Availability and Perceived Value of Bachelor of Science Programs in Pharmaceutical Marketing and Management in the United States

Omar F. Attarabeen
Marshall University, attarabeen@marshall.edu

Fadi M. Alkhateeb

Follow this and additional works at: https://mds.marshall.edu/sp_ppa

Part of the Interprofessional Education Commons, and the Pharmacy Administration, Policy and Regulation Commons

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Research at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Pharmacy Practice & Administration by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu, beachgr@marshall.edu.
Availability and Perceived Value of Bachelor of Science Programs in Pharmaceutical Marketing and Management in the United States

Omar F. Attarabeen1*, Fadi M. Alkhateeb2#

1Texas A and M Health Science, Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy, 1010 W. Ave B., Kingsville, TX 78363, USA
2Department of Pharmaceutical Systems and Policy, West Virginia University School of Pharmacy, Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center, Morgantown, WV 26506, USA
†These authors contributed equally to this work.

Abstract

Several academic institutions across the United States offer Bachelor of Science degree programs in Pharmaceutical Marketing and/or Management. In general, these programs are designed to provide students with stronger foundations and a broader understanding of the business side of pharmacy. The purpose of this study was to explore the availability of the Bachelor of Science programs in pharmaceutical marketing and management in the United States. Internet search was conducted in order to collect information about the programs of interest. Results showed that a total of 8 schools and colleges offer the Bachelor of Science degree programs. The total number of credit hours for each program ranged from 122 to 130. All these schools/colleges were located in only 3 States, namely Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts. Tuition and fees were markedly different across these programs. Additionally, salient differences between these programs were evident with regard to career paths expected for their graduates. These programs have gained more attention over the past few years as fewer numbers of pharmacists work in pharmaceutical sales jobs, leaving such jobs almost exclusively undertaken by graduates of Pharmaceutical Marketing and Management programs. In the future, we expect changes to take place in these programs’ curricula in order to equip students with more skills to assume certain jobs, such as insurance management, industry, or sales.

Keywords: Pharmacy education; Pharmaceutical marketing; Pharmaceutical industry

Introduction

Several academic institutions across the United States offer Bachelor of Science degree programs in Pharmaceutical Business. This field of study incorporates topics that focus on pharmaceutical marketing, pharmaceutical management, pharmacy administration, or a mixture of these three fields. These programs are designed to provide students with stronger foundations and a broader understanding of the business side of pharmacy while allowing students to pursue their interest in health care related studies. These programs are intended to help students excel in the marketing of pharmaceutical products and to gain experience in pharmacy and health related management and administration. The purpose of this study was to explore the availability of the Bachelor of Science programs in pharmaceutical marketing and management in the United States.

Methods Procedures

Internet search was conducted in order to collect information about the programs of interest. Key words utilized in the Internet search included pharmaceutical business, pharmaceutical marketing, pharmaceutical management, and pharmacy administration. This study was conducted in October of 2014. Several web search engines and internet browser software applications were utilized. The programs of interest were compared and contrasted across different academic institutions in order to show the properties of each program and clarify how different these programs are from each other. Points of contrast and comparison included the number of credit hours, estimated tuition and fees, and physical location of the campus.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The web search criteria included websites displayed in English language. Academic institutions that offer the programs of interest were included in the analysis only if they are located in the United States. Additionally, included programs were those that grant their graduates only the Bachelor of Science degrees in Pharmaceutical Business, Pharmaceutical Marketing, Pharmaceutical Management, or any related field upon the completion of the requirements of the program. Master’s degree programs (M.S.) and dual degree (e.g., BS and MBA) programs were excluded from the study.

Results and Discussion

A total of 8 schools and colleges met the inclusion criteria, hence included in the study. Basic characteristics of the programs offered are shown in Table 1. Despite the similarities across these programs with regard to courses offered and knowledge outcomes anticipated, these programs have evolved into highly distinct curricula of study across many schools and colleges, which resulted in different topics covered, different total number of credit hours required for graduation, and different career paths anticipated for the graduates of each of these programs.

It was notable that all these schools/university were located in only 3 States, grouped in the Northeastern and the Midwestern United States. However, these programs were markedly different from each other. Differences were most noticeable when comparing the curricula from different programs as they are available online for...
some of them. Economics (i.e., Macroeconomics Microeconomics, and Pharmacoeconomics), Statistics, Business, Health Care Management, and Marketing of Pharmaceutical Products were the most commonly covered topics across different programs. Salient differences between these programs were evident with regard to career paths after graduation. Although most of these programs focus on preparing their graduates for sales jobs, marketing, projects management, and business administration, some programs focus on accounting, finance, organizational behavior, and insurance industry as well.

These programs have gained more attention over the past few years as fewer numbers of pharmacists work in pharmaceutical sales jobs. Additionally, with the spread of PharmD programs and discontinuing of Bachelor of Pharmacy programs, an increasing number of registered pharmacists work in community pharmacies setting and focus on the direct provision of health care and clinical practice such as in hospitals, therefore, leaving the pharmaceutical sales jobs almost exclusively undertaken by graduates of Pharmaceutical Business programs.

Conclusions

Schools and colleges that offer such programs are trying to equip the graduates of these programs with more knowledge and skills pertaining to the business, marketing, administrative, and management sides of pharmacy. In the future, we expect changes to take place in these programs’ curricula in order to equip students with more skills to assume certain jobs, such as insurance management, industry, or sales. This may come about by focusing more on relevant courses that prepare students for assuming such careers by including more pertinent topics such as business, economics, and marketing-related topics in the curricula. These programs will did not qualify their graduate to work as a licensed pharmacist, but serves as the most relative degree that prepares students to work in the marketing of pharmaceutical products.

References

4. DeSales University. Pharmaceutical Marketing Program.
5. Ohio Northern University. The James F. Dicke College of Business Administration. Pharmaceutical Business Program.
7. Cleveland State University. College of Sciences and Health Professions. Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Science - Pharmacy Administration Track.
8. The University of Toledo. College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. BS in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmacy Administration Major.

Table 1: Comparisons of the Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Marketing & Management programs at USA institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Name of the School/University</th>
<th>Type of School or Department</th>
<th>Name of program</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
<th>Annual Tuitions and Fees*</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saint Joseph’s University</td>
<td>Haub School of Business</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing [1]</td>
<td>(NA)²</td>
<td>$40,420</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Sciences in Philadelphia</td>
<td>Philadelphia College of Pharmacy</td>
<td>Bachelor of science in pharmaceutical marketing and management [2]</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>$25,618</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences</td>
<td>School of Pharmacy - Boston</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Business [3]</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>$29,500</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSales University</td>
<td>jointly by the Division of Business and the Department of Natural Science</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical Marketing [4]</td>
<td>(NA)²</td>
<td>$32,350</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Northern University</td>
<td>The James F. Dicke College of Business Administration</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical business [5]</td>
<td>(NA)²</td>
<td>$28,050</td>
<td>OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland State University</td>
<td>College of Sciences and Health Professions</td>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Science - Pharmacy Administration Track [7]</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>In-state: $9,636² Out-of-State: $15,308²</td>
<td>OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Toledo</td>
<td>College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>BS in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmacy Administration Major [8]</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>In-state: $9,242² Out-of-State: $18,580²</td>
<td>OH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Estimated tuition and fees excluding lodging, housing, meals, books, or living expenses.
b Information was not available online when the study was conducted.
c Based on typical 12-hour semesters assuming a student to register for only two semesters: Fall and Spring.