Saudi	69	98.57%	Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist	1	1.54%
Non- Saudi	1	1.43%	Board Certified Critical Care Pharmacist	1	1.54%
Answered question	70		Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialists	2	3.08%
Skipped question	0		Non	62	95.38%
Academic Qualification (s)			Answered question	65	
18 to 24	0	0.00%	Skipped question	5	
25 to 34	30	44.12%	Total years of current position	Response N	Response %
35 to 44	26	38.24%	General Manager of Pharmaceutical care	5	7.58%
45 to 54	10	14.71%	Manager of Pharmaceutical care at region	1	1.52%
55 to 64	1	1.47%	Director of Hospital pharmacy	24	36.36%
65 to 74	1	1.47%	Supervisor of pharmacy units	33	50.00%
75 or older	0	0.00%	Director of Primary care center pharmacy	3	4.55%
Answered question	68		Answered question	66	
Skipped question	2		Skipped question	4	
Academic Qualification (s)			Total years worked as a Pharmacist	Response N	Response %
Diploma Pharmacy	7	10.29%	<3	9	13.24%
Bsc. Pharm	44	64.71%	3-5	13	19.12%
M.S	9	13.24%	6-10	13	19.12%
Msc. Clinical Pharmacy	4	5.88%	11-15	14	20.59%
Pharm.D.	11	16.18%	> 15	19	27.94%
Ph.D	0	0.00%	Answered question	68	
MBA	4	5.88%	Skipped question	2	
Pharmacy Residency (R1)	2	2.94%	Years of experience in administrative work	Response N	Response %
Pharmacy Residency (R2)	2	2.94%	Less than one year	10	14.29%
Fellowship	1	1.47%	1 - 3 years	18	25.71%
Other (please specify)	6	8.82%	4 - 5 years	13	18.57%
Answered question	68		6-10	14	20.00%
Skipped question	2		More than ten years	15	21.43%
			Answered question	70	14.29%
			Skipped question	0	

experience¹⁸ (25.71%) and more than ten years were 15 (21.43%) as explored in Table 1 and Table 2. The majority of pharmacy leadership described the current environment as work culture A 24 (38.1%) and work culture C 23 (36.5%). The most of them preferred work culture B 20 (31.25%) and Work culture A 19 (29.69%) as explored in Table 3. The average score Cultural Awareness skills were 2.48 (82.65%) with the highest score was Full respect for people who are not sharing the same region 2.73 (90.99%), and the lowest score was I am sensitive to the different cultural backgrounds 2.16 (71.99 %) as explored in Table 4. The majority of pharmacy leaders agreed the higher Management within the organization recognizes strong job performance 31 (46.27%), the Employees proactively identify future

challenges and opportunities 33 (53.23%), and Employees in my organization willingly accept change 31 (47.69%). Most of the pharmacy leaders (70%) though that is the maximum time should become pharmacy leader at his or her position four to five years as explored in Table 5.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of pharmacy strategic planning need leaders from Pharmacy to organize that is one. The successful plan needs very competent pharmacy leaders. Despite the presenting of an excellent leader, the demand for assistance leaders and working environment is necessary. The working environment involved several factors, for instance, the place of working with, a team of the work, higher administration, the communication and relationships among pharmacy staff. The fourth general of pharmacy strategic goal stated to create the working culture and environment.^[8] The pharmacy administration Established several tools for working culture or environment including the pharmacist job satisfaction done annually by all pharmacy staff and reported to pharmacy administration.^[9] The design of working place with requirements equipment, medical and pharmaceutical furniture, the shape of the place, and included with manual of pharmacy design and equipment described each pharmacy units and development. To make the pharmacy staff living and working in excellence environment place. Another program released to the created favorable working environment was the patient satisfaction of the pharmacy services.^[10-11] The program will encourage the pharmacist to communicate efficiently with all patients and provide best the services. Also, the pharmacy administration increase number of pharmacy workforce to facilitate the work very efficiently with proper environments.^[12-13] All those factors should organize and lead through pharmacy leaders. The investigator tried to measure the pharmacy-working environment through a national survey of pharmacy leadership at a healthcare organization in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The findings showed the majority of pharmacy leadership between two environments at the current situation with the open and friendly environment and worked as a team without policy and procedure or the second environment with policy and procedures and very structure places and organization. That's reflected the pharmacy practice either open or very restricted. The first one either old leader or had much experience and leadership through communication and other one new and do not had much experience and follow policy and tried to got mistakes. However, the most the leaders to be category B which leadership industry or the very open environment. That's mean most wish to be accurate and appropriate leaders, but maybe several factors stop the process of pharmacy leadership, for instance, the education and training

Table 2: Demographic hospital information.		
Number of beds at hospital	Response N	Response %
<50	6	9.09%
50-99	5	7.58%
100-199	7	10.61%
200-299	16	24.24%
300-399	9	13.64%
400-599	4	6.06%
More than or equal 600	8	12.12%
Medical City	7	10.61%
Regional Drug Information Centers at (General Health Affairs Directorate)	4	6.06%
Answered question: 70 and skipped : 0		
The hospital accreditation	Response Count	Response Percent
CIBAH	36	76.60%
Saudi Commission of Healthcare specialties	11	23.40%
JCI	22	46.81%
Canada	2	4.26%
ASHP	0	0.0%
ACCP	1	5.0%
Non	4	20.0%
Answered question: 47 and skipped question 23		

Table 3: Work environment.									
Answer Options	Work culture A		Work culture B		Work culture C		Work culture D		Response N
Select one of the work culture that best describes your current work environment:	24	38.10%	7	11.11%	23	36.51%	9	14.29%	63
Of the work cultures described above, which ONE culture would you PREFER to work within?	19	29.69%	20	31.25%	17	26.56%	8	12.50%	64
<p>Work culture A</p> <p>An open and friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves. Leaders are considered to be mentors or even parental figures. Group loyalty and sense of tradition are strong. There is an emphasis on the long-term benefits of human resources development, and great importance is given to group cohesion. There is a high concern for people. The organization places a premium on teamwork, participation, and consensus.</p> <p>Work culture B</p> <p>A dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative place to work. Employees and leaders embrace innovation and risk-taking. A commitment to experimentation and thinking differently are what unify the organization. The long-term emphasis is on growth and acquiring new resources. Being an industry leader is essential. Individual initiative and freedom are encouraged.</p>					<p>Work culture C</p> <p>A highly structured and formal place to work. Rules and procedures govern behavior. Leaders strive to be good coordinators and organizers who are efficiency-minded. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is most critical. Formal policies are what hold the group together. Stability, performance, and efficient operations are the long-term goals</p> <p>Work culture D</p> <p>A results-driven organization focused on job completion. People are competitive and goal-oriented. Leaders are demanding, hard-driving, and productive. The emphasis on winning unifies the organization. Reputation and success are common concerns. Long-term focus is on competition and achievement of measurable goals and targets.</p>				

Table 4: Cultural Awareness.

	Answer Options	Never		Sometimes		Always		Average	Response N
1	Values the opinions of diverse groups and individual.	2	3.17%	24	38.10%	37	58.73%	2.56	63
2	Encourage a diversity work environment.	1	1.59%	30	47.62%	32	50.79%	2.49	63
3	I am sensitive to the different cultural backgrounds.	9	14.29%	35	55.56%	19	30.16%	2.16	63
4	Full respect for people who are not sharing the same region.	0	0.00%	17	26.56%	47	73.44%	2.73	64
answered question:65 and skipped question: 5									

Table 5: Concept of working environment.

	Answer Options	5		4		3		2		1		Response N
1	The Management within my organization recognizes strong job performance.	6	8.96%	31	46.27%	19	28.36%	7	10.45%	4	5.97%	67
2	The Employees proactively identify future challenges and opportunities.	3	4.84%	33	53.23%	17	27.42%	6	9.68%	3	4.84%	62
3	The Employees in my organization willingly accept change.	5	7.69%	31	47.69%	17	26.15%	10	15.38%	2	3.08%	65
4	The maximum time should pharmacy leader at his position	29	41.43%	20	28.57%	11	15.71%	9	12.86%	1	1.43%	70
Question number 1,2,3: 1: Strongly disagree, 2: disagree,3: Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree,4: Agree,5: Strongly Agree												
Question number 4, 1: One year, 2: Two years,3: Three years,4: Four years,5: Five years												

pharmacy leaders. Other wishes keep as the same situation because they are old age and do not need and building up new leaders. The average score Cultural Awareness skills were acceptable with excellent respect environment of other region, but they face difficult background culture to dissolve the pharmacy staff in the environment. That's related to low experience background of pharmacy leaders to communicate very effectively and efficiently with Pharmacy staff to dissolve all barriers between them. The findings of the concept of the working environment of pharmacy leaders are excellent including the higher administration recognized their works, they had pleasant staff with proactive and ready for challenges and willing to change and accepted the new changes. All previous concepts encourage the pharmacy leaders to work very effectively and efficiently and improve pharmaceutical services and expand the pharmaceutical care concept to cover all patient-related drug therapy situations. Most of the leaders wish to work at his or her position four or five years as maximum time only. That's because the pharmacy leaders had very workforce without the support of training and education for leadership and without incentives to encourage the pharmacist to stay in their positions. It hard to compare the previous finding with other studies because of the literature was review papers or not in-depth detail information.^[5] Maybe the study is the first study-wide world or Saudi Arabia and Gulf or Middle East countries discussed the pharmacy leaders with the workplace environment. The pharmacy leaders had environment discrepancies with the right staff environment. However, pharmacy leaders wish to change their position within a short period because of missed of preposition leadership preparation, high workload performances, and without any benefits from the positions at the Ministry of Health organization in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

CONCLUSION

The working environment of pharmacy leaders is not acceptable generally. However, the pharmacy staff had created a good culture and workplace environment inside. Targeting of education and training of pharmacy readers to change the environment is highly recommended at MOH organization in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Author declares no conflict of interest.

ABBREVIATION USED

KSA: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, MOH: Ministry of Health.

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