



A Study on the Willingness of Government-funded Teacher Trainees to Leave Their Villages at the End of Their Term and the Factors Influencing Them

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Abstract. Government-funded Teacher Trainees is an important initiative to build rural teacher capacity and promote the revitalization of rural education, and the implementation of this policy is more important in fostering outstanding rural teachers who can teach for a long time and for life after the expiry of their contracts. However, relevant studies show that Government-funded Teacher Trainees have problems such as low renewal rates and low willingness to continue teaching in rural areas. In view of this, this study, under the perspective of the theory of planned behaviour and based on the questionnaire survey data of publicly-funded teacher training graduates from 16 cities in Shandong Province, empirically analyses the dynamics of the willingness of Government-funded Teacher Trainees to continue to teach in rural areas after expiry of their term of service, as well as the factors influencing them and the mechanism by which they do so.

Keywords: Government-funded Teacher Trainees; intention to teach; theory of planned behaviour; mediating effect

1 Introduction and Literature Review

Government-funded Teacher Trainees, who are trained by local colleges and universities, play a crucial role in building rural teacher teams. Since 2016, Shandong Province has implemented the "Government-funded Teacher Trainee" program in several local colleges and universities. The 2019 revised "Measures for the Implementation of Government-funded Teacher Training for Teacher Trainees in Shandong Province" aims to cultivate excellent teachers and attract outstanding talents to rural schools. The Rural Revitalization Strategy is an important policy proposed by China to promote rural change and development and to modernize China's countryside, and in 2015, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "the construction of rural teachers should be placed in the strategic position of priority development"[1]. Government-funded Teacher Trainees cultivated by local universities are an important part of the construction of rural teacher teams[2].

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There are fewer studies on Government-funded Teacher Trainees in foreign countries. Singapore has built a quality assurance chain for Government-funded Teacher Trainees; the Golden Apple Scholars Program of the United States is committed to recruiting, training and retaining outstanding teachers for weak schools; the British teacher educator training policy has gradually built up a set of financial assistance system. By summarizing and sorting out the current situation of relevant domestic research, the academic research on Government-funded Teacher Trainees mainly focuses on the research on the professional identity of Government-funded Teacher Trainees[3] and the potential impact of publicly-funded teacher educator policies on the existence of students. Zhu Shouxin, taking Jiangsu Province as an example, in the framework of the theory of planned behaviour, Behavior Attitude as a mediating variable, to empirically analyse the mechanism of the influence of the vocational commitment of rural oriented teacher trainees[4].

2 Theoretical Framework and Research Hypothesis

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Theory of planned behaviour (theory of planned behaviour, TPB) is developed by the American psychologist Icek Ajzen[5] on the basis of the theory of rational behaviour gradually improved to explain the psychological basis of human behaviour. The theory of planned behaviour includes five parts: behavioural action, Behavior Intention, Behavior Attitude, Subjective Norm, and Perceived Behavioral Control [6].

2.2 Hypothesis Formulation

This study argues that the three elements of the Theory of Planned Behaviour also have an impact on the willingness of publicly funded teacher trainees to leave the rural areas at the end of their term and formulates the research hypothesis:

H1 Behavior Attitudes of publicly funded teacher trainees have a significant positive effect on their willingness to leave rural areas after the expiry of their term;

H2 Subjective Norm of Government-funded Teacher Trainees have a significant positive effect on their willingness to leave the countryside after completion of their term;

H3 Perceived Behavioral Control of Government-funded Teacher Trainees has a significant positive effect on their willingness to leave the countryside at the end of their term.

Referring to the existing research results, it can be seen that by the impact and influence of the social changes of today's era, rural teachers have the problem of alienation from rural education, unfamiliarity with rural life, and confusion about their own roles and other problems such as the lack of native feelings[7].

H4 Subjective Norm of Government-funded Teacher Trainees influence their Behavior Intention to leave the countryside after the expiry of their term through Home-loving Syndrome.

3 Research Methodology

The dependent variable of this study is Behavior Intention, Behavior Attitudes, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behavioral Control in the theory of planned behaviour are used as the three latent variables in the study, and Home-loving Syndrome is used as the mediator variable of this study, using SPSS and AMOS modeling software, structural equation modeling is established to test the model data on the valid questionnaire data and the significance of the mediating effect between Home-loving Syndrome and Subjective Norm and Behavior Intention is tested using stepwise regression method.

The matrix equation of structural equation modelling is as follows:

$$x = \Lambda x\xi + \delta \quad (1)$$

$$y = \Lambda y\eta + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

$$\eta = B_\eta + \Gamma\xi + \zeta \quad (3)$$

Where equations (1) and (2) are referred to as the measurement model and equation (3) is the structural model.

4 Analysis of Empirical Results

4.1 Analysis of Willingness to Teach

Most of the Government-funded Teacher Trainees chose to leave the countryside to seek other development after the expiry of their term of study, while some of them held a neutral attitude.

4.2 Analysis of Factors Influencing Willingness to Teach

4.2.1 Path Analysis

Through the test of the existing model data, C.R. (i.e. the value of the test statistic) is greater than 1.96 means that it reaches the significance level of 0.05, and the P-value of all paths is less than 0.1, which leads to the conclusion that the three latent variables of the Theory of Planned Behaviour have a significant impact on the willingness of the Government-funded Teacher Trainees to leave the village for development after the expiry of their term. Among them.

In summary, all the paths of action are significant and at a good level of significance, and hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 are tested.

4.2.2 Significance Tests of Mediating Variables

According to the above results of the mediation effect test of stepwise regression method (this is shown in Table 1), it can be seen that in the first step (model I) of the

test, there is a significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. In the second step (model II) of the test there is a significant effect of the independent variable on the mediator variable. At the same time, in the third step (model III) of the test, the independent variable is not a significant effect on the dependent variable, and there is a significant effect of Home-loving Syndrome on the actual behaviour. The standardized path coefficient is 0.516, and the degree of significance is less than 0.001, which indicates that the mediating role of Home-loving Syndrome in the model is established and is fully mediated.

Based on the results of the coefficient test, the indirect effect of mediation can be calculated: $0.484 \times 0.516 / 0.609 = 0.41$, and the share of direct effect is: $0.193 / 0.609 = 0.3169$. Hypothesis H4 is verified.

Table 1. Tests for effects of intermediary variables (Hand-drawn by the author)

modelling implicit variable norm	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Behavior Intention		Home-loving Syndrome		Behavior Intention	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
Subjective Norm	0.609	16.236	0.484	11.696	0.193	4.587
Home-loving Syndrome					0.516	12.297
R Squared	0.371		0.235		0.400	
Adjusted R Squared	0.37		0.233		0.397	
F	263.613		136.785		148.247	

5 Conclusions

5.1 Main Findings

Firstly, the eyes of the immediate family, the support in terms of funds, personal development and other aspects make the original Home-loving Syndrome stronger, indirectly influencing the Government-funded Teacher Trainees to choose to leave the countryside. On the basis of the original Home-loving Syndrome, analysed by the path of AMOS model, when the immediate family members provide support in work and encourage the Government-funded Teacher Trainees to go back to work in their hometowns, the Home-loving Syndrome of the Government-funded Teacher Trainees will be even stronger on the basis of the original one, which indirectly influences them to choose to leave the countryside and return to their parents to work. Immediate family support has a direct impact on the Behavior Intention of Government-funded Teacher Trainees after the expiry of their term[8]. Zhao Xin pointed out that the sense of belonging to the organization has a good predictive ability on the turnover rate, absenteeism rate and work performance of enterprises[9].

Secondly, at the end of the period, Government-funded Teacher Trainees are more concerned about salary, marital relations and other practical issues. Since Perceived Behavioral Control positively affects their willingness to leave the countryside, we believe that "rural welfare" is less attractive than "urban charm", and "rural welfare" is

less attractive to Government-funded Teacher Trainees. We believe that "rural welfare" is less attractive than "urban charm" at this stage, and that "rural welfare" is less attractive to Government-funded Teacher Trainees and does not motivate them to stay in villages. Scholar Zhang Xuesong suggests that rural teachers' children can be given proper care in choosing schools, and rural teachers can be given the right to make their own choices[10], so as to reduce the loss of rural teachers.

Thirdly, government-funded teacher trainees at the end of their term are more concerned about realities such as salary and marital relations. According to the field survey, rural teachers in Shandong province were found to have higher monthly salaries than urban teachers (e.g., rural teachers in Dongying City, Shandong Province, would receive a monthly township subsidy of 1,500-1,700 yuan and a transport subsidy of 500-600 yuan). With the promotion of rural revitalization and strong support for rural education, better welfare benefits for rural teachers and higher rural subsidies become exogenous obstacles to government-sponsored teacher trainees leaving the countryside; the desire for advanced urban education and higher resource platforms becomes an endogenous driver to leave the countryside. Since Perceived Behavioral Control positively affects the Behavioral Intention to leave the countryside, we believe that "Rural Welfare" is less important than "Urban Charm" at this stage and that "rural welfare" is less attractive to government-funded teacher trainees and does not motivate them to stay in villages to teach. "Deep love for children, visionary devisal for future."

5.2 Countermeasure Recommendations

Teachers' high sense of responsibility comes from a high degree of autonomy, to stimulate the vitality of rural teachers, so that rural teachers can not only "take teaching as their aspiration", more "take teaching as pleasure". On the one hand, the establishment of a multi-criteria evaluation system for the professional development of rural teachers, giving rural teachers more autonomy and space for innovation, and changing the passive development of rural teachers from "wanting me to grow" to the proactive development of "my willing growth". On the other hand, we are exploring the construction of urban and rural education communities, broadening communication and cooperation channels for rural teachers, building learning communities and professional networks that meet the needs of the characteristics of rural education, and allowing outstanding teachers to lead rural teachers out of the "ivory towers of rural schools". For government-funded teacher trainees, there is a "gap" between urban and rural areas. Rural education facilities are relatively backward, and it takes a long time for advanced education concepts and pedagogical knowledge to be absorbed and changed; government-funded teacher trainees are mostly inexperienced new teachers who are quick to accept new knowledge.

Rural teachers face many psychological pressures such as professional identity, teacher ethics, professional competence, and performance responsibilities during the period of performance, which require them to be empowered in all aspects, from material support to spiritual support. On the one hand, psychological measurements and assessments should be conducted regularly for government-funded teacher trainees in performance to understand their psychological needs and confusion, so as to alleviate

the psychological pain of government-funded teacher trainees during their teaching in rural areas. During the interview, a government-funded teacher trainee pointed out that his major was physics, but he was assigned to teach mathematics because there was no shortage of physics teachers in his township school. The government-funded teacher trainee had never come into contact with the subject of mathematics during his training in school, which caused him to be emotionally unstable for a period of time, but she adjusted his mindset in time and was actively engaged in the process of teaching mathematics. On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen the contact and cooperation with the media from all walks of life, to strive for the support and attention of the community to rural teachers, to build a social ecosystem in which the whole society respects and supports rural teachers, so that they can receive positive support from the psychological point of view, and thus to provide a double guarantee for the awakening of the awareness of the rural teachers from the drive to the initiative.

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