

An Essay on Inadequacy of Time as a Barrier to Research Activities in Academic Pharmacy

Academic Pharmacy refers to the field of Pharmacy dedicated to educate, train, assess and develop pharmacy students. The competence of Pharmacists lay at the feet of Academic Pharmacists, a function that directly and positively impacts public health. Academic Pharmacists are often expected to fulfil the roles of teaching (didactic and experiential), conducting research and offering university or community service. This essay focuses on the research role of Academic Pharmacy highlighting how scarcity of time impacts faculty research output and suggesting potential solutions. By virtue of having multiple competing responsibilities faculty members are often unable to achieve a balance that makes it possible to consistently produce scholarly work. Literature demonstrates an inverse relationship between a heavy teaching or clinical workload with scholarly output among Academic Pharmacy Practitioners. Additionally, a faculty's evaluation for career progression is often tied to his/her research productivity. With little time guaranteed to conduct research, career stagnation, frustration and high faculty turnover is imminent. Variation in institutional values and priorities contributes to disparities in research output of faculty in different Pharmacy Schools. The availability of resources, for example revenue streams, for institutions underlie the variations in values and priorities and hence research output. Faculty shortage further exacerbates time inadequacy for faculty research initiatives. In the background of a high demand of the Pharmacy degree Schools of Pharmacy have to contend with larger class sizes and increased teaching workloads. To facilitate optimal faculty scholarly output there is a need to find a match between institutional goals and resource allocation. This should include career progression assessment metrics that take into account the time that is available for scholarship and the corresponding requirement for promotions. Furthermore, School of Pharmacy and university administrators are urged to support scholarship activity by defining and offering protected time for scholarship activities.

Key words

research output, faculty, pharmacy education

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Track Classification: Nutrition, Food Safety, Medical Education & Policy in Healthcare