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## Saudi pharmaceutical market and pharmacy education

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**Background:** The Saudi pharmaceutical market is the largest and fastest growing in the Middle East. The vast majority of the market is comprised of imports. There is an estimated need of more than 100,000 pharmacy graduates to cover all present sectors. The shortage of pharmacists has affected many of these sectors especially the pharmaceutical industry. It is not clear whether future Saudi pharmacists are willing to contribute to local pharmaco-industrial fields. This would be extremely beneficial and important for shaping the future of the drug industry within the kingdom.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional, questionnaire-based survey was conducted on all final-year pharmacy students in King Saud University (KSU), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

**Results:** Out of a total of 130 students registered in the final-year of the pharmacy program in KSU, 122 (93.8%) were able to complete the questionnaire. The results showed that the majority (83%) of Saudi pharmacy students indicated that they had not receive practical training in pharmaceutical companies, while only 17.2% of the students felt that they had the knowledge and the skills to work in the pharmaceutical industry after graduation. The majority of the students (66.7%) chose clinical pharmacy as their future career field while only 10.9% indicated willingness to work in a pharmaceuticals industry career. Only 8.2% actually selected working in the pharmaceutical industry. The significant predictor of possibly choosing a career in the local drug industry is being a student with a bachelor's degree (compared to Pharm. D degree) in pharmacy (OR=2.7 [95% CI 1.1-6.3]).

**Conclusion:** Saudi government is planning to improve the local pharmaceutical industry. Pharmacy students who are enrolled in Pharmacy education are not properly trained to play an influential role in local drug companies. As a result, their level of willingness to have a career in such important industry is not promising (more among Pharm.D program).

## Biography

Naser L Rezk is the founder of the clinical pharmacology and analytical chemistry core laboratory at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), NC, USA. His discoveries had led to the start of the new field of HIV-prevention. His honors include, the UNC Chancellor's award for innovation in science, and the State of North Carolina Governor's award for innovation in science, the highest prestigious scientific award in the state of North Carolina can be achieved. He acts as the PI for many HIV-research projects. He published thirty-nine papers in reputed journals, three web scientific technical articles and thirty-eight scientific abstracts. He has planned and established Saudi National Research Laboratories and a BE/BA center at the Saudi National Guard in Riyadh, KSA. His research interests include innovation in bio-analytical chemistry clinical pharmacology and clinical toxicology. Recently, he has joined Taibah University, Al-Madenah, Saudi Arabia as an Associate Professor. He teaches Pharmacology, Toxicology & Forensic Medicine and Research Methodologies courses.

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