Developing Empirically Guided Leadership Curricula for Practicing Pharmacists through Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Elizabeth J. Unni, PhD, Abraham M. Jeger, PhD , Rodina Abdelhady, PharmD Candidate
Department of Social, Behavioral, and Administrative Sciences, Touro College of Pharmacy, NY

Take Away Points

Customized needs assessment is a useful tool to guide data-informed decisions in both content and delivery of leadership curricula for practicing pharmacists.

Further studies are needed to fine tune the leadership training needs of the diverse learner populations.

Introduction: The Context

- Pharmacy literature demonstrates:
  - A dearth of leadership training among practicing pharmacists
  - Lack of research on practicing pharmacists' self-assessment of their leadership training needs
  - Fear of seeking leadership positions due to its impact on work-life balance and factors related to perceived professional competence
  - Community pharmacists not having adequate opportunities to develop leadership skills, unlike their counterparts in healthcare systems

- Empirically informed decisions are needed to develop content and delivery of leadership curricula for practicing pharmacists

GOAL
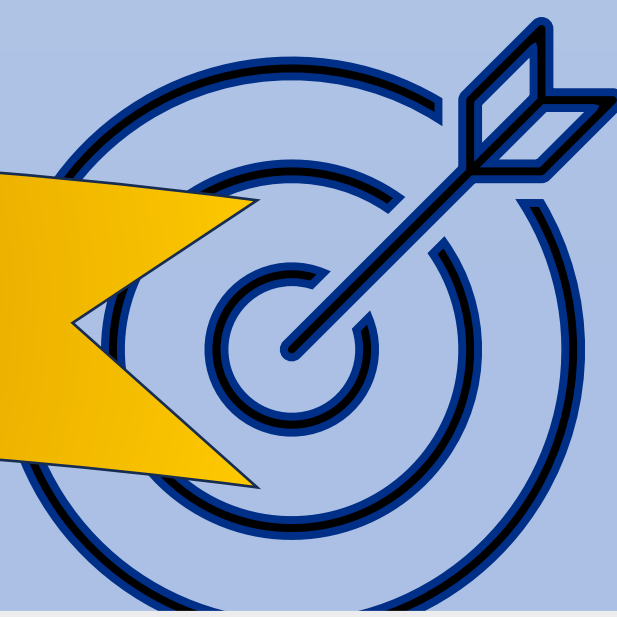
To develop empirically-informed guidelines to drive content development and delivery of leadership curricula for practicing pharmacists.

Correspondence

Please address inquiries to:
Elizabeth Unni, PhD
elizabeth.unni@touro.edu

Methods

Leadership Needs Assessment Survey

- Survey invitations sent to 9,436 registered pharmacists selected randomly from New York State through Qualtrics in 2022
- A screening question was used to identify community and healthcare system pharmacists
- Of the 511 respondents who clicked the link, 152 pharmacists completed the entire survey
- 18 leadership domains were operationally defined, and pharmacists were asked to:
  - Rate their priority in training needs for each domain on a 4-point scale ranging from "not a priority" to "high priority"
  - Rate their perceived level of confidence on a 5-point scale ranging from "not at all confident" to "extremely confident."
- Pharmacists were also asked to indicate:
  - Barriers to seeking leadership
  - Interest in obtaining leadership training
  - Preferred mode of delivery of leadership curricula, if interested in training
  - Professional demographics

Resources

1. Bachynsky JA, Tindall WN. It's time for more pharmacy leadership from within. *Can Pharm J (Ott).* 2018; 151(6):388-394.
2. Desselle SP, et al. Technicians' perception of pharmacist leadership behavior on their own commitment and turnover intention. *Am J Health-System Pharm.* 2022; 79(24): 2244-2452
3. Holdford DA. Leadership for pharmacists: Facilitating change in pharmacy practice. Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA. 2018.
4. New York State Department of Education, 2022. Pharmacists. https://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/pharm/pharmcounts.htm
5. Santibanez M, Sedlacek J, Parmar J. Perceptions regarding training across four domains of pharmacy practice: A survey of new pharmacist practitioners. *J Am Coll Clin Pharm.* 2021; 4:622–630.
6. Shay B, Weber RJ. Assuming a pharmacy organization leadership position: a guide for pharmacy leaders. *Hosp Pharm.* 2015; 50(11):1051–1056.
7. Shikaze D, Arabi M, Gregory P, Austin Z. Community pharmacists' attitudes, opinions and beliefs about leadership in the profession: An exploratory study. *Can Pharm J (Ott).* 2018; 51(5):315-321.
8. Steeb DR, Ramaswamy R. Recognizing and engaging pharmacists in global public health in limited resource settings. *J Glob Health.* 2019; 9(1):010318.
9. Trevick S, Kim M, Naidech A. Communication, Leadership, and Decision-Making in the Neuro-ICU. *Curr Neurol Neurosci Rep.* 2016; 16 (11): Article 99
10. Tyusuki R. A leadership crisis in pharmacy. *Can Pharm J (Ott). 2019;* 152 (1):6-7
11. White SJ, Enright SM. Will there be a pharmacy leadership crisis? An ASHP Foundation Scholar-in-Residence report. *Am J Health-System Pharm.* 2005; 62 (8): 845–855.

Leadership Domains

- Self-Awareness
- Communication Skills
- Positive Relationships
- Decision Making
- Emotional Intelligence
- Negotiation Skills
- Work-Life Balance
- Sensitivity
- Feedback Provision
- Mentoring & Coaching
- Employee Motivation
- Conflict Management
- Strategic Planning
- Delegation
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Ethics
- Unconscious Bias Recognition
- Advocacy

Results

More than half the respondents (53.9%) were **female; 75.7%** were employed full-time; 67.1% had >**15 years** of experience and 54.6% worked in a **community pharmacy.**

Two-thirds (68.4%) of the respondents reported having a "leadership role". However, **43.8%** indicated no leadership training. Those that did receive formal training rated its effectiveness as **"moderate"** (38.5%) or **"very effective"** (30.8%).

Major **barriers** to pursuing leadership roles included lack of time, interest, employer support, and skills/knowledge.

For mode of training, 30.2% preferred **online modalities**, and 28.9% preferred a **"mix"** of in-person/online education.

Of the 18 leadership domains, **14 were rated as predominantly "high priority"**, with the other 4 receiving "moderate priority" ratings.

Results

Table 1: Priority Rating for leadership training needs		
Domain	Mean (Scale of 1-4)	Standard Deviation
Communication	3.52	0.800
Conflict Management	3.39	0.802
Providing Feedback	3.38	0.759
Motivating Employees	3.37	0.834
Decision Making	3.37	0.858
Mentoring and Coaching	3.26	0.882
Positive Relationship	3.26	0.905
Strategic Planning	3.26	0.842
Negotiation Skills	3.24	0.757
Ethical Practices	3.24	0.903
Advocacy	3.24	0.860
Task Delegation	3.23	0.872
Work-Life Balance	3.19	0.863
Emotional Intelligence	3.19	0.782
Unconscious Biases	3.17	0.839
Sensitivity	3.15	0.828
Diversity and Inclusion	3.06	0.918
Self Awareness	2.99	0.837

Table 2: Perceived level of confidence in the leadership domains		
Domain	Mean (Scale of 1-5)	Standard Deviation
Ethics	4.40	0.804
Positive Relationship	4.19	0.911
Decision Making	4.09	0.854
Diversity and Inclusion	4.07	0.934
Self-Awareness	4.03	0.830
Emotional Intelligence	4.01	0.897
Sensitivity	4.01	0.912
Communication	3.99	0.979
Delegation	3.97	1.016
Feedback Provision	3.93	1.015
Mentoring and Coaching	3.93	1.011
Advocacy	3.91	1.035
Motivating Employees	3.86	0.993
Work-Life Balance	3.85	1.038
Negotiation Skills	3.78	1.064
Strategic Planning	3.78	1.027
Unconscious Biases	3.74	1.008
Conflict Management	3.71	1.123