

# Assessing the Knowledge and Attitude of Pharmacy Students Regarding Human Resource Management

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## Background

- Human resource management (HRM) is "the process of employing people, training them, compensating them, developing policies relating to them, and developing strategies to retain them."<sup>1</sup>
- Domain 2.2 of the CAPE Educational Outcomes outlines that ‘Medication use systems management (Manager)’ students will learn to “*manage patient healthcare needs using human, financial, technological, and physical resources to optimize the safety and efficacy of medication use systems.*”<sup>3</sup>
- AACP Curriculum Outcomes and Entrustable Professional Activities (COEPA) 2022 sub-domain#2.6 emphasize that pharmacists should “optimize patient healthcare outcomes using human, financial, technological, and physical resources to improve the safety, efficacy, and environmental impact of medication use systems.”<sup>4</sup>
- HRM competency is one of the most fundamental skills for pharmacists since several problem faced by pharmacy organizations and their solutions comes down to questions related to its workforce.
- Equipping pharmacists with effective HRM skills is critical to providing high-quality healthcare.

## Purpose

To assess pharmacy students' knowledge and attitudes toward HRM and to identify the factors that influence their attitudes toward this topic.

## Design and Methods

- Course Information**
  - Catalog description “*Human Resource Management is designed to equip students with essential personnel management and leadership skills necessary for practice in various pharmacy settings.*”
  - The “Human Resource Management for Pharmacists” course is a required 3-credit-hour course that meets twice a week for a total of 3 hours.
  - The course is taught in the third professional year of the didactic coursework.
- A pre/post survey was administered to the students enrolled in the course during the Fall semester 2022
- Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired t-tests.

## Results

Table 1. Topics and Major Assessments

Module #	Topic	Major assessments (excluding quizzes and exams)
1	Organizational Structure and Behavior	-
2	Human Resource Strategy and Planning in Pharmacy	-
3	Human Resource Management Practices for Quality and Patient Safety	-
4	Workforce Diversity	-
5	Employment Law and Workplace Safety	-
6	Successful Recruitment and Hiring Strategies	-
7	Conflict and Negotiation	-
8	Job Design and Analysis	-
9	Covey Time Management & Burnout Prevention	-
10	Emotional Intelligence and Human Resources	Self-reflecting on emotional intelligence; IPPE self-reflection
11	Effective Communication in Human Resource Management	-
12-16	Lean Concepts in Human Resources	Lean project report; Lean project journal activities; Lean project presentation
17	Expert Panel “Lessons Learned in Human Resource Management	Reflective writing
18	Managing Pharmacy Human Resources through Emergency and Disaster	-
19	Performance Management Systems in Pharmacy Organizations	-
20	Addressing Human Resources in Pharmacy Residency	-

Figure 1. Rating of Course Activities

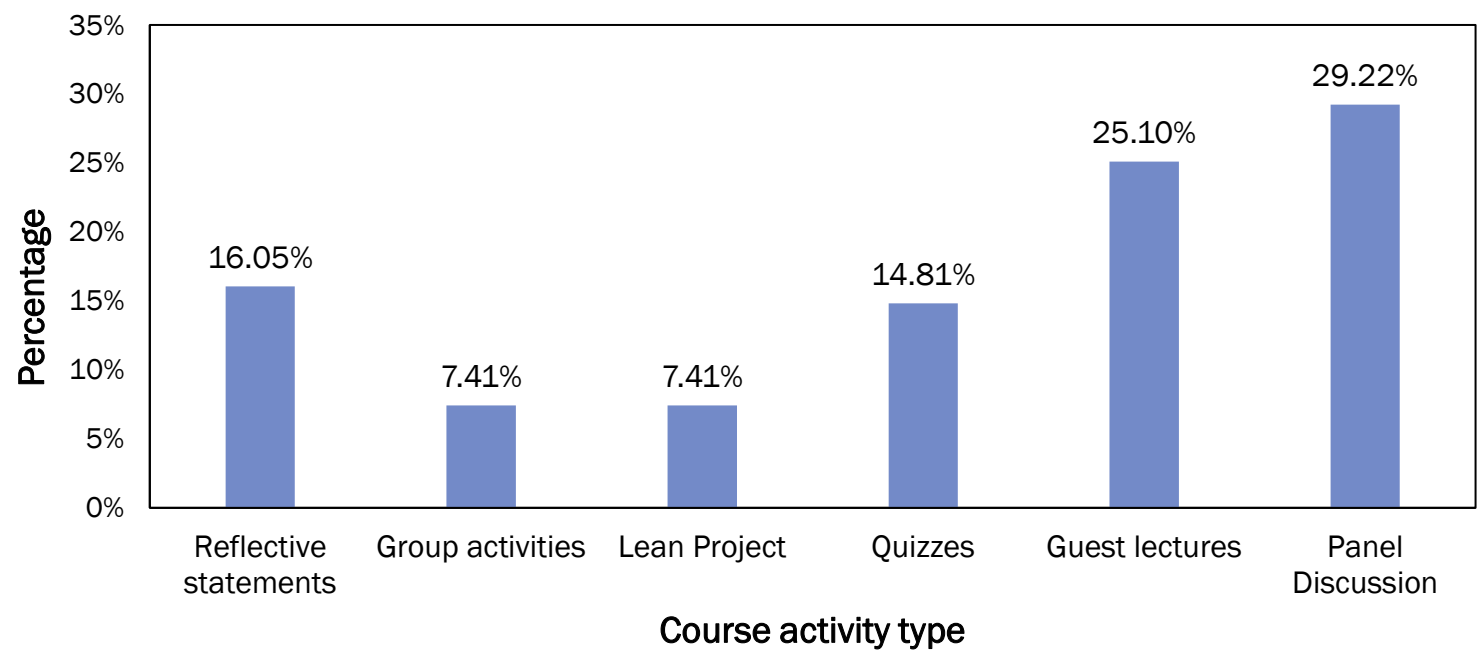


Table 4. Students’ Attitudes Toward HRM at the End of the Course (N=98)

Statement	Response, n (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I am willing to learn more about HRM in pharmacy school	15 (15.31%)	47 (47.96%)	25 (25.51%)	6 (6.12%)	5 (5.1%)
2. I will keep updated about HRM after completing the course	16 (16.33%)	59 (60.2%)	16 (16.33%)	6 (6.12%)	1 (1.02%)
3. HRM is an important topic to learn in the pharmacy school	28 (28.57%)	53 (54.08%)	10 (10.2%)	4 (4.08%)	3 (3.06%)

Table 2. Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N=98)

Variables	Frequency (%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	62 (63.27)
Male	36 (36.73)
<b>Years of any kind of work experience</b>	
Less than 1 year	3 (3.06)
1 – 3 years	23 (23.47)
4 – 7 years	52 (53.06)
8 years or more	20 (20.41)
<b>Years of pharmacy work experience</b>	
Less than 1 year	17 (17.35)
1 – 3 years	47 (47.96)
4 years or more	34 (34.96)
<b>Managerial or supervisory experience</b>	
Yes	16 (16.33)
No	82 (83.67)
<b>Postgraduate plans</b>	
Hospital pharmacy	35 (35.71)
Community pharmacy	33 (33.67)
Pharmaceutical industry	9 (9.18)
Others	7 (7.14)
Undecided	14 (14.29)

Table 3. Pre and Post Perceived Knowledge in HRM (N=98)

HRM knowledge components	Pre-course Mean (SD)	Post-course Mean (SD)	P value ‡
Organizational Structure and Behavior	2.27 (0.95)	3.7 (0.84)	*
Strategic Human Resource Planning	2.16 (0.96)	3.75 (0.80)	*
Workforce Diversity	3.19 (1.07)	4.15 (0.80)	*
Human Resource Laws and Regulations	2.17 (0.95)	3.97 (0.83)	*
Job Design and Analysis	2.28 (0.99)	3.8 (0.87)	*
Recruitment and Hiring Strategies	2.59 (1.00)	4.09 (0.77)	*
Conflict Resolution in Human Resources	2.76 (0.96)	4.12 (0.82)	*
Human Resource Communications	2.47 (1.04)	3.81 (0.88)	*
Managing Human Resources through Emergency and Disaster	1.98 (1.02)	3.58 (0.97)	*
Performance Management Systems	2.08 (1.11)	3.65 (0.94)	*
Emotional Intelligence	3.04 (1.09)	4.2 (0.82)	*
Burnout Prevention	2.77 (1.08)	3.97 (0.86)	*
Lean Concepts in Human Resources	1.46 (0.86)	3.59 (1.02)	*

‡ Significance in the difference between pre-and post-course knowledge; \* p < 0.01.

## Results (Con.t)

- Knowledge on all 13 course topics significantly increased by the end of the course (Table 3).
- Most students strongly agreed or agreed that
- ‘**Global and cultural effectiveness**’ was the highest ranked competency “
  - Global and cultural effectiveness comprises the knowledge and skills pharmacy students need to be successful in today’s interconnected and culturally diverse society and to fully engage in and act on issues of global significance.”
- Most students (n=52; 53.06%) indicated that they primarily expect to receive HRM training through conferences, workshops, and/or seminars.

## Discussion

- No previous studies has assessed the extent of HRM education in United States colleges and schools of pharmacy.
- The COVID-19 pandemic drove pharmacy organizations to evaluate their HRM strategies.
  - HRM issues addressed as part of a pharmacy department response to COVID-19 were<sup>5</sup>
    - crisis management, internal communications, employee stress, reorganization of workspaces, reorganization of pharmacist workforce, telework, and schedule management.
- HRM topics related to pharmacist workload, burnout, and well-being, and their effect on patient safety are increasingly discussed in the pharmacy curriculum.<sup>6,7</sup>
- Given the changes in pharmacy marketplace, the need for pharmacists to apply basic HRM concepts and skills in their practices will continue to grow.

## Conclusion

- HRM deals with an organization’s most important resource, which is its human capital, and is therefore vital to the smooth running of a pharmacy organization.
- Formalized HRM training for students aspiring to be in managerial positions or in community pharmacy practice are also warranted.

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