

## Public health and social services working together with pharmacist to promote patient safety.

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### Abstract

Modern healthcare organizations are confronted with the task of delivering cutting-edge medical care while also ensuring the well-being and efficiency of their personnel in order to provide patients with top-notch service. Therefore, prioritizing both patient safety and worker well-being are equally imperative objectives for medical institutions. Research indicates that investing in patient safety culture can be seen as developing an organizational asset, which is advantageous for enhancing the quality of care and safeguarding the well-being of staff. The benefits of healthcare services, particularly in the public health sector, extend to all individuals, including those in the social services and pharmacy fields

**Keywords:** *pharmacist, healthcare organizations, patient safety.*

### Introduction

Ensuring patient safety is a fundamental aspect of healthcare systems globally. Patient Safety is a field of study that has developed in response to the increasing complexities of healthcare systems [1]. Multiple researches have found that pharmacy practice services have the potential to significantly enhance patient safety and decrease hospital expenses related to prescription errors [1]. The importance of patient safety was initially emphasized during the World Health Assembly in 2002[2].

Multiple definitions of patient safety have been published. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) defines patient safety as the prevention of harm to patients. The World Health Organization defines patient safety as the absence of preventable harm to a patient during the healthcare process and the reduction of unnecessary harm to an acceptable minimum.

According to the Study Groups on Human Factors, patient safety culture is the result of the values, attitudes, perceptions, competences, and behavior patterns of individuals and groups

within an organization. These factors impact the level of dedication, style, and competency in managing health and safety. The primary objective of patient safety initiatives is to proactively mitigate errors and derive valuable insights from rectifying such errors, ultimately fostering a culture of safety among healthcare professionals and patients [4]. The patient safety culture among pharmacists plays a crucial role in enhancing patient safety and mitigating prescription errors. A medication error is a preventable incident that involves the incorrect use of medicines or injury to the patient due to errors in prescribing, dispensing, managing, or controlling drugs. Medication error ranks as the eighth most common cause of mortality in the United States of America (USA). Based on the 2006 IOM research, there is an estimated total of 51.5 million errors occurring in 3 billion prescriptions annually. This translates to an average of 4 errors per 250 prescriptions per pharmacy every day. Multiple studies conducted in Saudi Arabia have documented instances of drug mistakes in various settings [5]. A research conducted among in-patients found that there were 7.1% (113 out of 1580) instances of medication errors. Within a primary care setting, a study found that there were prescription errors in 990 out of 5299 prescriptions, accounting for 18.7% of the total [6].

There has been an increasing acknowledgment in the healthcare industry in recent years of the need to enhance patient safety by providing adequate resources for quality improvement and safety teams. However, the successful execution of enhancing patient safety relies on the establishment of a favorable patient safety culture. The 2008 report from the World Health Organization identifies open communication and teamwork as the fundamental aspects of a patient safety culture. International accreditation agencies, such as the Joint Commission International, need periodical assessments of the patient safety culture environment in healthcare institutions [7,8].

### Review:

The significance of patient safety is currently being recognized on a global scale in an increasing number of countries. After conducting a comprehensive study on the culture of patient safety in Arabic countries, it became clear how important it is to cultivate a culture that places a high priority on patient safety. For the purpose of developing strategies that will bring about a culture that is committed to providing patients with the highest possible level of safety, it is essential to acquire knowledge about the components and characteristics that shape culture and to conduct an evaluation of the culture of safety [9].

According to the findings of a comprehensive study that was carried out in 2017, it was found that there is an urgent requirement to cultivate a culture of patient safety in Arab countries. Putting the number 20 inside of square brackets is a good idea. The majority of the research that was carried out in Arab countries between the years 2008 and 2018 utilized the Hospital Survey on Patient Safety Culture (HSOPSC) in order to examine the culture of patient safety. In order to improve both the safety of patients and the quality of service that pharmacists provide, there is a growing recognition of the significance of establishing a culture of patient safety in pharmacies [10].

Additionally, the sale of items continues to be the primary focus of community pharmacies in Saudi Arabia. In the year 2018, the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Health (MoH) enacted regulations that were designed to control and restrict the distribution of antibiotics that did not require a prescription. Additionally, the Ministry of Health (MoH) has launched a program that distributes drugs to the general public at free cost through private community pharmacies. This is in contrast to the traditional method of depending solely on government hospitals to provide medication distribution. On the other hand, this raises concerns about the safety of patients who are receiving treatment from community pharmacies [11]. The vast majority of the study that was carried out in Arab countries consisted of hospital surveys on patient safety culture (HSOPSC). Community

pharmacies, on the other hand, are a suitable venue for the dissemination of information on patient safety because of the combination of their convenient accessibility and the high grade of pharmacy practice services that they provide. Since this is the case, it is of the utmost importance to have a solid understanding of the practical realities surrounding many facets of the patient safety culture in community pharmacies. In addition, conducting an evaluation of the patient safety culture can be of assistance in identifying areas that require improvement and gaining an understanding of the changes that have occurred in practice over a period of time [12]. The patient safety culture in the healthcare industry is often shaped by a variety of characteristics inside the healthcare organization, and it contributes to the prevention and mitigation of errors [13]. The quality of the healthcare program in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be improved as a result of gaining an understanding of the patient safety culture that exists within community pharmacies. Increasing the pharmacists' understanding of patient safety problems and recognizing both areas of competency and areas that require improvement are two ways in which this can be accomplished [11,12]. There are a number of studies that have been conducted on the subject of patient safety from the perspective of various healthcare professionals, such as for pharmacists [13]. There has been a significant amount of study conducted on this subject; nevertheless, there is a dearth of information about the assessment of patient safety culture in community pharmacy settings, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia [14].

The safety of patients is an essential component of the quality of healthcare and is a concern of the general public in every healthcare system throughout the world. The prevention, avoidance, and correction of unfavorable outcomes that may occur during medical care are all included in this term. Its purpose is to guarantee that patients do not sustain any injuries as a result of accidents. Pharmaceutical errors, which are preventable events that could result in incorrect pharmaceutical usage or injury to patients while the medication is within the control of healthcare professionals, patients,

or consumers, are a common occurrence in medical errors that pose a risk to patient safety [15]. Pharmaceutical errors are a type of error that can be prevented. It is anticipated that they will be the eighth most prevalent cause of death in the United States, and they are responsible for the deaths of approximately 44,000 to 98,000 people on a yearly basis. Although it is possible to prevent all pharmaceutical errors, it is possible to prevent 28 percent of adverse drug events (ADE), which are injuries that are caused by medical treatments that use drugs. Because pharmacists have the capacity to prevent fifty percent of these adverse drug reactions (ADEs), they play an essential role in preventing them. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the participation of pharmacists has the potential to improve both the quality of healthcare and the safety of patients [15].

The establishment of a "culture of safety" within healthcare organizations has emerged as a very important technique for improving the safety of patients. It is the collective values, attitudes, perceptions, competences, and behavioral patterns of individuals and groups within an organization that determine the culture of safety that exists inside that organization. These elements have an impact on the degree of commitment that employees have to the health and safety management style and efficacy of the company itself [15]. For the purpose of establishing a culture of safety, it is essential to have a solid understanding of the values, beliefs, and standards that the firm has in relation to health and safety. Therefore, in order to assist the transformation of the safety culture inside the company, it is vital to unearth the cultural factors that lie beneath the surface of the organization [8, 9]. Over the course of the past decade, numerous frameworks, surveys, and assessment tools have been established in order to evaluate and appreciate the particular culture that is present in healthcare organizations. Using these methods, the goal is to identify the areas of strength and weakness that exist within these firms.

Assessing the safety culture of healthcare institutions is a solid way for attaining long-term safety enhancement, according to organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO)

and the Joint Commission International (JCI), which are both international organizations. A recent in-depth study that examined the state of patient safety culture in Arab countries highlighted the importance of cultivating a culture of patient safety in order to improve the level of patient safety in the Arab World [16].

There has been a deliberate effort made by the Ministry of Health (MoH) of Kuwait to guarantee that the quality of healthcare services is up to par with international standards. In Kuwait, Accreditation Canada International (ACI) was recruited to establish a nationwide accreditation plan that would be applied by government hospitals and polyclinics [16]. This scheme would be executed by each of these institutions. Due to the fact that this particular domain has gotten less attention, it is essential to carry out this study within the framework of community pharmacies in order to analyze the existing condition of patient safety and to make ideas that are required.

Medication mistakes have been identified as the key factor that brings to a culture of compromised patient safety in community pharmacies, according to research studies that have been conducted all over the world. Nevertheless, it is of equal importance to identify the extra potential circumstances that could put the safety of the patient at risk. Consequently, it is of the utmost importance to have a comprehensive understanding of the concept of patient safety culture from the perspective of community pharmacists [17].

As part of the current investigation, the PSOPSC was applied to investigate the patient safety culture from the perspective of community pharmacists. It is clear that community pharmacists are extremely committed to enhancing patient safety, as evidenced by the fact that the current study received 92.8% of responses during its course. According to the findings of earlier research conducted in the same industry [17], this proportion was significantly greater.

Based on the findings of the research conducted in Kuwait, the areas of cooperation, organizational learning and continuous

improvement, and patient counseling were shown to have the highest Performance Rating Ratios (PRRs). When we conducted our own research, we found that the PRRs for teamwork and patient counseling were the greatest [18]. These findings are very similar to the findings that were found in the previous study. In order to determine the average score for patient safety, the 36 items that were included in the questionnaire were added together and the result was found to be 82.32. [19] This score is higher than the results that were published in research that were carried out in Malaysia and China, but it is equivalent to the findings that were discovered in the Kuwait study (83.3). The overall score that the study received for patient safety indicates that community pharmacists in southern Saudi Arabia have a solid knowledge of their responsibility to improve patient safety. Teamwork was shown to have the highest proportion of positive responses, according to the findings of the study. The findings of this study are in close agreement with the findings of a study that was carried out among hospital pharmacists in Kuwait [20].

Results that were comparable were observed in clinical trials that were carried out at hospitals in the United States of America, Belgium, and Taiwan. In addition, research that was carried out among community pharmacists yielded results that were comparable to the findings of the current study [21].

In the pharmacy, the existence of excessive workloads and insufficient staff is a contributing factor that can lead to errors, which have the potential to result in clinically serious concerns. Such errors can have catastrophic consequences. In addition, a number of studies conducted both in the United States and internationally have demonstrated that there has been a reduction in the Patient-to-Registered Nurse Ratio (PRR) within the context of staffing and work pressure. The findings of this study suggest that pharmacists all over the world have the same opinion that they do not have enough workers to effectively manage their workload, which has a direct influence on the safety of their patients [22].

It is possible to successfully reduce the number of errors that occur and improve patient safety by increasing the level of communication transparency among the pharmacy workers working within the pharmacy. In spite of the fact that there was a better level of openness throughout the discussion, the shortcomings were readily apparent. A reduction in the PRR was observed in the area of "responses to mistake," particularly in regard to the statement that "Staff think that their errors are used against them." A wide variety of emotional distress was often experienced by the staff members who were responsible for making blunders. In addition, these findings are in agreement with the research that was conducted in the United States. It is possible for individuals to acquire information from their mistakes if they are provided with constructive criticism and if there is a nurturing environment present in the workplace [23].

Based on the results of the study, it was discovered that community pharmacists had a positive attitude toward providing patient counseling and devoting more time to elucidating the appropriate way to use medications. As a result of the fact that this has a direct influence on the outcomes for patients, the World Health Organization has recommended that pharmacists set aside a minimum of three minutes for patients to receive counseling and orientation [23]. In light of the fact that the role of community pharmacists in patient counseling and their expertise in counseling skills are extensively taught in nearly all pharmacy schools in Saudi Arabia [24], it is not surprising that community pharmacists in our study had a good attitude toward patient counseling.

When it comes to the distribution of medication, the risk of making mistakes is steadily increasing, as indicated by a study that was carried out in the central region of Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the study discovered that the work environment is a crucial factor that plays a part in affecting the work that pharmacists do. Inadequate space and unsanitary conditions are linked to errors that occur in nursing homes. According to the findings of the current research, the majority of community pharmacies

in the area under investigation were well-organized, free of any disorder, and assisted by a workflow that was worthy of praise. These results are indicative of a number of investigations that have been conducted both nationally and internationally [24].

When asked about the level of patient safety at their pharmacy, the vast majority of community pharmacists who participated in the current study awarded their pharmacy a rating that was satisfactory. On the other hand, the Patient Reported Rating (PRR) was lower for one particular item within this category, which suggests that certain pharmacies placed a higher priority on sales than they did on the safety of their patients. The results of our analysis were comparable to those obtained by a study that was carried out in Malaysia [23]. In line with the findings of a previous study carried recently [25], the evaluation of patient safety that was carried out by the pharmacists was presented with an outstanding rating.

### **Conclusion:**

Gaining insight into the patient safety culture as perceived by community pharmacists can facilitate the identification of vulnerabilities and inform decisions for enhancements. Prompt and focused efforts should be directed towards addressing the identified deficiencies in patient safety, particularly in the areas of Staffing, Work Pressure, and Pace. In order to ensure patient safety, stakeholders should take the necessary measures to support community pharmacists by providing them with a sufficient number of workers and creating an orderly and less distracting work environment. Establishing Advanced social worker Practice jobs in social services can contribute to enhancing safety in home care. The precise delineation of the evolving responsibilities and duties of technical aid providers' personnel should be established through a comprehensive discussion on effective strategies, as well as the involvement of the public health sector in ensuring patient safety, managing the pandemic, and preventing the transmission of various toxins and diseases.

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