

**FACTORS INFLUENCING ON PERCEPTION
AND WILLINGNESS TOWARDS WORKING
AT A TOWNSHIP HOSPITAL AMONG
ASSISTANT SURGEONS IN TERTIARY
HOSPITALS OF MANDALAY**

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ABSTRACT

Inequitable distribution of medical doctors is one of the challenging issues to achieve universal health care coverage in developing countries like Myanmar. Understanding of perception and willingness of medical doctors towards working at a township hospital is crucial to extend health care coverage to the vulnerable rural population. This study aims to assess the factors influencing on perception and willingness towards working at a township hospital among the civil assistant surgeons in tertiary hospitals of Mandalay city. A total of 169 participants from four tertiary hospitals of Mandalay city responded to the self-administered questionnaire and 12 participants for in-depth interviews. The results revealed that only one out of five assistant surgeons were interested to work at a township hospital and majority showed negative perception. Having graduated parents was associated with negative perception while having health professional fathers had significant association with reduced willingness towards working at a township hospital. The respondents with positive perception were more likely to work at a township hospital than those with negative perception. Both quantitative and qualitative findings consistently revealed that the major barriers to work at a township hospital were heavy workload, inadequate medical equipment and essential medicine, accommodation facility, limited career opportunities and security concerns in conflict areas. They also suggested the transfer policy to be fair and transparent and to increase payment or offer cost of living allowance for working at remote township hospitals. The perception of assistant surgeons which directly affect their willingness of working at a township hospital should be taken into consideration and applied during policy formulation and implementation of human resources for health. Further similar study should be conducted using nationally representative sample of assistant surgeons to reflect the overall perception from different aspects and to understand the real situation of working at a township hospital.