

# UA Pharmacy Interns Insights: Exploring Job Satisfaction and Factors Affecting Student Pharmacists

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## Introduction

### Background

Internships are critical for pharmacy education. An opportunity exists to better align internships with post graduate pharmacist opportunities. Factors like pay grade, task alignment, and professional development influence satisfaction. Existing studies show gaps in readiness for patient care and discrepancies between educational preparation and practice.

### Aim

To explore how various factors impact the job satisfaction of pharmacy interns and identify strategies for improvement

### Methods

#### Study Design:

- Online survey distributed to UA pharmacy interns.
- Focused on roles performed, pay grade, mentorship opportunities, and impact of workplace dynamics.

#### Study Population:

- *Inclusion:* UA pharmacy students actively working as interns.
- *Exclusion:* Non-pharmacy students and those under 18.

#### Data Collection:

- Survey using REDCap to ensure confidentiality.

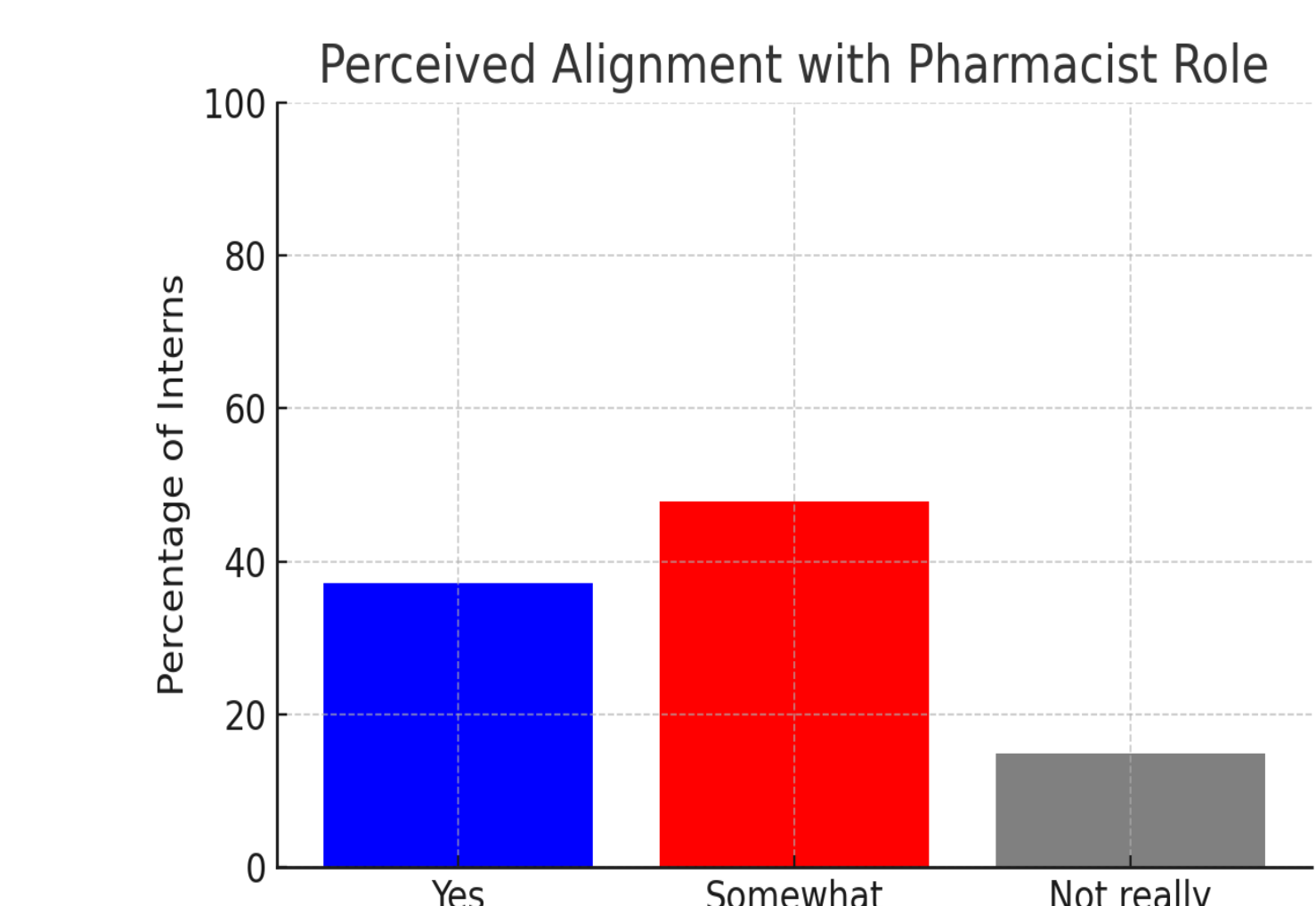
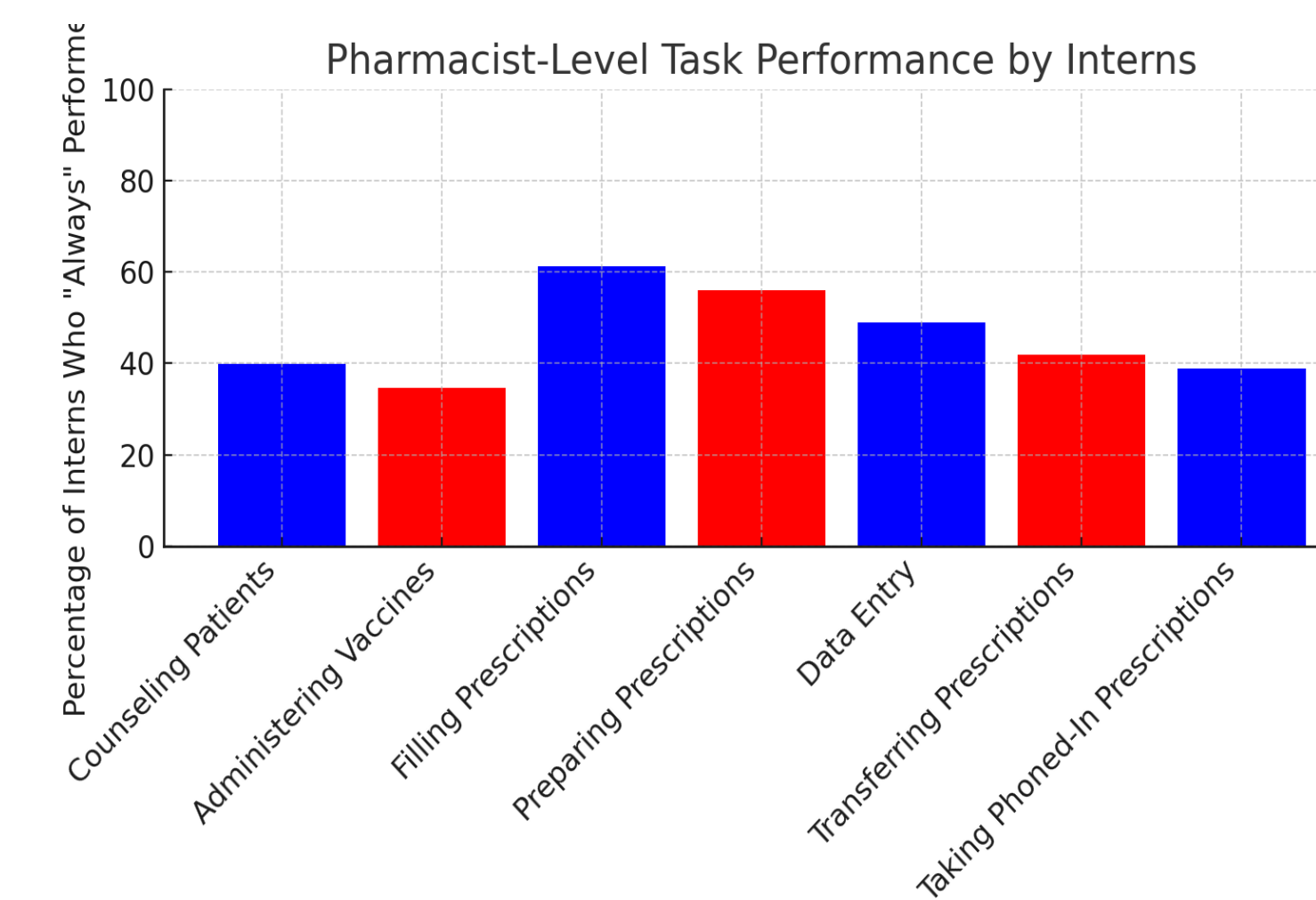
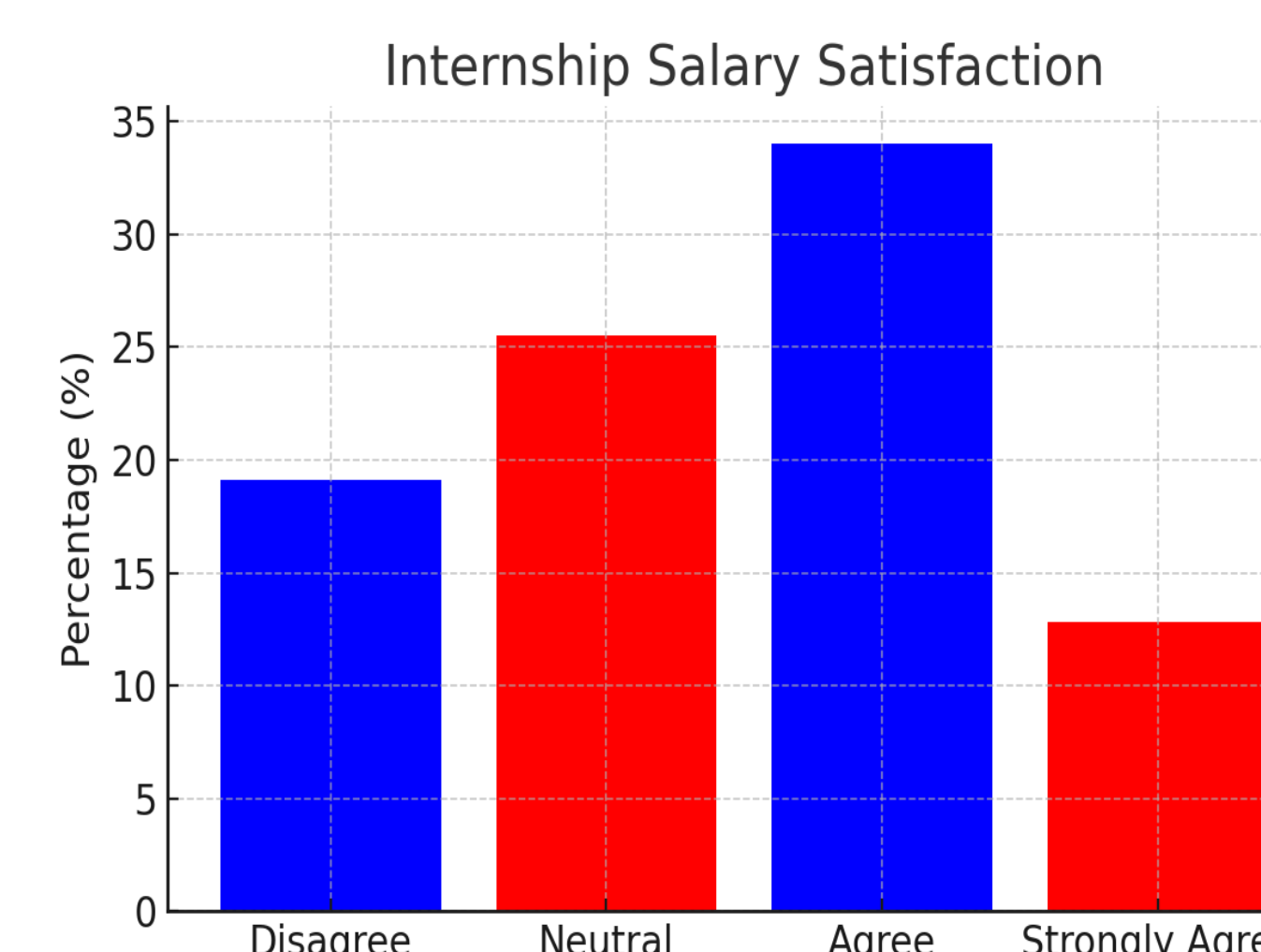
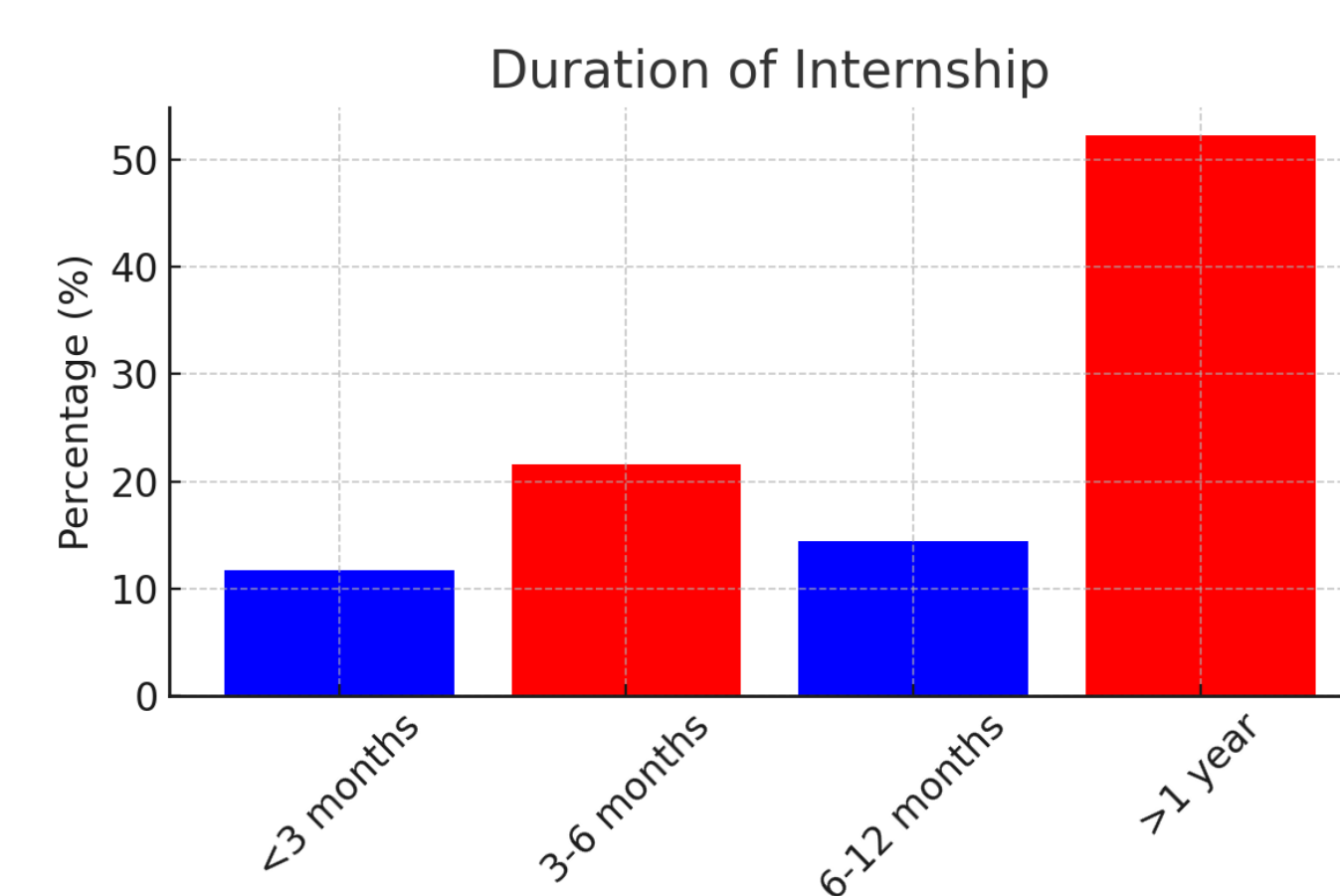
#### Specific Aims

- *Aim 1:* Analyze role alignment (pharmacist vs. technician tasks) and its impact on satisfaction.
- *Aim 2:* Evaluate pay grade's association with satisfaction.
- *Aim 3:* Assess the influence of professional development opportunities.
- *Aim 4:* Examine the impact of community pharmacy engagement.

## Results

### Trends:

- 52.3% of interns had more than one year of experience, and 79.3% worked part-time, primarily in community pharmacies (72.3%).
- Interns who performed pharmacist-level tasks like counseling (39.8%) and vaccine administration (34.7%) reported greater job satisfaction.
- Those earning higher pay (34% agreed, 12.8% strongly agreed they were satisfied) and receiving mentorship had higher overall satisfaction.
- 47.9% felt they were only somewhat gaining experience relevant to a pharmacist's role, showing room for improvement in internship alignment.



## Discussion

### Implications:

- Internship structure has a strong impact on intern satisfaction and professional growth.
- Keeping interns engaged in meaningful, pharmacist-level work can increase preparedness and retention.

### Future Directions:

- Develop standardized internship models with emphasis on mentorship and clinical exposure.
- Investigate long-term career outcomes based on intern satisfaction.

### Limitation:

- Self-reported data is prone to bias.
- Low response rate and unevenness of internship settings can limit generalizability.

## Conclusion

- Pharmacy intern satisfaction is significantly enhanced by engagement in pharmacist-level tasks, higher pay grades, and access to mentorship opportunities.
- Structured internships that align with professional roles and provide clinical exposure contribute to increased preparedness for post-graduate practice.
- Standardizing internship models with focus on professional development and role alignment may improve long-term outcomes and workforce retention.

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