



THE CURRENT SCENARIO AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE PHARMACY PROFESSION IN INDIA

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Abstract:

The field of pharmacy is an essential component of any country's healthcare infrastructure across the globe. A pharmacy that has a practice that is well-organized may go a long way toward ensuring that the patient receives high-quality medical treatment. In years gone by, pharmacists were solely responsible for the distribution of various drugs. The traditional function of pharmacists is gradually being expanded, and nowadays, pharmacists are increasingly playing an important part in the direct treatment that is provided to patients. This is particularly true with the current generation of pharmacists who have earned their Pharm. D degrees. Pharmacists play a significant part in the delivery of healthcare services by means of community pharmacy services in rural areas that either lack access to physicians or have access to physicians whose services are prohibitively expensive for the purpose of meeting the basic healthcare requirements. There are still a lot of changes that need to be made before Indian pharmacists will be happier in their jobs. Some of these changes include higher salaries, more job opportunities in government offices, recognition of pharmacists as professionals in the health care field, and modifications to the Pharm. D and pharmacy curriculum. This research examines the present problems facing the profession of pharmacy in India and offers various ideas to increase work satisfaction among pharmacists in India.

Keywords: Pharmacy, satisfaction, India, recommendations

Introduction:

Patient care, medication research and development, production, and distribution are just few of the responsibilities that fall within the purview of the pharmacy profession in India, which plays an important part in the nation's overall healthcare system. The profession, which has a long and illustrious history, has developed over the years in order to adapt to the changing requirements of

patient care as a result of population growth.

Pharmacists are vitally important members of the healthcare community because they oversee the proper and secure administration of pharmaceuticals, educate patients, and play an important role in the prevention and treatment of illness. They collaborate closely with other healthcare practitioners, such as doctors, nurses, and

specialists in allied health, in order to get the best possible results for their patients.

In India, the profession of pharmacy is regulated by a number of different governing organizations, including the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) and the state pharmacy councils. State pharmacy councils are responsible for regulating the profession on a regional level, while the PCI is responsible for establishing standards for pharmacy education, registration, and practice. These organizations are very important to the process of ensuring that pharmacists operate in a competent and ethical manner.

An education in pharmacy in India normally consists of two degrees: a Bachelor of Pharmacy, or B.Pharm, degree, which is concentrated on pharmaceutical sciences, and a Master of Pharmacy, or M.Pharm, degree, which offers specific knowledge in a variety of fields of pharmacy practice. In recent years, a new programme known as the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree has emerged with the goals of providing pharmacists with enhanced clinical training and preparing them for professions that include direct patient care. The field of pharmacy in India is struggling with a number of issues, including a lack of competent pharmacists and an insufficient ratio of pharmacists to the country's total population. Because of the shortage of pharmacists, their availability is restricted, which in turn

hinders their capacity to deliver all-encompassing pharmaceutical treatment. In addition, there is an absence of uniform education and training programmes across the nation, which results in variances in the quality of pharmacy education.

In addition, the scope of practice that pharmacists in India often have to deal with is frequently constrained, which results in their abilities and knowledge being underused. There has been a delay in realising pharmacists' full potential as important members of healthcare teams, which has resulted in wasted chances to improve the health of patients and the general public.

In the following sections of this review paper, we will discuss recent initiatives and developments, provide recommendations for advancement, and offer insights into the future outlook of the profession of pharmacy. In addition, we will investigate the current problems and obstacles that the pharmacy profession in India is dealing with at the present time. By addressing these issues, we want to throw light on the existing situation and give some ideas for developing the pharmacy profession in India so that it may better meet the healthcare requirements of the public.

Current Challenges and Issues:

The profession of pharmacy in India is confronted with a number of obstacles and issues that have an influence

on its capacity to successfully contribute to the provision of healthcare and patient care. It is crucial to have an understanding of these problems in order to identify areas for improvement and to execute adjustments that are required. The following are some of the most significant obstacles and concerns that the profession of pharmacy is now facing in India:

- Lack of qualified pharmacists and an insufficient pharmacist-to-population ratio: When compared to its total population, India has a much lower number of competent pharmacists than it should have. The ratio of pharmacists to the population is still rather low, which results in restricted access to pharmacy services in many different regions. This scarcity makes it difficult to provide pharmacological treatment and patient counseling, which is especially problematic in rural areas and other areas that are neglected.
- Due to a lack of education and training programmes that are standardised: The competency and abilities of pharmacists might vary greatly from one institution and university to another due to differences in the quality and subject matter of pharmacy education offered at each of these settings. It may be difficult for

pharmacists to advance their careers and keep up with changes in the healthcare industry if the curricular frameworks they are required to follow are inconsistent, they get insufficient hands-on training, and teaching practices are out of date.

- Insufficient recognition and integration of pharmacists in healthcare teams: Despite their competence in drug management, pharmacists are often underused in healthcare settings. One reason for this is insufficient acknowledgment and integration of pharmacists in healthcare teams. Because of insufficient acknowledgement of their position and contributions by other healthcare professionals and politicians, chances for collaborative patient care and inter professional cooperation may be overlooked.
- In India, the present scope of practice for pharmacists is often restricted to the distribution of various pharmaceuticals; as a result, the abilities that pharmacists possess are not used to their full potential. This limits their ability to participate in the administration of drug treatment, provide counseling to patients, and provide other professional services that might lead to better patient outcomes. It is

possible for pharmacists to make greater contributions to the delivery of healthcare if their scope of practice is broadened.

- Problems with quality control and regulations are common in the pharmaceutical sector. It is essential to the preservation of public health that pharmaceutical goods meet stringent standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness. However, India is struggling with issues relating to the production of fake medications, the distribution of low-quality medicine, and insufficient government oversight of the pharmaceutical business. In order to effectively address these difficulties, it will be necessary to implement solid regulatory frameworks, efficient monitoring systems, and collaborative efforts between regulatory agencies and pharmacists.

In order to effectively address these difficulties and problems, a variety of stakeholders—including regulatory agencies, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and policymakers—must work together. It is possible for the pharmacy profession in India to have a greater influence on patient care, to foster inter professional cooperation, and to contribute to improvements in health outcomes if the profession acknowledges

the problems it faces and works actively to address them.

Initiatives and Developments:

There have been important efforts and advancements in India that strive to solve the problems encountered by the pharmacy profession and advance the role of pharmacists, despite the fact that this country's pharmacists are up against a number of obstacles. These efforts have the ability to mould the profession of pharmacy in India into the future that it will become. The following are some of the most important efforts and developments:

- A brief overview of the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) curriculum includes the following: In order to give pharmacists with more advanced clinical training, India has begun offering a curriculum leading to a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. Care that is oriented on the patient, clinical pharmacy practice, and teamwork amongst professionals are emphasised throughout this curriculum. Graduates of the Doctor of Pharmacy programme are prepared with the information and abilities necessary to actively engage in direct patient care, the administration of drug treatment, and collaborative decision-making.

- Guidelines for the implementation of Good Pharmacy Practice, often known as GPP: In order to ensure that pharmacy is practiced in a consistent manner across India, the Pharmacy Council of India has developed standards for "Good Pharmacy Practice." The purpose of these recommendations is to improve the safety of patients, better the management of medications, and encourage professionalism among pharmacists. The Good Pharmacy Practice (GPP) recommendations include a variety of topics, including dispensing techniques, patient counseling, the storage and management of pharmaceuticals, and quality control.
- Expansion of clinical pharmacy services in healthcare settings: There is a growing acknowledgment of the importance and influence of clinical pharmacy services in improving patient outcomes. This has led to an expansion of clinical pharmacy services in healthcare settings. In healthcare settings such as hospitals, clinics, and primary care offices, multidisciplinary healthcare teams are increasingly include clinical pharmacists as members. They provide services such as medication education, drug information, and therapeutic monitoring in addition to medication reconciliation and medication education. This integration improves the safety of medications, maximizes the effectiveness of treatment, and encourages the responsible use of drugs.
- The use of technology and digital solutions in pharmacy practice The rapid development of technology has the potential to completely revolutionise pharmacy practice in India. E-prescribing, medication management applications, and electronic health records are examples of digital technologies that have the potential to increase drug adherence, expedite procedures connected to medicine, and better communication between patients and the healthcare practitioners that treat them. The use of technology into pharmacy practice may also make remote consultations, prescription reviews, and telepharmacy services more accessible, which is especially beneficial in underprivileged and rural regions.
- Collaboration between academic institutions, private businesses, and government regulators the advancement of the pharmacy profession in India is dependent

upon collaboration between academic institutions, the pharmaceutical industry, and government regulators. Partnerships between educational institutions and businesses have the potential to advance research and development, encourage innovation, and close the gap that exists between academic theory and real-world application. The promotion of ethical behaviours, conformity with quality standards, and an increase in patient safety may all be achieved via collaborative efforts with regulatory agencies.

The field of pharmacy in India is now experiencing a period of growth as a result of recent efforts and innovations. By welcoming new innovations, the profession will be able to develop to adapt to the shifting requirements of healthcare, broaden the area of practice, and increase the influence pharmacists have on the care they provide to patients. Maintaining support for these efforts, working together on them, and making investments in them are essential if one wants to see the pharmacy profession in India expand and flourish in a sustainable manner.

Recommendations for Advancement:

It is possible to take into consideration a number of suggestions in order to further advance the pharmacy profession in India

and optimise its potential influence on the delivery of healthcare and the results for patients. These proposals give direction for the development of the pharmacy profession by addressing important areas that need improvement and addressing major areas that need improvement. The following are some of the most important suggestions:

- It is critical to both standardise and improve pharmacy education and training programmes throughout the nation. At the same time, strengthening pharmacy education and training programmes is essential. This includes bringing the curriculum up to date so that it is in line with the most recent requirements for healthcare, incorporating more opportunities for hands-on training, encouraging research and developing skills in critical thinking, and fostering inter professional education in order to make collaborative practice easier.
- Enhancing patient counseling provided by pharmacists and medication therapy management. Pharmacists should be encouraged and given the authority to participate in patient counseling and medication therapy management in order to improve these services. This involves giving full medication evaluations, supporting drug adherence, making

suggestions on lifestyle and self-care, and responding to patients' concerns and questions about their medications. It may be possible to enhance patient outcomes by providing pharmacists with training that emphasises patient-centered care and better communication skills.

- Increasing the scope of practice for pharmacists It is vital to broaden the scope of practice for pharmacists if one want to make appropriate use of the skills they possess. This includes giving pharmacists the right to prescribe specific drugs, letting them request laboratory tests and allowing them to interpret the findings, and integrating pharmacists in collaborative illness management programmes. The creation of norms and procedures for advanced pharmacy services will make it easier for pharmacists to work in a variety of healthcare settings.
- Establishing collaborative practice models with other healthcare professionals is something that should be promoted. These collaborative practice models should be ones that foster inter professional cooperation. In order to do this, opportunities need to be created for pharmacists to collaborate closely with physicians,

nurses, and other medical professionals who provide care to patients on patient care teams. The development of shared care protocols, the implementation of medication reconciliation procedures, and the holding of frequent case talks are all ways in which healthcare professionals may improve their communication and cooperation with one another.

- Improving the effectiveness of regulatory procedures and maintaining high quality standards in the pharmaceutical industry: It is essential to improve regulatory procedures in order to guarantee the quality of pharmaceutical goods as well as their safety and effectiveness. This involves conducting thorough monitoring and inspections of production facilities, ensuring that quality control requirements are effectively enforced, and conducting exhaustive assessments of the safety of pharmaceutical products. It is possible for regulatory procedures to be enhanced via the use of collaboration between regulatory agencies, pharmacists, and other stakeholders in the pharmaceutical business.

To put these ideas into action, a variety of stakeholders—including regulatory agencies, educational

institutions, healthcare organisations, and policymakers—will need to work together. In addition, there should be a greater emphasis placed on continuing professional development programmes, which provide pharmacists with the opportunity to remain current on the most recent pharmaceutical developments and industry standards. By adhering to these guidelines, the profession of pharmacy in India will be able to overcome the obstacles it is now facing, extend its position in patient care, and greatly contribute to the improvement of healthcare outcomes for the population as a whole. These developments will eventually lead to an improvement in both the overall quality as well as the efficacy of India's healthcare system.

Conclusion:

In India, the field of pharmacy plays an important part in the provision of healthcare by assuring the proper, safe, and effective use of pharmaceuticals and by providing treatment that is focused on the patient. However, the profession is beset by a wide variety of difficulties and problems that prevent it from reaching its full potential. The pharmaceutical sector has a number of significant obstacles, some of the most significant of which include a restricted scope of practice, a limited number of competent pharmacists, a lack of standardised education and

training programmes, and a scarcity of skilled pharmacists.

Despite this, there have been some encouraging developments and efforts that try to solve these difficulties and enhance the profession of pharmacy in India. Promising steps toward enhancing the profession include the introduction of the Pharm.D. programme, the implementation of Good Pharmacy Practice guidelines, the expansion of clinical pharmacy services, the utilisation of technology in pharmacy practice, and collaboration between academia, industry, and regulatory authorities.

Several ideas have been put up in the hopes of bringing about additional advancements in the field of pharmacy in India. Among these recommendations are a strengthening of pharmacy education and training programmes, an improvement in pharmacist-patient counseling and medication therapy management, an expansion of the scope of practice for pharmacists, the establishment of collaborative practice models, and an enhancement of regulatory mechanisms and quality control in the pharmaceutical industry.

It is possible for the pharmacy profession in India to overcome the problems that are now present and further maximize the contributions that it makes to healthcare if it accepts these suggestions and implements the required reforms. It is very necessary for regulatory agencies,

educational institutions, healthcare organizations, and legislators to work together in order for these proposals to be successfully implemented.

The future of the pharmacy profession in India contains a tremendous amount of promise to revolutionize patient care, enhance the safety of pharmaceutical use, and make a significant contribution to improved health outcomes. It is possible for the pharmacy profession in India to emerge more powerful, more prepared, and able to address the increasing healthcare demands of the people if ongoing support and investment are provided, as well as if a collaborative approach is used.

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