

Introduction

The demand by student pharmacists for post-graduate career opportunities has grown significantly during the past decade based upon a number of converging factors such as increased supply of pharmacy graduates which has led to stagnating compensation for community and hospital pharmacists. This increased supply of graduates has led more pharmacy graduates to explore industry.

Unfortunately, pharmacist job satisfaction data has been confined to traditional practice types only.

Examples of this research gap are demonstrated by the following two studies. In a *Pharmacy Times* 2019 Salary and Job Satisfaction Survey (n=586), 88% practiced in community or hospital settings and the remaining 12% worked in what the study described as "completely different settings".¹ Survey respondents reported their job satisfaction on average to be 4.23 using a Likert scale of 1-7 with 7 being extremely satisfied. In a similar survey reported by *Drug Topics*² in 2020 (n= 1037) almost half (44%) of respondents indicated dissatisfaction with their job. In this survey 67% worked in community or hospital settings and the remaining settings included: LTC, Govt., Mail-order, Compounding, and Managed care. Of note, industry practice was not specified.

To meet this unmet need, the Industry Pharmacists Organization (IPhO) conducted industry-focused job satisfaction research in an effort to expand currently available data. This will allow student pharmacists, who are deciding upon their post-graduate career plans, and traditional pharmacists, who may be re-examining their current career options, to arrive at well-informed decisions.

Objectives

- Analyze job industry pharmacists satisfaction data and highlight influencing factors and trends
- Assist student pharmacists and graduates in evaluating their career selection decisions

Methods

- This cross-sectional research utilized an electronic self-administered, anonymous survey.
- Questionnaires were sent out to industry pharmacists excluding current industry fellows with a minimum of one year of industry experience who were registered on the IPhO website. The survey was fielded in June 2021 with preliminary data analyzes done in August 2021.
- Selected survey questions were designed to match recent published pharmacist job satisfaction research in order to provide future additional comparative perspectives between traditional pharmacy and industry pharmacy practice settings.

Results

Figure 1. Total Years in Industry

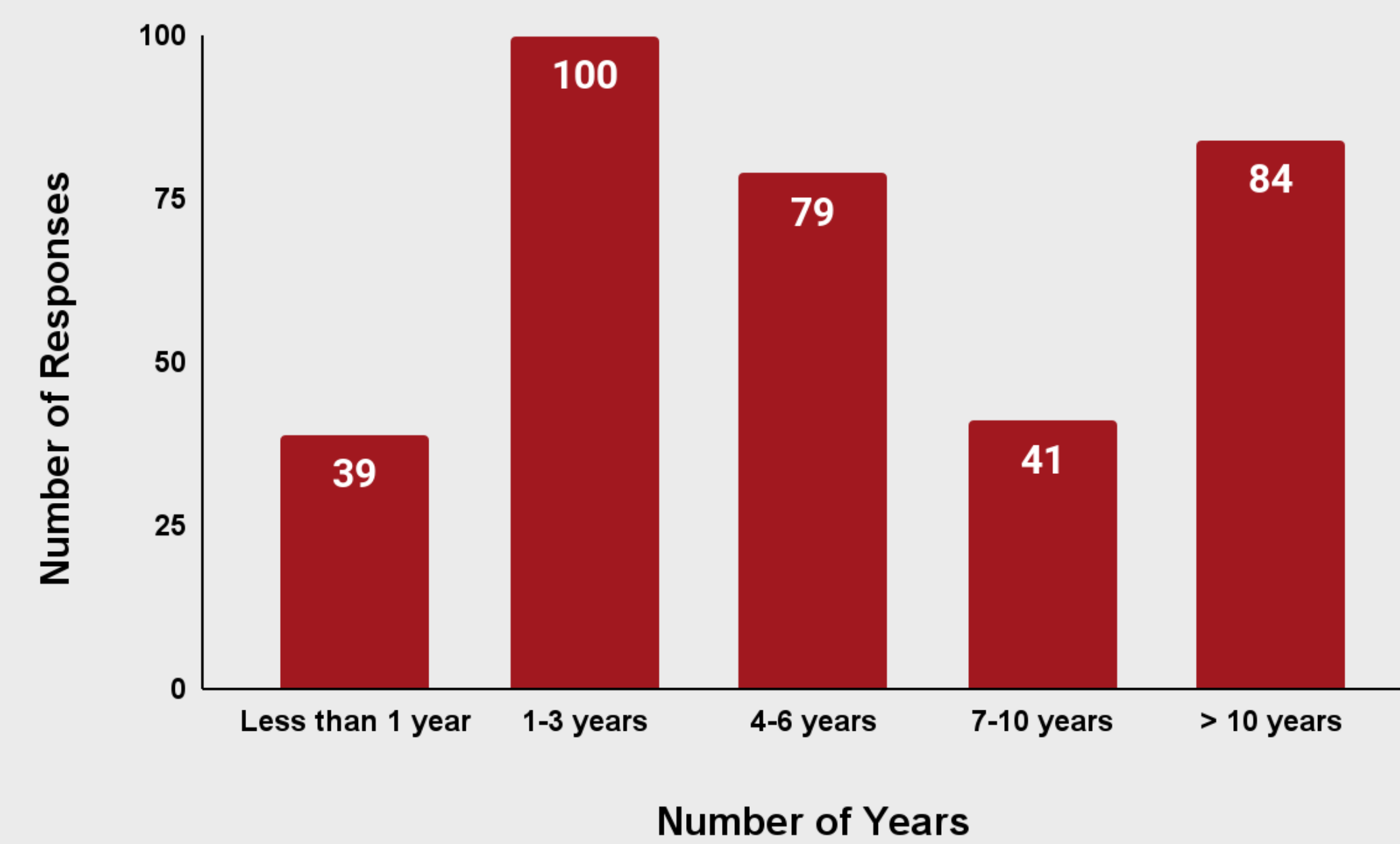


Figure 3. Drivers of Job Satisfaction

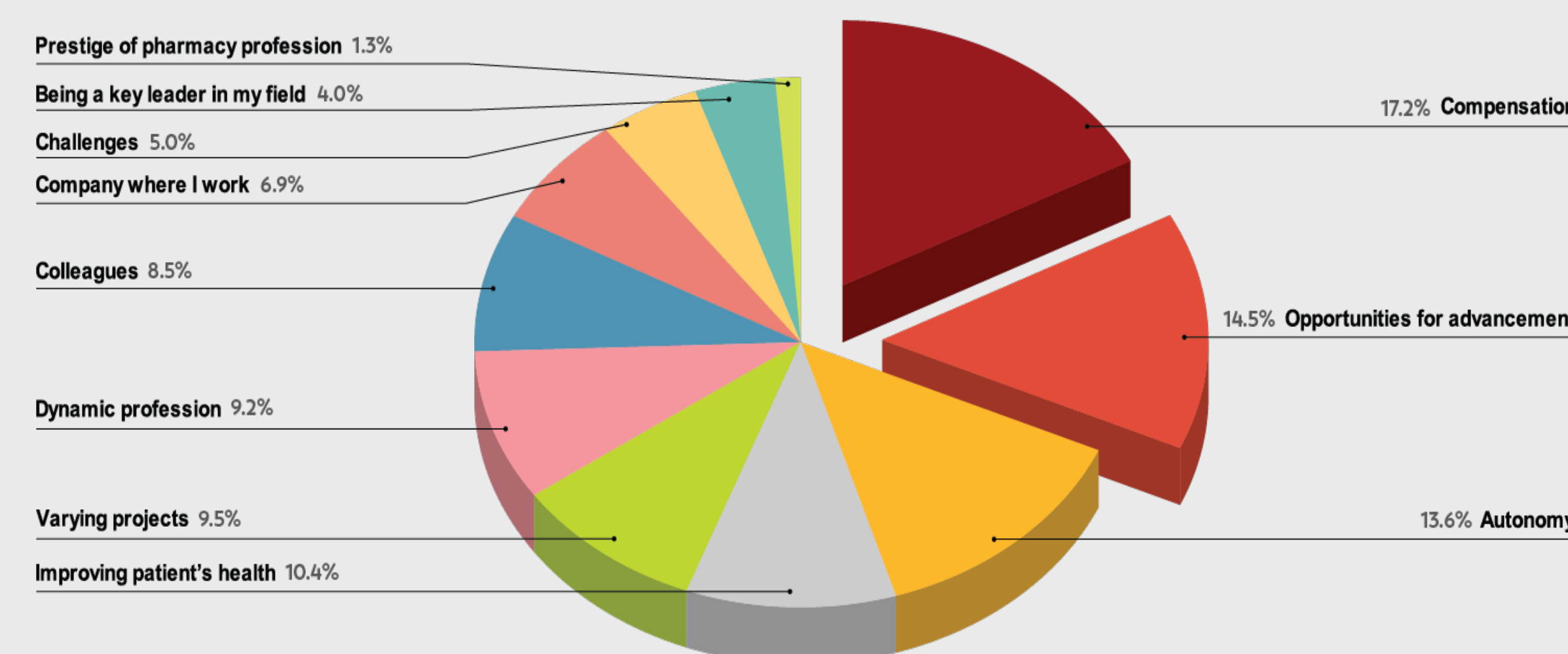


Figure 2. Functional Areas within Industry

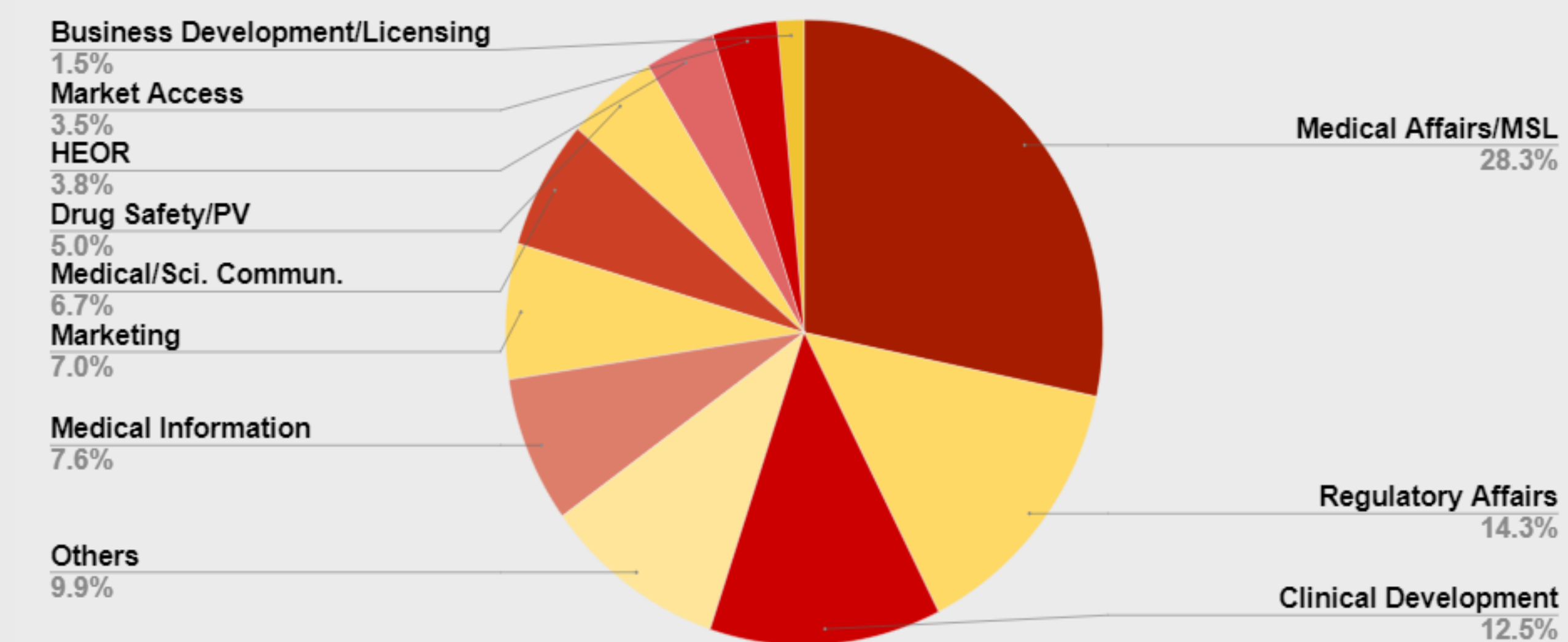
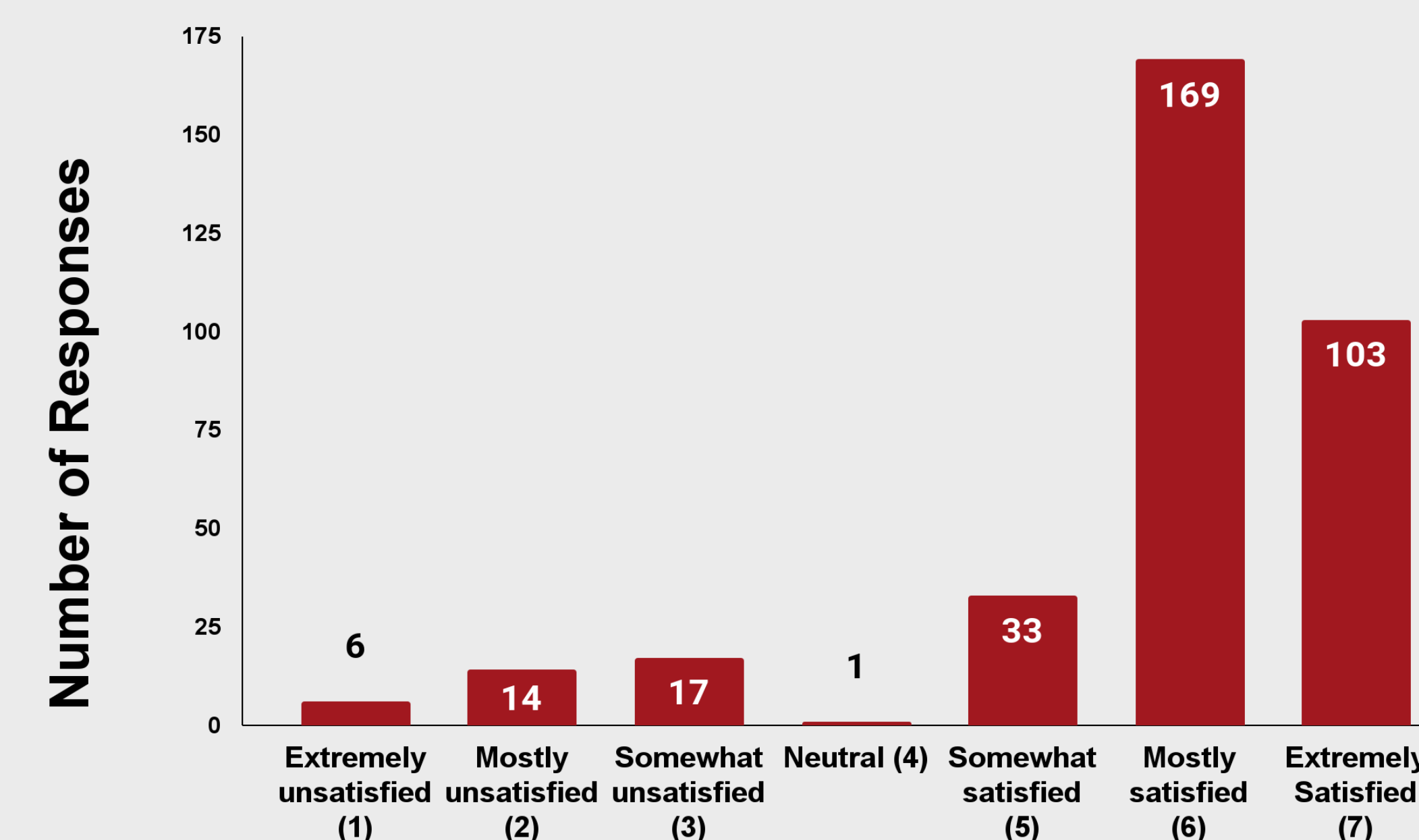


Figure 4. Current Overall Job Satisfaction



References

- 2019 Salary and Job Satisfaction Survey Results. Part 3 Job Satisfaction. *Pharmacy Times*. March 2021.
- 2020 Pharmacy Salary Survey Results. *Drug Topics*. Vol.164. No.12. December 2020.

Discussion

Three hundred and forty three industry pharmacists participated in this research. The average total years industry pharmacy experience including an industry fellowship where applicable was 4-6 years. The majority of pharmacists 82.7% worked for the Pharmaceutical/Biotechnology sector.

The split between those who completed a post-doctoral industry fellowship and those that did not was very similar, 46.6% completed a fellowship vs. 53.4% did not.

Figure 1. Total Year in industry

The specific breakdown for the total number of years in industry showed good participation at all ends of the experience spectrum. Those with less than one-year of industry experience (X%), 1-3, (X%), 4-6 years (56%), 7-10 years (X%), and greater than 10 years (X%).

Figure 2. Functional Areas Within Industry

The largest functional areas represented in this research included, Medical Affairs/Medical Science Liaison (28.3%), Regulatory Affairs (14.3%), and Clinical Development (12.5%). All key functional areas that commonly employ industry pharmacists were represented.

Figure 3. Top Drivers of Job Satisfaction

The "top 3 drivers" of job satisfaction, included, compensation (51.6%), opportunities for advancement (43.4%), and autonomy (40.8%). The authors believe that the high percentage of those respondents including autonomy in their top 3 satisfaction drivers is due to the impact of Covid-19 and respondents working more from home as a result. When industry pharmacists were asked to identify their "top 3 drivers" of job dissatisfaction, work-related stress(66.8%), workload (48.4%), and work/life balance (34.4%) were cited most frequently.

Figure 4. Current Overall Job Satisfaction

Industry pharmacists were asked to rate their current overall job satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being "extremely unsatisfied" and 7 being "extremely satisfied". This specific rating scale was chosen as it corresponds to the rating scale from the *Pharmacy Times* research described in the introduction. Using the same rating scale the overwhelming majority of industry pharmacists surveyed (79.3%) described their overall professional satisfaction at the highest end of the ratings scale of six and seven.

Conclusion

The findings of this industry pharmacist job satisfaction study shows that industry pharmacists are highly satisfied with their practice setting. When compared to pharmacist job satisfaction in community and hospital settings; industry pharmacists rate their job satisfaction much higher. This is one of the factors that directly correlates to the increases seen in the demand by students and post-graduates to pursue a career in industry. Given the importance of this type of research, future studies that include and distinguish industry pharmacists research participation will provide valuable information to students and post-graduates making career decision choices.