

VIEWPOINTS

Globalization of Pharmacy Education: What is Needed?

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The era of globalization has affected every sector of society including education. Pharmacy education has a history in global outreach with many collaborative educational, clinical, and research endeavors across continents.¹⁻⁷ Such opportunities have proven to be fruitful, enriching, and rewarding.^{1,3,5-7} I have traveled to several countries in the Middle East over the last 17 years, presenting at schools of pharmacy and serving as an external assessor for pharmacy programs, and I found that many pharmacy institutions there are struggling with the same issues we are struggling with here in the United States and in other parts of the world. With the increased role pharmacists can play in the healthcare system on a local and global level, establishment of purposeful best practices in the development of pharmacy curriculum; exchanges of faculty members, administrators, professional and graduate students; successful models of pharmacy practice; addressing regulatory issues and other key areas in pharmacy, is needed more than ever before. Several organizations and groups are working on different aspects of this including the American Associations of Colleges of Pharmacy,^{1,2} International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP),^{5,8-10} Global Pharmacy, and the World Health Organization.⁵ The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's special interest group on global pharmacy has 5 subcommittees working on best practices in advanced pharmacy practice experiences.

Certainly, pharmacy in the era of globalization can benefit from the lessons learned from economic globalization. Rather than what appears to many to be an attempt to make nations and ethnic identities disappear, emphasis should be on reconstruction of the education system with respect for ethnic, regional, and national identities, but embedding the curriculum with a clear and purposeful global perspective. Also, instead of having Western societies as the main reference point and Western education as the norm for learning at all levels, local needs should be a critical driver as well as any local practice models or educational experiences that the West

can learn from. Further, the concern for social, political, economic implications (loss of jobs due to shifting resources, violent demonstrations, international terrorism, etc), the above should be countered with a sincere effort to ensure that global pharmacy education is purposeful to meet workforce needs of local and regional communities, improve health and opportunities similar to what FIP's Global Pharmacy Education Taskforce is attempting to do.⁵

So what is needed for success in the era of globalization of pharmacy education? Based on my experience and exploration of this issue for the last several years, I think success can be achieved by addressing the following 5 key strategies:

- (1) Share expertise and resources to benefit the parties involved (governments, institutions, sites, students, faculty members, local population, etc) and establish innovative ways to meet needs and share expenses (eg, use of distance education technology);
- (2) Respect historic factors and ethical dilemmas which may have influenced pharmacy education and practice in a region of the world; respect cultural linguistic, religious, political, and traditional beliefs and values; and respect local perspectives of key stakeholders for the educational model to be adopted;
- (3) Consider local manpower needs: ensure resources needed to build the infrastructure for educational institutions; establish collaborations for training at the entry level, and graduate and professional levels; create and expand on career pathways for PhDs and clinical faculty members; develop new job opportunities for graduates; and a manpower that address local, regional, and global health issues and decrease overall health disparities within a society and globally;
- (4) Establish accreditation standards in individual or regional countries; address internal and external factors impacting pharmacy education and practice; involve pharmacy college and school associations and professional pharmacy organizations; engage local ministries of labor, health, and education; engage other health professions

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associations and professional organizations; address guidelines established, for example, by the FIP Global Pharmacy Education Taskforce; and address guidelines or strategic plans by other stakeholders (eg, World Health Organization);

- (5) Empower students by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (eg, culture competency and humility) to meet the needs of the current and future generations on a local and global level; ensure accountability of the institutions, professional organizations, and political system to provide job opportunities for future graduates; and address the training of support personnel who can work in different setting.

Globalization of pharmacy education is a worthy endeavor for the academy and other stakeholders. It will help us to address the common issues we face in pharmacy academia and practice by sharing with, learning from, collaborating with and building trust and understanding among governments, institutions, and individuals for sustainable relationships in pharmacy education and practice. As a goal, it should be part of the strategic planning of institutions; encourage innovation in curriculum design and delivery; and empower, inspire, and motivate faculty members and students to contribute to solving the issues facing the global village. On an individual professional level, it should be about enrichment, professional development, opportunities for collaboration, and appreciation and understanding of other cul-

tures. On a student level, it is seeking out new horizons, perspectives, and opportunities to make a difference, and striving for culture competency and humility.

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