

# Communication and Relationships Factors of Pharmacy Career Satisfaction in Saudi Arabia

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## ABSTRACT

**Objectives:** This article describes the overall job satisfaction of pharmacists working in Saudi Arabia by exploring their communication and relationship with supervisors and patients. The aim of this study to declare the communications and relationship factors of Pharmacist Job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia.

**Methods:** This is a 4-months cross section survey of communication and relationship factors on Pharmacist Job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. The study consisted of forty-three questions divided into two-part demographic information and the second part was the questions about communication and relationships factors of pharmacy job. It included pharmacy supervisors, relationship with coworkers and pharmacist interaction with other healthcare providers, the customer interaction and overall job satisfaction. **Results:** The total responders were two hundred and forty-two. The gender distribution 169 (70.7%) was male and 70 (29.3%) was female. The majority of them 202 (84.2%) were in age (20-39). The average satisfaction score of pharmacy supervisors' factors was (3.0), pharmacist interaction with other healthcare providers' factors was (3.34) while the customer interaction was (2.81) and the pharmacist relationship with coworkers was (3.67). Most of the pharmacist found the challenges at their job were (77.6%). Some responders wished to change their pharmacy career (43.75%) while (61.66%) liked to stay in the pharmacy field. The overall job satisfaction scores were (3.61). **Conclusion:** Most of the pharmacists not satisfied with their job because of the supervisor relationship and non-existent patient education services. The pharmacy supervisors of hospital pharmacies demanded management tools and communication skills with their colleagues. In addition, patient counselling program should be implemented at healthcare institutions in Saudi Arabia

**Keywords:** Communication, Relationships, Factors, Pharmacy, Career, Satisfaction, Saudi Arabia.

## INTRODUCTION

The health care system in Saudi Arabia is advanced and well-structured including pharmacy services, where the employment sectors include the Ministry of Health, Non-MOH, University, private healthcare, community pharmacies, the pharmaceutical industry and other facilities.<sup>1</sup> The professional pharmacist interacted closely with other medical health care professionals in hospitals and with the patients; hence, the significance of pharmacists in a multidisciplinary team has increased. As part of a team providing health services, pharmacists are a participant in fulfilling various tasks and in making decisions that have an impact on a patient's quality of life.<sup>2</sup> As a result, an employee's feeling towards his/her job plays a vital role in work motivation, satisfaction and retention.

Job satisfaction is an essential factor for increasing a person's involvement in the workplace. Satisfaction has been linked positively to motivation, performance, productivity, organizational commitment and patient safety.<sup>3</sup> Several factors that may affect job satisfaction are proper management, good relationships with co-workers, regular working hours and compensation. One of the critical factors associated with employee's job satisfaction is communication. The communication impacts an employee's job situation and can decrease an employee's uncertainty. Communication is also a multidimensional concept and communication factors responsible for employ-

ee's job satisfaction are role expectations, social support, leadership and justice. The furthestmost determinant factors for job satisfaction have been known as job interestingness, relationships with managers and colleagues, high income and evidently definite career advancement opportunities. Employees are more satisfied when they are supported by their co-workers and superiors, have an understanding of the precise role of their job, have superiors that are ready to help them and affect them in the right way and are informed of critical decision making within the hospital. It should keep the employees glad and satisfied at work as it influences productivity and patient satisfaction.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, poor job satisfaction directly impacted performance, especially for pharmacists. These performance problems can include medication error like an error in prescription, dispensing, or administration, not detecting drug interactions and inadequate patient counseling. It is essential to realize that a decrease in pharmacist performance could cause patient harm or even death. As a result, the dissatisfaction may also affect the way that patients views the pharmacist and therefore, may limit their interactions with the pharmacist. If pharmacists are dissatisfied with their career, they are more likely to resign. Pharmacist job satisfaction does affect the pharmacist at the workplace, besides this may potentially affect many other aspects of the phar-

macist's life.<sup>5</sup>

The authors based on their knowledge are familiar with few investigations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) about communication factors with supervisors or coworkers or healthcare providers that affected positively or negatively on pharmacist job satisfaction.<sup>6,7</sup> This study will celebrate association of many factors which related to pharmacist job satisfaction linked such as relation with health care practitioners like nurse and physicians. Moreover, challenging tasks for pharmacists never stop. As professional members of the health care team, pharmacists must exhibit positive relation with colleagues and staff. Pharmacist relationship with patient as customer is another important task as far job responsibilities are concerned.

## METHODS

It is a 4-months cross sectional survey of communication and relationship factors on Pharmacist Job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. The study consisted of 34 questions divided into two parts, demographic information and the second part was the questions about communication and relationship factors of pharmacy job. It included pharmacy supervisors, relationship with coworkers and pharmacist interaction with other healthcare providers, customer interaction and overall job satisfaction. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used. There were open and closed-ended questions. The survey was made as an electronic format and it analyzed through survey monkey system.

## RESULTS

The total responders were 242. Of those 214 (91.8%) were from Saudi and 33 (8.2%) were from other countries. The gender distribution 169 (70.7%) was male and 70 (29.3%) was female. The majority of them 202 (84.2%) were in age (20-39). Most of the pharmacists were married 152 (66.38%) while 75 (32.75%) were singles (Table 1).

The most educational level of the responders was a bachelor degree in pharmacy 114 (47.7%), followed by pharmacy diploma level was 81 (33.89%) and Pharm.D 26 (10.88%). Most of the responders has not board of pharmaceuticals 171 (93.44%). Most of the current positions were held by pharmacy technicians 80 (34.93%) and staff pharmacist 78 (34.5%) and worked at outpatient pharmacy 83 (39.7%) and inpatient pharmacy 73 (34.9%). Most of the responders spent less than 2 (30%), followed by three years, three to five years 61 (24.42%) and six to ten years 50 (20.83%) working in the current position. While more of responders receive 7,000 – 12,000 SR monthly salary 138 (58.97%) (Table 2).

Most of the responders worked at Ministry of health 103 (42.92%) followed by MOH government Hospital 66 (27.5%) and Non- MOH government Hospital 31 (12.92%). The responders worked at (200-299 beds) 32 (17.02%) followed by (100-199 beds) 31 (16.49%) and (<50 beds) 29 (15.43%). Most hospitals were accredited by Saudi Commission for Health Specialties 97 (48.74%) followed by Saudi Central Board for Accreditation of Healthcare Institutions (CBAHI) 58 (29.15%) and Joint commission of hospital accreditations USA 40 (20.1%) (Table 3). The average satisfaction score of pharmacy supervisors' factors was (3.0), pharmacist interaction with other healthcare providers' factors was (3.34) (Table 4 and 5). While the customer interaction was (2.81) the pharmacist relationship with coworkers was (3.67). Most of the pharmacists found the challenges at their job (77.6%). Some responders wished to change their pharmacy career (43.75%) while (61.66%) liked to stay in the pharmacy field. The overall job satisfaction scores were (3.61) (Table 6).

## DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of the present study was to explore the communication and relationships factors of pharmacy career satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. The reason for these aims was efforts should be made to raise the levels of job satisfaction for pharmacists to improve their motivation and competence and to reduce stress among workers which puts both pharmacists and patients at safe side. The results from this study indicate that most pharmacists in Saudi Arabia found the challenges in their jobs. One of the causes of these challenges for pharmacists in their careers was the supervisors' relationship with employees. The pharmacists confirm in this study that most of the supervisors did not support them. Also, they have no superiors that are ready to help them and affect them in the right way and teach them how to properly deal with various types of patients. These results are in line with previous studies as they have justification when employee's job roles are not clear; they are more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs.<sup>4</sup> The majority of respondents reported the supervisors don't give adequate consideration to their complaints and respond to them, previous study<sup>8</sup> justify this negative reason. The only possible explanation to that is the individual variation that might exist from one pharmacist to the other and the uniqueness of each case. Besides the results of this study, pharmacists face challenges with physicians, where

**Table 1: Demographic social information.**

Nationality	Response Count	Response Percent
Saudi	214	91.85
Non- Saudi	19	8.15
Answered question	233	
Skipped question	9	
Gender	Response Count	Response Percent
Male	169	70.71
Female	70	29.29
Answered question	239	
Skipped question	3	
Age	Response Count	Response Percent
<19	0	0
20-29	87	42.08
30-39	86	42.08
40-49	26	12.92
50-59	6	2.92
>60	0	0
Answered question	240	
Skipped question	2	
Marital status	Response Count	Response Percent
Single	75	32.75
Married	152	66.38
Other (please specify)	2	0.87
Answered question	229	
Skipped question	13	

**Table 2: Demographic responder qualifications information.**

Academic Qualification (s):	Response Count	Response Percent
Diploma Pharmacy	81	33.89
Bsc. Pharm	114	47.70
M.S	4	1.67
Msc. Clinical Pharmacy	16	6.69
Pharm.D.	26	10.88
Ph.D	2	0.84
MBA	4	1.67
Pharmacy Residency Two years (R <sup>2</sup> )	2	0.84
Pharmacy Residency one year (R1)	2	0.84
Fellowship	0	0
Other (please specify)	3	1.26
Answered question	239	
Skipped question	3	
Board of Pharmaceutical Specialty	Response Count	Response Percent
Board Certified Ambulatory Care Pharmacist (BCACP)	2	1.09
Board Certified Critical Care Pharmacist (BCCCP)	3	1.64
Board Certified Nuclear Pharmacist (BCNP)	0	0.00
Board Certified Nutrition Support Pharmacist (BCNSP)	0	0.00
Board Certified Oncology Pharmacist (BCOP)	0	0.00
Board Certified Pediatric Pharmacy Specialist (BCPPS)	0	0.00
Board Certified Pharmacotherapy Specialists (BCPS)	2	1.09
Board Certified Psychiatric Pharmacist (BCPP)	1	0.55
Non	171	93.44
Other (please specify)	4	2.19
Answered question	183	
Skipped question	59	
Current position	Response Count	Response Percent
Pharmacy Technicians	80	34.93
Lecturer	0	0.00
Intern Pharmacist	3	1.31
Director of Pharmacy	22	9.61
Staff Pharmacist	79	34.50

Supervisor Pharmacist	21	9.17
Clinical Pharmacist	12	5.24
Deputy Director of Pharmacy	4	1.75
Manager	3	1.31
Other (please specify)	5	2.18
Answered question	229	
Skipped question	13	
The practice area	Response Count	Response Percent
Inpatient Pharmacy	73	34.76
Outpatient Pharmacy	83	39.52
Satellite Pharmacy	0	0.00
Narcotics	2	0.95
Extemporaneous Preparation	2	0.95
Clinical Pharmacy	9	4.29
Inventory Control	3	1.43
Drug Information	4	1.90
Emergency pharmacy	2	0.95
Medication safety	2	0.95
Repacking	0	0.00
Pharmacy Education and Training	1	0.48
Other (please specify)	29	13.81
Answered question	210	
Skipped question	32	
Total years you worked in current position	Response Count	Response Percent
<3	72	30.00
3-5	61	25.42
6-10	50	20.83
11-15	25	10.42
> 15	32	13.33
Answered question	240	
Skipped question	2	
Monthly income	Response Count	Response Percent
<6.000	16	6.84
7.000 - 9.000	56	23.93
10.000 - 12.000	82	35.04
14,000 - 16,000	43	18.38
18,000 - 20,000	26	11.11
>25.000	11	4.70
Answered question	234	
Skipped question	8	

**Table 3: Demographic hospital information.**

Sector of work	Response Count	Response Percent
Ministry of Health	103	42.92
General Medical Directorate in Region	3	1.25
MOH government Hospital	66	27.50
Non- MOH government Hospital	31	12.92
MOH-Primary Care Center	22	9.17
Private Hospital	3	1.25
Private Primary Care Center	0	0
Community pharmacy	7	2.92
Other (please specify)	5	2.08
Answered question	240	
Skipped question	2	
Number of beds at your hospital	Response Count	Response Percent
< 50	29	15.43
50-99	16	8.51
100-199	31	16.49
200-299	32	17.02
300-399	15	7.98
400-499	13	6.91
500-599	14	7.45
= or > 600	13	6.91
Medical City	25	13.30
Answered question	188	
Skipped question	54	
The hospital accreditation	Response Count	Response Percent
CBAHI	58	29.15
Joint Commotion USA	40	20.10
Canada	4	2.01
Saudi commission of health accreditation	97	48.74
Answered question	199	
Skipped question	43	

some physicians are uncooperative when they must communicate with them about “job-related issues”. Also, of the results most of the pharmacists in the present study they confirm satisfied with the good coworkers and have a good interpersonal relationship between pharmacists. The current study is similar to previous studies<sup>6,7</sup> showed that the pharmacists who were confident with the coworkers as pharmacists confirm in this study patient’s appreciation for the services provided to them and attempt to comply with the directions and advice given to them. After all, these reasons showed that there was a significant relationship between all of these factors and job satisfaction.

**Table 4: Pharmacist satisfaction on supervisor's relationship.**

Supervisors		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	My supervisors provide competent and consistent supervision.	32	74	61	46	27	3.16	240
2	My supervisors give me a sufficient amount of information (feedback) about how well I am doing my job.	30	75	55	52	28	3.11	240
3	My supervisors have an adequate knowledge of their jobs.	21	63	79	49	28	3.00	240
4	My supervisors give ample consideration to employee complaints and pharmacy issues and respond to them in a timely manner.	21	74	42	65	37	2.90	239
5	My supervisors teach pharmacist the proper dealing with various types of patients.	23	64	64	61	29	2.96	241
6	My supervisors teach the pharmacist professional pharmaceutical / management related skills.	15	62	53	73	35	2.79	238
7	My supervisors help the pharmacist in identifying potential unavailable products in pharmacy but available in warehouse or other pharmacies.	25	73	64	47	27	3.09	236
8	My supervisor provides constructive criticism to employees.	18	74	62	51	30	3.00	235
Average							3.00	
Answered questions 241, Skipped questions 1								

## CONCLUSION

The pharmacist job satisfaction was inadequate. The supervisors did not support the pharmacist. The pharmacist had challenges in the pharmacy work with inadequate customer communication. Annual survey of Pharmacist job satisfaction with an emphasis on communication factors is highly recommended in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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None.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

**Table 5: The pharmacist interaction with other healthcare providers' factors.**

	Negative / Positive interactions with health care providers	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	Physicians are uncooperative when I must communicate with them about "job-related" matters.	35	71	73	54	7	3.30	240
2	Physicians consult with me often on professional matters.	14	101	78	35	8	3.33	236
3	Nurses are uncooperative when I initiate communication with them about "job-related" matters.	17	57	63	83	14	2.91	234
4	Nurses often initiate consultation with me on professional matters.	27	104	68	24	11	3.48	234
5	Non- pharmacists often perform functions that should only be performed by a pharmacist.	31	70	65	50	18	3.20	234
6	Technicians are respected by other health care providers.	26	98	54	35	23	3.29	236
7	Technicians are cooperative at the pharmacy.	62	113	37	20	5	3.87	237
	Average						3.34	
Answered questions 240, Skipped questions 2								


**Table 6: The pharmacist relationship with Customers and coworkers.**

Customer interactions		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	Patients show appreciation for the services I provide for them.	28	75	75	45	14	2.43	237
2	In general, I find that patients (customers) attempt to comply with the directions and advice I give them.	13	109	81	29	6	3.19	238
	Average						2.81	
Answered question 238, Skipped question 4								
Relationships with coworkers		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	The people with whom I work are friendly.	49	121	52	13	4	3.83	239
2	I receive recognition and a sense of personal worth from my colleagues.	58	117	45	14	2	3.91	236
3	All of my coworkers in the pharmacy are highly competent.	30	67	83	47	9	3.26	236
	Average						3.67	
Answered questions 239, Skipped questions 3								
Overall job satisfaction		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	I find challenge in my work.	87	100	32	16	6	4.02	241
2	Knowing what I know now, if I had to decide all over again whether to go into pharmacy, I would choose another field.	62	43	36	60	39	3.12	240
3	If I were free to pursue any type of career I wanted, I would stay in pharmacy.	68	80	57	21	14	3.70	240
	Average						3.61	
Answered questions 242, Skipped questions 0								

## ABBREVIATIONS

**KSA:** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; **MOH:** Ministry of Health; **B.Sc. Pharm:** Bachelor in pharmacy; **Pharm D:** Doctor of Pharmacy; **CBAHI:** Saudi Central Board for Accreditation of Healthcare Institutions.

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