

EXPLORING PHARMACISTS' EXPERIENCES WITH ANNUAL RENEWAL OF LICENSE OF PRACTICE IN NIGERIA

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Published online: 16 Nov 2022

To cite this article: BURJI, S. L., JATAU, A. I., KHALID, G. M., HASSAN, M. A.-K.,
YUNUSA, I., SHEHU, S. A., GULMA, K., AHMED, A., MOHAMMED, F. & BELLO, I. (2022)
Exploring pharmacists' experiences with annual renewal of license of practice in Nigeria,
Malaysian Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences, 20(2): 121–134, <https://doi.org/10.21315/mjps2022.20.2.10>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.21315/mjps2022.20.2.10>

ABSTRACT

Consistent with the global best practices, pharmacists practicing in Nigeria are mandated by law to renew their professional licenses annually. However, there is limited data regarding pharmacists' experience with the renewal of practice licenses in Nigeria. Therefore, we aimed to provide this data. A cross-sectional study was conducted in an online survey (using Google Form™). Eligible respondents were registered pharmacists in Nigeria. A questionnaire (link) that examines experiences towards renewing their license was developed and validated. The survey link was shared with the respondents via social media platforms, namely, Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. A total of 349 pharmacists responded to the survey,

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of which 313 (89.7%) completed the questionnaire. Of these respondents, 276 (88.2%) reported renewing their licenses annually. Among those, 18 (48.6%) do not renew their licenses due to the high cost of license renewal, 9 (24.3%) due to cumbersome process and 8 (21.6%) reported licenses not required in their place of work, were the common reasons for not renewing their licenses. A total of 277 (88.5%) respondents indicated a preference in the online method of license renewal. Of the respondents, 43.5% and 64.2% disagreed with linking Mandatory Continuing and Professional Development (MCPD) and payment of professional associations' dues with re-licensure, respectively. Twenty (6.4%) rated the performance of the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) as excellent and 143 (45.7%) as good. A high proportion of pharmacists (276 out of 313) renew their practice licenses in Nigeria. However, a reasonable number of pharmacists 82 (29.7%) in this study reported inconsistent attitudes towards license renewal. Therefore, there is a need for interventions to encourage pharmacists to renew their licenses annually.

Keywords: Pharmacist, Licence, Nigeria, Profession, Regulation