


Stress Factors on Pharmacy Technician Personal Satisfaction in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To explore the Stress factors on pharmacy technician personal satisfaction in Saudi Arabia.

Methods: It is a 4-months cross-section survey of the stress factors impact of pharmacy technician job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. The study consisted of 35 questions divided into two-part demographic information and the second part consisted of three parts. Part one was about stress-related factors of pharmacy job. Part two included the questions about pharmacy services units of pharmacy job. Part three questions about communication and relationships factors of pharmacy technician job and overall job satisfaction. The questionnaire was made as an electronic format and it was analyzed through survey monkey system about part one that was about stress-related factors of pharmacy technician job. **Results:** The total responders were 96. The gender distribution 83 (86.46%) were males and 13 (13.54%) were females. The majority of them 86 (89.58%) were in age group (20-39 years). The average pharmacy technician satisfaction score of pharmacy management policies factors was (3.61), personal pharmacy time was (3.14) and salary and benefits were (2.51). The average score of pharmacy stress factors were (4.03) and the overall job satisfaction was (3.62). The most pharmacy technician motivation factors found were the financial reward and salary advancement was 84 (89.36%) and the flexibility in work scheduling was 63 (67.02%) followed by the Funds to support additional education and training 61 (64.89%) and the time needed for education and training was 61 (64.89%). **Conclusion:** There are high job stress factors with inadequate pharmacy salary affected negatively pharmacy technician satisfaction in the pharmacy practice. Those factors very essential related motivation factors on pharmacy technician at healthcare institution in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Stress, Factors, Job, Satisfaction, pharmacy technician, personal, Saudi Arabia.

INTRODUCTION

The pharmacy technicians is a significant part of pharmacy staff and healthcare professionals at healthcare institutions.¹ They need education and training to fulfill the job requirements.² The general administration of pharmaceuticals during pharmacy strategic plan founded on a job training program for new Pharmacy technicians joining hospitals at the Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.³ The program aimed to improve pharmacy technician's skills and prepare the new employees to start their jobs at the hospitals. Besides, the Pharmacy administration released local or international scholarship for all pharmacy technicians to complete their education to be pharmacists or gaining a master or Doctor of Philosophy in different pharmacy specialties. The education and training program were one of the significant aspects of motivation factor and improved job satisfaction. Several studies explore the stress job factors with employee satisfaction for pharmacist.³⁻⁹ Few investigations have been done about pharmacy technicians.¹⁰⁻¹³ The authors based on their best knowledge, there is no evidence of stress factors with pharmacy technicians job satisfaction in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia or Gulf and Middle East countries. The goal of the study was to explore stress factors affecting pharmacy technician's job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia.

METHODS

It is a 4 months cross-section survey of the stress factors impacting pharmacy technician job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. The study consisted of 35 questions divided into two-part demographic information and the second part consisted of three parts. Part one was about stress-related factors of pharmacy job. It included pharmacy management policies, pharmacy stress factors, pharmacy personal time, salary and benefits, pharmacy motivation factors. Part two included the questions about pharmacy services units of pharmacy job. It included pharmacy management structure, dispensing and patient education, clinical pharmacy services, pharmacy technology, pharmacy store and overall job satisfaction. Part three questions were about communication and relationships factors of pharmacy technician job. It included pharmacy supervisors, relationship with coworkers and pharmacist interaction with other healthcare providers, customer interaction and overall job satisfaction. The 5-point Likert response scale system closed ended questions were used. Several factors were involved in the analysis of pharmacy technician's job satisfaction (gender, age, social status, experiences current position, salary). The questionnaire was made as an electronic format and it was analyzed through survey monkey system about part one that was about stress-related factors of pharmacy technician job.

RESULTS

The total responders were 96. Of those 96 (100%) was Saudi and 0 (0%) was non-Saudi. The gender distribution 83 (86.46%) were males and 13 (13.54%) were females. The majority of them 86 (89.58%) were in age group (20-39 years). The most of pharmacy technicians were married 67 (74.44%) while 23 (25.56%) were singles (Table 1). In the age group (30-39 years) more male gender than age (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in age group (20-30 years) more female gender than the male with significant differences ($p<0.05$). In the age group (30-39 years) more marriage than single status (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in age group (20-30 years) more single than marriage status with significant differences ($p<0.05$).

Most of the pharmacy technicians worked at outpatient pharmacy 50 (59.52%) than inpatient pharmacy 24 (28.57%). In all age group categories, there are no significant differences between all categories at current pharmacy works ($p>0.5$). Most of the responders spent less than three years were 28 (29.17%) three years, followed by six to ten years 26 (27.08%) and three to five years 24 (25.00%) and worked in the current position. In the age group (30-39 years) more total years of experience ($p>6$ years) in the current position than age (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in age group (20-30 years) more total years of experience (<3 years) than age group (30-39 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$).

While most of the responders receive 7,000-9,000 SR monthly salary 45 (47.87%) and 10,000-12,000 SR monthly salary 32 (34.04%) (Table 2). In the age group (30-39 years) more salary (10,000 and above SR

than age (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in age (20-30 years) more salary (7,000-9,000 SR) than age (30-39 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). In salary income (10,000-12,000 SR) more marriage than salary income (7,000-9,000 SR) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in the salary income (7,000-9,000 SR) more singular than salary income (10,000-12,000 SR) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). In salary income (10,000-12,000 SR) more working at the primary care center and continue to stay in the Pharmacy field than salary income (7,000-9,000 SR) with significant differences ($p<0.05$).

The most of responders worked at Ministry of health 48 (50%) followed by MOH government Hospital 24 (25.00%) and private Hospital 16 (16.67%). In the age group (30-39 years) more working at MOH than MOH hospitals (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in age (20-30 years) more MOH hospitals than MOH with significant differences ($p<0.05$). The responders worked at (<50 beds) hospitals 14 (20.00%) followed by (100-199 beds) 13 (18.57%) and (200-299 beds) hospitals 11 (15.71%) and the most hospitals accredited by Saudi Commission for Health Specialties 44 (57.14%) followed by Saudi Central Board for Accreditation of Healthcare Institutions (CBAHI) 24 (31.17%) and Joint commission of hospital accreditations USA 9 (11.69%) (Table 3). In all age categories, there are no significant differences between all categories at hospital bed capacity ($p>0.5$). The finding showed for gender factor there are no significant differences between male or female and social status (married or single), experiences of current position and most of salary income factors for all communication parameters ($p>0.5$).

The average pharmacy technician satisfaction score of pharmacy management policies factors was (3.61), In the age group (30-39 years) more strongly agree in free how to work, have excessive work, had a shortage of staff than age (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). While in age group (20-30 years) more disagree in the flexible schedule than age group (30-39 years) in the flexible schedule or working in the weekend with significant differences ($p<0.05$). Otherwise, in all age categories, there are no significant differences between all categories at pharmacy management policy satisfaction elements ($p>0.5$). In the personal pharmacy time was (3.14), In the age group (30-39 years) more strongly disagree in had time for medical education, more disagree in had time for rest, more agree with had effective in changing therapy than age group (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). In the salary and benefits were (2.51), in all age categories, there are no significant differences between all categories with salary and benefits satisfaction elements ($p>0.5$) (Table 4). The average score of pharmacy stress factors were (4.03), in the age group (30-39 years) more agree in high workload negatively affected the mental and emotional health, strongly agree in high workload negatively affected qualify of pharmacy work than age group (20-30 years) with significant differences ($p<0.05$). And the overall job satisfaction was (3.62), in all age categories, there are no significant differences between all categories at overall job satisfaction elements ($p>0.5$) (Table 5). Most of the pharmacy technician motivation factors found were the financial reward and salary advancement was 84 (89.36%) and the flexibility in work scheduling was 63 (67.02%) followed by the funds to support additional education and training 61 (64.89%) and the time needed for education and training was 61 (64.89%) (Table 6). The finding showed for gender factor there are no significant differences between male or female and social status married or single, experiences of current position and most of salary income for all stress related elements ($p>0.5$). In all factors including all age group categories, gender, age, social status, experiences current position, salary, there are no significant differences between all factors and the method of motivations elements ($p>0.5$).

Table 1: Demographic social information.

Nationality	Response Count	Response Percent
Saudi	95	100.00%
Non- Saudi	0	0.00%
Answered question	95	
Skipped question	1	
Gender	Response Count	Response Percent
Male	83	86.46%
Female	13	13.54%
Answered question	96	
Skipped question	0	
Age	Response Count	Response Percent
<19	0	0.00%
20-29	36	37.50%
30-39	50	52.08%
40-49	10	10.42%
50-59	0	0.00%
>60	0	0.00%
Answered question	96	
Skipped question	0	
Marital status	Response Count	Response Percent
Single	23	25.56%
Married	67	74.44%
Other (please specify)	0	0.00%
Answered question	90	
Skipped question	6	

Table 2: Demographic responder qualifications information.

The practice area	Response Count	Response Percent
Inpatient Pharmacy	24	28.57%
Outpatient Pharmacy	50	59.52%
Narcotics	1	1.19%
Extemporaneous Preparation	1	1.19%
Inventory Control	0	0.00%
Emergency pharmacy	4	4.76%
Drug Information	0	0.00%
All (All previous sections)	2	2.38%
PCC pharmacy	2	2.38%
Pharmacy licensees	1	1.19%
Answered question	84	
Skipped question	12	
Total years you worked in current position	Response Count	Response Percent
<3	28	29.17%
3-5	24	25.00%
6-10	26	27.08%
11-15	6	6.25%
> 15	12	12.50%
Answered question	96	
Skipped question	0	
Monthly income	Response Count	Response Percent
<6.000	2	2.13%
7.000 - 9.000	45	47.87%
10.000 - 12.000	32	34.04%
14,000 - 16,000	9	9.57%
18,000 - 20,000	5	5.32%
>25.000	1	1.06%
Answered question	94	
Skipped question	2	

Table 3: Demographic hospital information.

Sector of work	Response Count	Response Percent
Ministry of Health	48	50.00%
General Medical Directorate in Region	2	2.08%
MOH government Hospital	24	25.00%
Non- MOH government Hospital	5	5.21%
MOH-Primary Care Center	1	1.04%
Private Hospital	16	16.67%
Community pharmacy	0	0.00%
Other (please specify)	0	0.00%
Answered question	96	
Skipped question	0	
Number of beds at your hospital	Response Count	Response Percent
< 50	14	20.00%
50-99	6	8.57%
100-199	13	18.57%
200-299	11	15.71%
300-399	9	12.86%
400-499	5	7.14%
500-599	4	5.71%
= or > 600	2	2.86%
Medical City	6	8.57%
Answered question	70	
Skipped question	26	
The hospital accreditation	Response Count	Response Percent
CBAHI	24	31.17%
Joint Commotion USA	9	11.69%
Canada	0	0.00%
Saudi commission of health accreditation	44	57.14%
Answered question	77	
Skipped question	19	

DISCUSSION

Pharmacy technician human resources was part of the pharmacy strategic plan.^{14,15} The key performance indicators (KPI) were founded with the plan to monitor the implantation of the pharmacy services at all healthcare institution at Ministry of Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. One of the effective KPI was pharmacy job satisfaction including pharmacy technicians. In the current study part of the plan implementation of the KPI. This paper reports on the levels of job satisfaction among pharmacy technician in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as the likely causes of stress and job pressure and low job gratification in this group. The findings of the study showed the pharmacy management policies are not acceptable. That is related to high workload with inadequate staff and the environmental working conditions is not appropriate, similar finding was observed with previous study with pharmacists.⁷ The working environment has direct impact on the working

staff. The facilities arrangement and the smooth workflow in the working environment preferred among working staff especially in heavy workload stations, that will give the chance for the working staff to be more vigilant which is required when we deal with medications. Also working in well-designed environment meet all the demands according to the updated recommendation and standards of the pharmacy practice which will increase the proper communication between the working staff and patients. Those factors may affect negatively on pharmacy technicians job satisfaction. The pharmacy technician's time is not adequate that is related to the unavailable time to medical education or take a break during duty. The pharmacy technicians satisfaction on the salary was poor, which the lowest factor affect the pharmacy technicians job satisfaction similar to previous studies.¹⁰ That is related to the payment is to meet the heavy workload in practice, the pharmacy technicians not satisfied with their salary and sometimes the salary is not equal to other organizations. The pharmacy technician's job stress factors were very high. The most

Table 4: The pharmacy technician satisfaction of management policies, Personal time and Salary and benefits.

	Overall management policies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	I am allowed a sufficient amount of freedom to decide how I do my work.	20	26	32	9	8	3.43	95
2	My workload is excessive.	50	25	13	8	0	4.22	96
3	Staffing is inadequate; not enough employees are hired to cover the workload.	54	21	14	5	2	4.25	96
4	The management, in scheduling work hours at my place of employment, takes into account individual employee needs and preferences.	10	31	26	17	11	3.13	95
5	I work too many weekend and holiday hours	11	25	32	21	7	3.13	96
6	My environmental working conditions (lighting, air conditioning, heating, bathroom facilities, ventilation, noise level, etc.) are poor.	27	27	16	16	10	3.47	96
	Average						3.61	
Answered question 96, Skipped question 0								
	Personal time and related issues	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	I have the time to focus on continuing education and maintain my professional competence	9	16	17	23	29	2.50	94
2	I have the time to take breaks during the day.	3	22	20	27	23	2.53	95
3	My work has a significant contribution to the successful operation of my organization.	15	32	33	10	5	3.44	95
4	I am able to positively influence patient drug therapy.	19	51	23	2	0	3.92	95
5	Compared with the respect shown to other health professionals, patients and customers show pharmacists an appropriate amount of respect.	11	39	24	12	9	3.33	95
	Average						3.14	
Answered question 95, Skipped question 1								
	Salary and benefits	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	Considering the kind of work I do and the amount of responsibility I have, my pay is about right.	4	14	16	34	28	2.29	96
2	My salary is equivalent to the salary of persons holding similar positions in other organizations.	7	24	23	26	16	2.79	96
3	I am satisfied with my salary.	6	12	24	29	24	2.44	96
	Average						2.51	
Answered question 96, Skipped question 0								

stress factors were the number of very high prescriptions and the stress affected the Job through mental and emotional health. That is expected from the previous question with very high workload hours and may contribute to dissatisfaction, that's similar pharmacy job satisfaction.⁸ All previous reasons may affect pharmacist job satisfaction positively if corrected.¹³ Most pharmacy technicians motivations were increased the financial reward similar to the previous pharmacist study,¹⁶ and they need the flexibility of the working schedule. Besides, pharmacy technicians need more time to continue their post-graduate education and regular medical education to renew their license and improve job satisfaction and similar to previous studies.^{10,11} All those factors demand to raise the pharmacy technician's job satisfaction

CONCLUSION

The pharmacy technician's job satisfaction was affected with several factors, including excess workload, financial rewards and postgraduate education that did not exist. Targeting to correct the stress factors will raise pharmacy technician's job satisfaction 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 pharmacy technicians stress factors and overall job satisfactions.

	Pharmacy stress factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	The number of hours I work is excessive.	30	37	21	6	1	3.94	95
2	The number of prescriptions per day is excessive.	53	24	16	1	1	4.34	95
3	The stress associated with my job has adversely affected my mental or emotional health and well-being.	48	23	17	6	1	4.17	95
4	The stress associated with my job has adversely affected the quality of the work that I do.	36	24	21	11	3	3.83	95
5	The stress associated with my job has adversely affected my relationships with friends and those close to me.	31	36	16	10	2	3.88	95
	Average						4.03	
Answered question 95, Skipped question 1								
	Overall job satisfaction	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1	I find challenge in my work.	33	37	15	11	0	3.96	96
2	Knowing what I know now, if I had to decide all over again whether to go into pharmacy, I would choose another field.	25	14	12	26	19	3.0	96
3	If I were free to pursue any type of career I wanted, I would stay in pharmacy.	32	35	20	5	4	3.9	96
	Average						3.62	
Answered question 96, Skipped question 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; **KPI:** Key Performance Indicators.

Table 6: The pharmacy technician's motivations factors.

Suggest methods for motivating Pharmacy technicians' practitioners	Response Count	Response Percent
Financial rewards, salary advancements	84	89.36%
More favorable schedule	54	57.45%
Increased autonomy in the workday	33	35.11%
Flexibility in scheduling	63	67.02%
Funds to support additional education and training	61	64.89%
Time off to achieve additional education and training	61	64.89%
Opportunity for advancement to pharmacy management	35	37.23%
Opportunity to teach/mentor pharmacy students and residents	35	37.23%
Chances of promotion	44	46.81%
Other (please specify)	15	15.96%
Answered question	94	
Skipped question	2	

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