

**Unlawful and Unjustified Collection of Enrolment Fee from Pharmacy Students****Khalid Hussain & Furqan Khurshid Hashmi**

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Editor: Despite indubitable provisions of the Pharmacy Act 1967, the Pharmacy Council of Pakistan is charging an amount of Pakistani Rupees 1000 per student as an enrolment fee from the pharmacy institutes all over Pakistan. This demand from each student enrolled in an undergraduate program is merely a burden as both parents and students have disagreed to do so, but pharmacy institutes enforced the students to pay this amount. Considering the gravity of the matter, the demand of the Council was evaluated in the light of law, the Pharmacy Act 1967, which stated as under:

1. Section 3 (1) (a) and (b) describes the establishment of Pharmacy Council of Pakistan by the Federal Government and Provincial Pharmacy Council, by the Provincial Government respectively, known by the name of the province concerned [1].
2. Section 16 (1) describes the finances of the Pharmacy Council of Pakistan as *"the funds of the Central Council shall consist of such moneys as may be placed at its disposal by the Federal Government"*, and Section 16 (2) describes the funds of Provincial Pharmacy Council as *"the funds of a Provincial Pharmacy Council shall consist of the fee received by it under this Act and of such moneys as may be placed at its disposal by the Provincial Government"* [1].
3. Section 17 (1) (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i) describes the functions of the Central Pharmacy Council [1].
4. Section 23 (a), (b), (c) and (d) are about the functions of Provincial Pharmacy Council that are about the registration of pharmacist in register-A [1].

5. Section 25 is regarding the qualification as a pharmacist or as an apprentice in pharmacy, and under this section 1 (a) states as *"persons who hold a degree in pharmacy conferred by a university or an institution affiliated thereto, where the degree is recognized by the Central Council"* [1].
6. Section 26 is regarding the procedure for registration, and Section 26 (2) states that *"an application for registration shall contain such particulars and be made in such a form as may be specified by the Provincial Council and shall be accompanied by such fee as may be prescribed by the bye-laws"* [1].

In the light of aforementioned sections of the Act it is lucid that:

1. The Pharmacy Council of Pakistan accredits the pharmacy institutes and recognizes their degree.
2. The Provincial Pharmacy Councils are responsible for the registration of qualified person in register (A, B and C) and collection of registration fee.
3. Collection of any enrolment fee from the students is not the purview of the Pharmacy Council of Pakistan.

Hence, the demand of enrolment fee is neither lawful nor justified, and is a straightforward infringement of the Act. It is astonishing to know that the Punjab Pharmacy Council is levying an amount of 500.00 (Pakistan Rupees) for registration from pharmacists whosoever wishes to get registered with the council, whereas the demand of the Pharmacy Council of Pakistan is double as an enrolment fee. It is worth mentioning that most of the private and some public sector universities/institutes were forced to pay the enrolment fee and as a result most of the institutes started collecting the money from students for onward submission to the Council, just to save their accreditation. The ever increasing imbalance in demand and production of pharmacist in the country urges [2] the Council to strive for the amendments in provisions of the prevailing Pharmacy Act that are related to the registration of pharmacist in 3 categories viz A, B and C to promote better healthcare deliverance to ailing commune and reduce unemployment, instead of putting efforts in collection of money. The Council is also required to take stern notice about the touchstone of pharmacy education in all the institutes and homogenize examination/evaluation system, the need of which has

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also been emphasized previously [3].

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