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Abstract:

This study aimed to evaluate attitudes and barriers towards scientific research among undergraduate pharmacy students. This preliminary descriptive study took place between August and December 2018 and included 200 students of year 3 and year 4 from Kuliyyah of Pharmacy in IIUM, Kuantan. A validated questionnaire survey with 15 close-ended questions and two open-ended questions were designed to evaluate students' attitudes and barriers towards research. Responses were scored on a 5-point Likert scale. A total of 200 students participated in the study (response rate: 90%). Of these, 150 (75%) were female. A positive attitude towards research was reported by 80% of the students. No statistically significant differences were observed between genders with regards to attitudes towards and available resources for research ($P = 0.500$ and 0.200 , respectively). Our result shows that the senior (Year 4) students had a significantly more positive attitude towards research compared to year 3 students ($P = 0.005$). A total of 78% students agreed that research is important for student and that they had sufficient resources for research. The participants reported barriers to embark on research included time management restrictions ($n = 80$; 40%), lack of research mentors ($n = 30$; 15%), lack of formal research analysis/methodology training ($n = 20$; 10%) and troubles in conducting literature searches ($n = 20$; 10%). According to the survey, pharmacy students had a positive attitude towards scientific research.

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

Globally, many educational institutions have undertaken initiatives to promote research amongst their students. Scientific research is a crucial component of undergraduate and post graduate student education that enables them to become qualified health care professionals. Pharmacists play a major role in dispensing medication and saving the life of patients through extensive health care therapy by collaborating with general practitioner. In addition, health systems allow them to perform a full range of medication decision-making functions as part of the patient's health care team. Thus, it is imperative then that as a healthcare professional, pharmacist should be trained and proficient in various aspects of health care including scientific and academic research. Furthermore, conducting effective and efficient research is the ground rule for the establishment of evidence based medicine (Sadana et al., 2004; Munabi et al., 2006; ACCP, 2006). Extensive review has supported the need for medical and pharmacy related research through the establishment of health care networks (Sadana et al., 2004; Munabi et al., 2006). Incorporation of research based training in pharmacy undergraduate education is thus important to for a firm understanding of their curriculum. The preliminary study was done to assess the research attitudes and barriers about research amongst pharmacy students.

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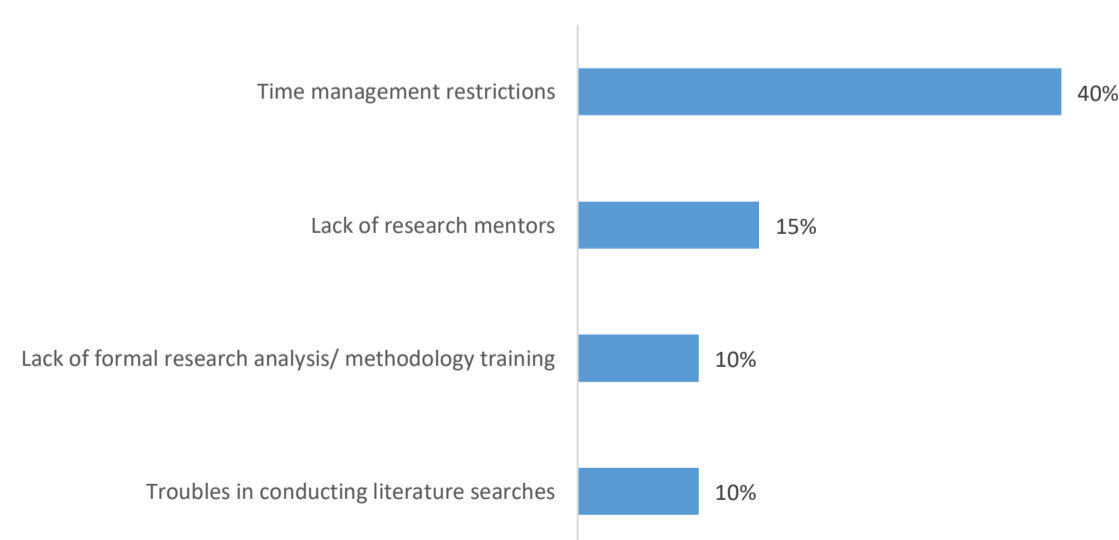
METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted taking data from 200 respondents including YEAR 3 and YEAR 4 pharmacy students. The survey includes the data of both males and females. The respondents were given self-designed questionnaire containing general introductory questions and specific questions related to the study. The attitudes of respondents was analyzed using first 10 questions. The next seven questions were given to analyze barriers towards conducting research. The questionnaires were collected and data were tabulated and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Our study shown a positive attitude towards research was reported by 80% of the students. No statistically significant differences were observed between genders with regards to attitudes towards and available resources for research ($P = 0.500$ and 0.200 , respectively). As expected, our result shows that the senior (Year 4) students had a significantly more positive attitude towards research compared to year 3 students ($P = 0.005$). A total of 78% students agreed that research is important for student and that they had sufficient resources for research. The participants reported barriers to embark on research included time management restrictions ($n = 80$; 40%), lack of research mentors ($n = 30$; 15%), lack of formal research analysis/methodology training ($n = 20$; 10%) and troubles in conducting literature searches ($n = 20$; 10%).

Students Barrier to embark on research projects



The findings clearly indicate that the pharmacy students has positive attitude towards research. Moreover, Participants reported that research is relevant for their course, and the students need more formal training. The result of this study could be the basis for future study which may encourage positive research attitudes among student. Attention should be given to minimize the barriers identified in this study.