

A Survey to Explore Academic General Practitioner Educators' Job Embeddedness

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Introduction

The ongoing shortfall in the UK General Practitioner (GP) workforce reinforces the need to encourage medical students to consider General Practice as a career¹. Academic General Practitioner Educators (AGPEs) play a crucial role in exposing students to primary care during training as an acknowledged driver of GP career intentions. However, little is known about the job embeddedness—comprising fit, links, and sacrifice²—of AGPEs and the factors that support their retention in educator roles.

Methods

An online survey of AGPEs in the UK and Republic of Ireland explored factors influencing occupational embeddedness of AGPEs. Embeddedness was measured using an adapted Occupational Embeddedness Scale³ and a newly developed questionnaire informed by prior qualitative interviews with AGPEs.

Sample

Sixty AGPEs (mean age = 46.58, 37 Female) who worked an average 0.36 full time equivalent (FTE) in undergraduate medical education responded to the survey (Table 1 for sample demographics).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Survey Sample

	Mean	SD	Salary comparison (pro rata)	(n/%)
Age	46.58	9.53	1 Educator much less than clinical	16 (26.7%)
Educator FTE	0.36	0.24	2 Educator bit less than clinical	17 (28.3%)
GP FTE	0.46	0.26	3 Educator about the same as clinical	17 (28.3%)
Total FTE	0.83	0.22	4 Educator a bit more than clinical	9 (15.0%)
Years Educator	10.00	8.00	5 Educator much more than clinical	
Education contract type		Gender		
Open ended	43 (68.3%)		Female	37 (61.7%)
Others	16 (31.7%)		Male	23 (38.3%)
Workplace		Qualified GP years		
England	20 (33.3%)		<3 years	7 (11.7%)
Scotland	25 (41.7%)		3-7 years	9 (15.0%)
Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Wales	15 (25.0%)		8-15 years	11 (18.3%)
			16-25 years	18 (30.0%)
			26+ years	15 (25.0%)

Table 2: Mann-Whitney U Test for the Difference of Relative Educator Salary Between Open-ended and Other Contracts

	Open ended contract			Other contracts			Statistic	p	Effect Size	HL 95% CI
	n	M (SD)	Mean Rank	n	M (SD)	Mean Rank				
Relative Salary	43	2.56(1.05)	33.36	16	1.81 (1.11)	20.97	U = 488; Z = 2.554**	.010	0.420	[0.000, 1.000]

Results

Several mechanisms supporting embeddedness were identified. AGPEs on open-ended or permanent educator contracts perceived their relative educator salary (compared with their GP salary, see Salary comparison part in Table 1) more favourably (Table 2). Relative salary positively predicted overall embeddedness—particularly the links and sacrifice dimensions—after adjusting for age and gender (Table 3).

Independently of age, gender, and relative salary, AGPEs with higher proportional educator FTE reported stronger overall embeddedness, educator identity and reward in education activity (Table 4).

Discussion and Conclusion

These results imply that *while salary matters*, finding education work meaningful and seeing oneself as an educator may be central to embeddedness (especially, *links* and *sacrifice* aspects). The proportion of educator and GP contract lengths predicted overall and two novel components of embeddedness, indicating that optimal educator contract types may depend on individuals' context. *These findings highlight practical strategies to enhance AGPE retention and introduce educator identity and perceived reward as novel contributors to occupational embeddedness.*

Table 3: Hierarchical Regression for the Effect of Relative Salary on Occupational Embeddedness Controlling for Age and Gender

	Predictor	B	SE	β	p	B	SE	β	p	R ²	F _{change1} (2, 55)	F _{change2} (1, 54)	
1	Fit	Age	-.036**	.011	-.416	.001	-.035**	.010	-.409	.002	.172	5.706**	
		Gender	.070	.204	.042	.732	.045	.203	.027	.826			
		Relative salary	—	—	—	—	.125	.089	.170	.169	.201	1.943	
2	Links	Age	.034**	.012	.348	.008	.035*	.012	.362	.004	.121	3.788*	
		Gender	-.106	.236	-.057	.656	-.161	.225	-.086	.478			
		Relative salary	—	—	—	—	.269**	.099	.326	.009	.226	7.355**	
3	Ordinal	Age	.192	.114	.221	.097	.203	.110	.234	.070	.063	1.839	
		Gender	-2.331	2.202	-.139	.294	-2.773	2.128	-.165	.198			
		Relative salary	—	—	—	—	2.175*	.939	.292	.024	.147	5.363*	
4	Number	Age	-.027*	.010	-.326	.013	-.026*	.010	-.313	.013	.109	3.362*	
		Gender	.137	.203	.087	.501	.091	.193	.058	.638			
		Relative salary	—	—	—	—	.226*	.085	.322	.011	.211	7.017*	
5	Sacrifice	Age	-.013	.008	-.229	.088	-.012	.007	-.212	.087	.052	1.522	
		Gender	.051	.149	.045	.737	.010	.138	.009	.943			
		Relative salary	—	—	—	—	.200**	.061	.398	.002	.209	10.689**	
6	Overall	Age	.029	.033	.114	.396	.032	.032	.128	.318	.026	.735	
		Gender	-.603	.647	-.124	.356	-.746	.619	-.154	.233			
		Relative salary	—	—	—	—	.706*	.273	.329	.012	.133	6.690*	

Note. N = 58. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 4: Hierarchical Regression for the Effect of Percentage of Educator Job on Overall Job Embeddedness, Educator Identity and Reward in Education Controlling for Age, Gender and Relative Salary

	Predictor	B	SE	β	p	B	SE	β	p	R ²	F _{change1} (3, 52, 53)	F _{change2} (1, 51-52)	
CMO Based	OE Overall	Age	-.017	.009	-.242	.065	-.018*	.009	-.257	.042	.138	2.838	
		Gender	.303	.175	.223	.088	.353*	.169	.260	.041			
		Relative Salary	.120	.078	.197	.129	.023	.085	.038	.784			
Identity	Ed FTE%	Age	-.022*	.010	-.283	.029	-.024**	.009	-.308	.009	.222	5.610*	
		Gender	.204	.185	.139	.276	.281	.169	.191	.102	.197	4.257	
		Relative Salary	.224**	.083	.337	.009	.083	.085	.125	.332			
Educator	Ed FTE%	Age	-.011	.012	-.124	.361	-.012	.011	-.140	.279	.355	12.503***	
		Gender	.198	.229	.116	.391	.267	.220	.157	.229	.059	1.100	
		Relative Salary	.135	.102	.177	.191	.001	.111	.001	.994			
	Ed FTE%	—	—	—	—	.012*	.005	.368	.014	.162	6.406*		

Note. N = 56-57. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

References

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