

Turnover Intention and Continuing Professional Development of Rural Doctors from Targeted Admission Medical Education Program in China: A Cross-Sectional Study in the Post-COVID-19 Era

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Abstract

Background China has officially implemented a special free medical education program known as the Targeted Admission Medical Education (TAME) program since 2010. Since retaining TAME doctors remains a challenge, continuing professional development (CPD) is often seen as a viable retention strategy. **Methods** A snowball sampling method was adopted to collect survey responses from 1,369 TAME doctors with 5 to 10 years of work experience in Jiangxi Province, China. Multivariate binary logistic regression models were used to investigate the relationship between TAME doctors' turnover intention and demographic characteristics, work environment characteristics and CPD activities. **Results** Male doctors were less likely to report turnover intention (TI) than females (OR=0.425, 95% CI: 0.315 to 0.573). Rural doctors whose fathers were farmers were less likely to report TI (OR=0.410, 95% CI: 0.249 to 0.676), and a similar effect was seen for mothers who worked on farms. The highest TI effects were identified among those had pursued continuing professional development in a degree program (OR=6.927, 95% CI: 3.378 to 14.208) and had training in a higher-level institution totally for more than three months (OR=2.848, 95% CI: 1.934 to 4.195). **Conclusion** The study found that rural doctors in China who are active in continuous professional development (CPD), particularly among those pursuing a degree program, have highest turnover intention. The retention rate may be further improved by selecting students with strong rural connections and confirming their parents' engagement in farming. Additionally, work-life balance can be enhanced by considering their work location preferences, facilitating convenient fulfillment of family commitments.

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