Obituary

Professor Dr. Mohamed Azmi bin Ahmad Hassali (1974-2021)

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The profession of pharmacy had lost one of its key intellectual leaders when Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azmi Ahmad Hassali (Fig.1) had suddenly passed away on 16th of July, 2021.

Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azmi Ahmad Hassali was born on the 19th of February, 1974 in Penang, Malaysia. He graduated with a Bachelor’s Degree in Pharmacy from Universiti Sains Malaysia in the year 1998, followed soon after with a Master’s Degree in the field of clinical pharmacy from the same university in 2000. For his outstanding performance, he was then selected to receive the ‘Universiti Sains Malaysia Academic Staff Training Fellowship (ASTS)’ to pursue his PhD studies in the field of social pharmacy in Australia in 2002, consequently earning him a PhD by the Victorian College of Pharmacy at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.

Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azmi Ahmad Hassali joined Universiti Sains Malaysia as a lecturer and researcher after obtaining his PhD degree, and he was one of the key academicians and pioneers involved in setting up the Discipline of Social and Administrative Pharmacy Department within the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia. He was promoted to the position of associate professor and appointed as programme chairman for the Discipline of Social and Administrative Pharmacy in 2010. In 2012, he was appointed as the deputy dean of student affairs and networking of the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia. He obtained his professorship in 2014 at the age of 40.

As a researcher, Prof Azmi’s main research areas of expertise included the fields of social pharmacy, pharmacoepidemiology, pharmacy practice research, clinical pharmacoeconomics and clinical pharmacy. He had published over 800 articles in international peer-reviewed journals and authored over 250 conference presentations, besides also being recognized by the World Health Organization Pacific Office and WHO Geneva as a leading researcher in the field of generic medicine policy analysis and medication safety. He also made history when his name was recorded in the Malaysia Book of Records (MBR) for ‘Most Number of Medical Research Journals Published’ in 2017 [1]. Prof. Azmi published research books and contributed several book chapters which are widely utilized among the pharmacy profession to this day. One of the best known of the many books he had published is his books about generic medicine [2][3]. As a research supervisor, Prof. Azmi had graduated over 100 postgraduate students. He received numerous awards in the university and national level.

Professionally, Prof. Azmi served as advisory board member for many different journals since the year 2008, including the Journal ‘Pharmacy Practice’, the Journal of Medicine Use in Developing Countries, the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, Southern Medicine Review and Archives of Pharmacy Practice, the Journal of Pharmaceutical Health Service Research, the Journal of Pharmacy and Alternative Medicine and the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education as well as the Journal of Pharmaceutical Technology and Drug Research. He also served as a member of the editorial board for Nepal Journal of
Epidemiology and as an editor for the Journal of Pharma Scientist. Of course, his accomplishments are not limited to black-and-white journal publications alone, for he had also been invited as a keynote and plenary speaker for various conferences held both locally and internationally, besides also being actively involved in contributing to local community works. Prof. Azmi was also well sought-after as an internal and external examiner as well as an academic reviewer. He had numerous appointments as an adjunct lecturer besides also holding positions as honorary and visiting professors in the Middle East and Malaysia.

Despite his remarkable achievements and contributions to the profession both locally and globally, Prof. Azmi was better known for his role as an academician. Being the friendly, diligent, generous, caring and a much-loved mentor and supervisor that he was, he earned the title of the ‘Great Guru’ among his students, many of which are now scattered far and wide across the world. Therefore, amidst his countless academic accomplishments, his greatest legacy will always be the hundreds and thousands of pharmacists and students of whom he had impacted, inspired and developed.

“Some people come into our lives, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never the same.” - Unknown

REFERENCES


The main author, Ooi Guat See was a PhD student under the main supervision of Prof. Dr. Mohamed Azmi Ahmad Hassali and graduated in 2015. She was then joined School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia as a lecturer and became a colleague to Prof. Azmi in since 2018. They had been working closely in various research projects as well as teaching and learning related tasks.

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