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Editorial Article

FACULTY APPOINTMENT CRITERIA IN A PUBLIC SECTOR PHARMACY INSTITUTION IN PAKISTAN.

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South East Asian part of the world has always played a vital role to evolve the ideas in the discipline of pharmacy, health and medicine in history. Different empires and dynasties has directly impact the research and development in this continent. The Arabs, Mughals, British, Persians and Afghans has also ruled different states and brought variety of curative skill and knowledge. These states had been recognized as well cultured, prosperous, highly crowded and developed [1]. We have variety of religious believers with different mythological thoughts. That potentially impacts the curative philosophy and treatment [2]. Therefore, we aimed this study to understand the current administrative situation, quality assurance and faculty recruitment criteria of public sector pharmacy teaching institution in Pakistan. That may potentially help us to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of World Health Organization.

Pharmacy is a healthcare profession requiring a high level of education and training, because it is directly deal with the life, health and safety of people. It encompasses all fields within pharmacy, with the same ambition, training and education all over the world. Therefore, the pharmacy health professional need a significant and intensive formal education in health care setting [3]. The scope of pharmacy comprised of medication therapy management, drug information, formal training program, drug utilization, application of electronic data processing (EDP) and disease state management. Whereas, the key segments of pharmacy are pharmacovigilance, therapeutical monitoring, pharmaco-economics, drug informations, bio-safety, and aseptic dispensary.

Therefore, the faculty members are main stakeholders of pharmacy education. The quality graduate can only be obtained if faculty is competent, experienced and have skills to deliver knowledge required to handle the issues of the life, health and treatment. Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has developed minimum guidelines for appointment of faculty members in the Universities which is mandatory requirement to be followed by the Higher Education Institutions. These requirements were designed while keeping in view the competency desired for teaching the core domain and carrying out research on the current problems of the pharmacy.

Additionally, there are two type of faculty appointment criteria Basic Pay Scale (BPS) and Tenure Track System (TTS). Both have major three components Qualification, Experience, and Research Publications. BPS is traditional appointment system, adopted by most of the Universities [4,9]. Whereas TTS is incentive based appointment system, the faculty members are given additional amount in salary for publishing impact factor

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publications. The institutional administration, educational experts and appointed staff have different opinions regarding the benefits and effectiveness of both programs [5,6]. However, the criteria for selection and promotion should technically correlated with other factors of community engagement, participation in conferences, arranging academic and research events, fund raising, inventions and patents.

We have selected a prototype selection and appointment of a professor or pharmaceutics and dean pharmacy in university of Sargodha, Punjab Pakistan. That may help us to understand the level of enforcement of defined standards and HEC given criteria in pharmacy teaching institutions. Department of Pharmacy, University of Sargodha (UOS) was founded and notified in 2003. This is a unique model of pharmacy institution that symbolically highlights the potential reasons of poor health care in developing parts of the world. The position for the selection of Professor of Pharmaceutics was properly advertized and the senior most faculty member was selected and appointed dean of Pharmacy, UOS. Unluckily, he has successfully cheated the institution, system and authorities and fraudulently obtained administrative, official and monetary benefit. It was also noticed a mafia, unbelievably working to protect and support each other in perfect manner. Therefore, we aimed to probe credibility, competency and eligibility of this appointed officer.

Meanwhile, the irregularities were reported to the institutional authority for appropriate action. But, unluckily the local internal authority did not even consider entertain at any possible level. Therefore, the case was taken to next level and reported to Higher Education Commission (HEC). The Assistant Director (A&C) HEC, Islamabad, has undertaken the case. She replied to my application under her letter No. No. 05-48/A&C(Affairs)/2016/HEC/7151 dated July 01, 2016. Additionally, another case was filed in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Lahore under Complaint Diary No. 4790/2016, and 8120,10999/19. Additional Director (Staff), NAP Lahore has referred the matter to the Chairman of Higher Education Commission, Islamabad under letter No. 1(33)HQ/Complaints/DA/04/NAB-L, Serial No. 4, Diary No.2128/19 on June 21, 2019 for appropriate action as per law.

However, an application was filed in the office of then Vice Chancellor on March 15, 2016 to obtain the external reports/ recommendations of the expert under the "Right to Information Act, 2013". These foreign external reports have key value to confirm competency and compliance of candidate with advertized position. These are most reliable component to appoint the professor in university. Unluckily the reports not granted to shield the violation and cover the blunder. However, the reports were obtained from another reliable source this year. Both of the foreign reports were found non- supportive to appoint the candidate as professor. Professor of Pharmaceutics and Social Pharmacy, Sem Sælands vei 3 Farmasibygningen 0371 Oslo stated in his decision (conclusion) that "reports and short communications can not be considered as research publication. In this case, candidate do not comply neither with the requirement for the total publications, nor with the requirement for publication during the last five years. If one or more the publication in journals of unknown status should turn out to be recognized by HEC, candidate will comply the requirement for number of publication during the last 5 years, but the total number will still be too low".

The second expert was Associate Professor, Programme Chair, Discipline of Social and Administrative Pharmacy, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia,

11800 Penang, Malaysia. Technically and legally, he can not evaluate the candidate for the appointment as professor. Because he is one step lower than the position advertized. So he automatically disqualified to judge the credibility of an application candidate for the position higher than his currently holding official post. Secondly, he has worked with applicant candidate during September 2009 - November 2009 to complete a cross-sectional, observational study entitled "Association between knowledge and drug adherence in patients with hypertension in Quetta, Pakistan". Both of them, the candidate and evaluator have published their research article together in "Tropical Journal of Pharmaceutical Research" April 2011; 10(2): 125-132. This is a potential conflict of interest that automatically disqualifies the appointment of this expert. Additionally, the judgment should also absolutely reject at all level. Therefore, his evaluation should be turned downed and became null and vide on behalf of their explicitly identified predetermined relationship, conflict of interest and unethical practice.

So, the faculty development programs should be established for substantial improvement in selection and recruitment of the academic positions. That demands a serious effort of human resource department to strengthen and consolidate the faculty development programs. [7,8].

Thus, in order to meet the end of justice the decision of the Syndicate and the notification thereof as referred above may be declared void ab initio and without any merits. Any other course of action may be considered integral part of the proceeding. Keeping in view the facts as narrated above, and taking considerate view of the qualifications, a sever action to taken to establish the rule of law. That may potentially improve the teaching quality, recruitment policy and health care system in Pakistan [9,10].

Moreover, the most current education model of learning courses focus upon the management and pedagogy for the medical faculty. Faculty development programs can be used as important tool for the recruitment and training of killed teachers. They can then deliver the valued professional services to development targeted skills in learners and student [11,12]. The ideas and procedures given in scientific literature can also be used to design and refine the available protocols [13]. The modern technology, human resource informatics and scientific tools can be used to support the development of faculty programs for inter-professional education.

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