

BACKGROUND

- The educational and career goals of pharmacy students are expected to change throughout the course of a Doctor of Pharmacy program.
- There are numerous factors within the pharmacy program that have the potential to influence the goals and interests of the student such as, subjective norms, influences from faculty and peers, didactic electives, pharmacy practice experiences, and participation in residency showcases.
- Faculty mentorship has the potential to cater information specific to a student's personal goals and interests.

OBJECTIVE

- The primary objective of this study is to determine the impact of faculty mentorship and a student interest in postgraduate opportunities from the beginning and end of a Doctor of Pharmacy program.
- Additional data collected in the survey is not included in analysis.
- For the purpose of this study only the students' interest in participating in postgraduate training and whether they had a faculty mentor were assessed.

METHODS

Study Design

- Observational, prospective, cohort study.
- A ten-question survey was emailed to each student with a unique link in order to match their responses to previous surveys.
- Participants were invited to complete the survey a total of 4 times, in the spring of each semester enrolled in pharmacy school at SIUe SOP.

Inclusion Criteria

- Enrolled in the pharmacy program at SIUe SOP
- Anticipated to graduate in May of 2022
- Completed the survey in the spring semester of P1 or P2 (2019/2020) and P3 or P4 (2021/2022)

Exclusion Criteria

- Anticipated graduation year other than 2022 during the study period (2019 to 2022)
- Unmatched data from P1/P2 to P3/P4

Study Measures

- Faculty Mentorship was defined as having a faculty mentor and meeting at least once a semester.
- Students' Interest in Postgraduate Training was defined as answering yes or maybe to planning to participate in further education after graduation such as residency or fellowship.

Data Analysis

- Data in P1/P2 (2019/2020) and P3/P4 (2021/2022) was assessed using a McNemar statistical test.
- Paired data from P1/P2 (2019/2020) and P3/P4 (2021/2022) was assessed using a paired McNemar test.

RESULTS

Table 1. Baseline Characteristics

Characteristics	P1/P2 (2019/2020)	P3/P4 (2021/2022)
Male no. (%)	20/50 (40%)	
Female no. (%)	30/50 (60%)	
Age Range (years old)	18 to 30	21 to 35
Degree no. (%)	22/50 (44%)	
Interested in postgraduate training no. (%)	39/50 (78%)	28/50 (56%)
Uninterested in postgraduate training no. (%)	11/50 (22%)	22/50 (44%)
Faculty Mentor no. (%)	15/50 (30%)	18/50 (36%)
No Faculty Mentor no. (%)	35/50 (70%)	32/50 (64%)

Table 2. Students' interest in postgraduate training and faculty mentorship

P1/P2 (2019/2020)	(+) Faculty Mentor	(-) Faculty Mentor	Odds Ratio (95% CI)
Interested in postgraduate training no. (%)	11/50 (22%)	29/50 (58%)	7.25 (2.55 to 20.62)
Uninterested in postgraduate training no. (%)	4/50 (8%)	6/50 (12%)	
P3/P4 (2021/2022)	(+) Faculty Mentor	(-) Faculty Mentor	Odds Ratio (95% CI)
Interested in postgraduate training no. (%)	16/50 (32%)	12/50 (24%)	6.0 (1.34 to 26.81)
Uninterested in postgraduate training no. (%)	2/50 (4%)	20/50 (40%)	

RESULTS

Table 3. Paired Analysis from P1/P2 (2019/2020) to P3/P4 (2021/2022) Postgraduate Training Interest

Postgraduate Training Interest	(+) Postgraduate P3/P4 (2021/2022)	(-) Postgraduate P3/P4 (2021/2022)	X ² (p-value)
(+) Postgraduate P1/P2 (2019/2020)	27/50 (54%)	13/50 (26%)	8.64 (0.003)
(-) Postgraduate P1/P2 (2019/2020)	1/50 (2%)	9/50 (18%)	

Table 4. Paired Analysis from P1/P2 (2019/2020) to P3/P4 (2021/2022) Faculty Mentorship

Faculty Mentorship	(+) Faculty Mentor P3/P4 (2021/2022)	(-) Faculty Mentor P3/P4 (2021/2022)	X ² (p-value)
(+) Faculty Mentor P1/P2 (2019/2020)	8/50 (16%)	7/50 (14%)	0.235 (0.628)
(-) Faculty Mentor P1/P2 (2019/2020)	10/50 (20%)	25/50 (50%)	

CONCLUSION

Students that had a faculty mentor were more likely to be interested in pursuing a postgraduate training. This association may be due to students seeking faculty mentorship if they had an interest in pursuing postgraduate training. Having a faculty mentor has the potential to bridge the gap of information regarding potential careers related to the student's interest that otherwise would not be addressed in the typical pharmacy curriculum. The personal, one-on-one interaction between a faculty member and the student aids in providing the most relevant information regarding the opportunities available upon graduation. While presentations and pamphlets regarding postgraduate training are available to pharmacy students, they may not increase the awareness of the variety of career opportunities available to the student. Due to the variety of pharmacy career paths, it is unlikely that during a student's pharmacy education, that they are exposed to every opportunity available upon graduation. Therefore, students are expected to choose a career path based upon personal influences and experiences throughout the course of a Doctor of Pharmacy program. With a faculty mentor, the student is exposed to additional information and can make a career decision based upon their interests.