

## Analysis of teacher recruitment and selection processes with the aim of enhancing policy making in public administration

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze the challenges and problems of teacher recruitment process and to provide policy recommendations for its optimization. To do so, adopting basic qualitative method, Semi-structured interviews were used as the main instrument for data collection. Using purposive sampling, 15 academic experts, specialists and managers in the field of human resource management and teacher education and 4 student-teachers were selected and participated in this study. Based on the research background and lived experiences of participants, the basic questions of the interview protocol were prepared and finally, with the opinion of experts, its validity was confirmed. After preparing and sending the interview protocol to the participants, the interviews were conducted. Analysis of the results and findings revealed that there are six shortcomings of: 1-policy making-institutional; 2-cognitive-attitudinal; 3-futuristic; 4-executive; 5-legal; and 6-methodological in teacher recruitment and selection. After the formation of the focus group, policy recommendations were provided in accordance with these shortcomings, which were presented in four categories of recommendations focusing on the areas of theory, policy-making and intermediate management, middle management and planning, and executive management. This study rich theoretical, methodological, and practical implications for researchers and policy makers involved in teacher education.

**Keywords:** Teacher Education, Teacher Recruitment and Selection, Teacher Recruitment Optimization, Teacher Recruitment Pathology

## Introduction

Today one of the most important and influential organizations in any society is education. The organization of education is one of the most important pillars of any social system (McNamara, 2021) in which the teacher is the most basic element. So that the efficiency of any educational system is directly or indirectly related to its activities (Osamwonyi, 2016). Quality in teacher education is a high priority public demand due to its effectiveness in advancing the lofty goals of the country; because the quality of teacher education affects the quality of students' achievement and leads to cultural, political, social and even economic growth of our society. For this reason, quality assurance is considered a common practice in quality assessment (Bob

et al, 2005; Brings, 2009; Chong & Ho, 2009) which includes all the policies, policy makings, processes and activities through which the quality is maintained, improved and developed. To this end, some countries, such as Sweden, Turkey and Australia, have developed and established a national framework of qualifications (Zakersalehi, 2018) according to which procedures from new quality assurance and setting standards based on student enrollment to learning outcomes are used (Keevy & Chakroun, 2015).

This framework targets the components such as designing competencies, defining learning outcomes, designing programs, measuring and accrediting programs, credits, and learning pathways (Farrokhi, 2018). Majority of the researches on the subject of student selection and admission have been aimed at finding an optimal set of criteria by which the top students can be ranked and selected in an unbiased and systematic manner. These criteria should be consistent with the goals and mission of universities and provide an accurate prediction of the success of those admitted (Ghorbani & Montazer, 2015; Faraji Dehsorkhi et al, 2016). On the other hand, some studies have emphasized the implementation and measurement of these criteria (Rostamzadeh et al, 2021; Nabavi, 2019).

This dimension of teacher education has been studied and researched in different countries and educational systems. The method for selecting primary-school teachers in the Iranian education system has been evaluated (Farahani et al, 2012). Based on the results of this study, it has been suggested that in the process of recruiting and selecting teachers, attention should be paid to the interest and motivation of candidates, as well as their physical, psychological and academic characteristics, improving the recruitment and selection process and using local forces. In terms of methods and tools, a group of researchers examined the factor structure of the psychological characteristics scale in recruiting primary-school teachers (Sharifzadeh et al, 2019) and identified cognitive, personality, emotional, and spiritual factors. Another researcher (Saafi, 2019), after studying the written works, said that the most important problem in the recruitment process is the lack of sufficient inclination of intelligent and talented students to choose a teaching job, the lack of stability in the regulations and executive policies of education regarding recruitment, employment, selection of Farhangian Teacher Education University students through the national entrance exam and as a result of the impossibility of forming student classes at the beginning of October due to the delay in the process of selecting and recruiting students in different campuses, not allocating the necessary employment ranks for student-teacher admission by the Management and Planning Organization, lack of equipment has done.

The problems of the professional interview process for admission to Farhangian Teacher Education University were examined in a study (Nabavi & Farhadian, 2021) that finally divided them into six main categories: professional talents, abilities and capabilities, motivation and interest of candidates, level of expectations, personality and psychological characteristics, and health of psychologically, they were classified. The implementation problems of this process also included introducing the candidate for the interview, coordination between the interviewers, attracting capable interviewers, interfering with the interviewers' duties, tendency to choose the teaching profession, reducing the tendency to the teaching profession, interview duration, and localization of the candidates.

In a comparative study, the criteria for selecting student-teachers in teacher education institutions in South Korea, Japan, Canada, Finland and Iran were examined (Soleimani, et al, 2021). According to this study, paying attention to practical skills and assigning a part of the interview to the candidates' participation in the actual teaching process and using the interview tool as a complementary tool is a feature. The main advantages are the use of interview tools to determine the right people in the teacher education centers of the mentioned countries, which is somewhat different from the student-teacher selection process in Iran. In another study (Ramezankhani et al, 2021), belief components, personality traits, educational background, identity, social and skills were emphasized as basis of evaluation. The Education Committee has published a detailed report on the recruitment and retention of teachers in the UK (The Education Committee, 2021). The report showed that in order to attract teachers, regional and thematic differences, initial teacher education and continuous teacher education should be considered. Elementary teachers are weaker in math and science, and this should be re-examined in terms of recruitment criteria. In another study, the criteria for recruitment and selection process of high school teachers through the Public Services Commission in the Balochistan province of Pakistan has been examined (Jaafar et al, 2020). The results showed that the employment policy of the Balochistan Public Services Commission is ambiguous. Competence was the most important standard of selection, but the methods adopted to analyze the applicant's competence did not conform to standard methods.

The results of the researches indicate that despite the emphasis on theoretical and research bases and superior documents in the field of attracting the best and worthiest applicants, no transformational action has been taken so far. Causal

factors such as policies, futures studies, teacher image and underlying factors such as the competence of managers and those involved in recruitment, the amount of budget required and other factors have made the recruitment process cannot properly identify the best. Therefore, in this study, we seek to find obstacles in the path of attracting and selecting teachers in the Iranian education system.

## Methodology

The present study is applied in terms of purpose and from the point of view of implementation method, it is a descriptive exploratory type. The approach of this research is qualitative and in doing so, the basic method was used. Participants in this study are a combination of academic experts and managers aware of human resources and teacher education, policy makers in this field, and student teachers were susceptible who were selected by purposive sampling. The criteria for selecting academic experts was the implementation of at least three studies related to student admission and the quality of teacher education. This criterion was considered for informed managers and policy makers, policy and management in the field of human resources of teacher education for at least three years and for students, elite and gaining a top position in the student period. Data collection continued until the theoretical saturation of the information was reached. Based on this, a total of 15 academic experts, specialists and managers in the field of human resources and teacher education and 4 student-teachers participated in this study.

Semi-structured interviews were used as data collection tools and the duration of each interview varied from 37 minutes to 133 minutes. Analysis in this qualitative research was an almost sequential process that led to the accurate description and interpretation of the phenomenon. Depoy & Gitlin (2005) is a naturalistic and efficient version of analysis that is specific to field studies and its six stages was used. After implementing and writing the text of the recorded interviews and in order to analyze the data and information, open, centralized and selective coding methods were used.

## Findings

After analyzing the interviews, 24 problems were identified. After axial coding, the problems were classified into six categories, the results of which are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*The main concepts of the problems of the teacher recruitment and selection process*

Components	Main Problems	Components	Main Harms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inaccurate understanding of teacher education</li> <li>Minimization of education</li> <li>Teacher's appearance</li> <li>Legal and livelihood status of the teacher</li> <li>Lack of transparency in the definition of a teacher</li> </ul>	Cognitive-attitudinal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of teacher education policy maker</li> <li>Instability of teacher education policy</li> <li>Lack of a comprehensive teacher system</li> <li>Lack of teacher organization</li> <li>Inconsistency between departments in the field of teacher supply</li> <li>Intervention of various institutions</li> <li>Dominance of taste and political views</li> </ul>	Policy-Institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unplanned and urgent execution</li> <li>Lack of budget allocation and sufficient time for executive management</li> </ul>	Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of establishment of talent management system</li> <li>Lack of competitive approaches in recruitment</li> <li>Lack of measurement tools</li> <li>Quality of interviewers</li> <li>A minimal look at standards</li> </ul>	Approachical-methodological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obsolescence of rules and procedures</li> <li>Lack of independent employment and financial law in education</li> </ul>	Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ambiguous estimation in required teacher planning</li> <li>Lack of future studies, employment status research and labor market</li> </ul>	Futuristic

After analyzing the results, in order to provide policy recommendations, a focus group consisting of seven academic experts and managers related to recruitment and admission was formed. In order to transfer the experiences of the quality department, two experts from the university department and policy makers were also present in this group. During a meeting,

the group discussed the research results and made recommendations. Table 2 provides policy recommendations for improving the teacher recruitment and selection process.

**Table 2**

*Policy recommendations derived from the results of the focus group*

A) Recommendations focused on the field of theory
Defining the teacher and redefining it, in order to revive and strengthen the comprehensive role of the teacher
Redefine teacher education and clarify the goals of teacher education
Reconceptualization the philosophy of teacher to meet the challenges of education in the contemporary century
Futurology studies
B) Recommendations for long-term implementation
Establishing, appointing, or strengthening a reference and the main and final policy-making body and institution regarding the teacher and teacher education
Designing, compiling and approving a comprehensive teacher system
Establishment of a talent management system
C) Recommendations for implementation in the medium term
Designing, compiling and approving the national system of teacher education
Change in teacher recruitment through change from external motivators to internal motivators
Diversification by methods of teacher preparation and education
Decentralization of teacher supply and education and its planning based on national, provincial and regional needs
Design, approval and establishment of the teacher system organization
D) Recommendations for implementation in the short term
Design, development and implementation of a comprehensive system for assessing entry competence and output competency of teacher education
Accurate and regular scheduling and allocation of sufficient budget to assess the entry of teacher candidates

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed that one of the disadvantages of the teacher recruitment and selection process is policy-institutional shortcomings. Teacher education is a national issue and its emphasis as a national institution has been emphasized in numerous studies (Tatto et al, 2013). This finding is in line with the results of other researches (Heidari, 2020). In this study, phenomena such as globalization, systematicity, strategicity, comprehensiveness, holism, transparency and avoidance of ambiguity have implied the existence of a policy-making body in teacher education. Other research (Jaffar et al, 2020; Musset, 2010) has also found the existence of a national policy-making body in teacher education necessary to respond to the vision of global change.

Another disadvantages are cognitive and attitudinal deficits. One of the problems in the field of understanding teacher education is that there is no accurate understanding of teacher education among the scientific community and experts on the one hand, and policy makers and implementers on the other (Gouya & GholamAzad, 2019; NamdariPejman, 2019). Despite the definition of the teacher education subsystem as a reference for recruiting, preparing, retaining, promoting and evaluating teachers in the document of transformation (Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, 2010), the dimensions of this issue are not clear by stakeholders and stakeholders. This ambiguity and lack of transparency requires related documents and sub-documents to clarify the concept of teacher education so that the unity of thought and attitude towards the issue of teacher education as a common discourse occurs between different groups.

One of the shortcomings that affect the process of teacher recruitment as a mediator is futuristic failures. Future research consists of a set of efforts that visualize and plan for potential futures by analyzing resources, patterns, and factors of change or stability. This result is consistent with the findings of other studies (Mossadegh & MohammadiPouya, 2020; Jahanian, 2009) in which the issue of predicting the supply of manpower and evaluating its programs is one of the strategies for optimizing the program. Introduction of education manpower has been introduced.

Another disadvantage of this process is related to executive failures. A short period of time allows the interview sessions to be held superficially and with minimal credibility. Other studies (Nabavi & Farhadian, 2021; Mossadegh & MohammadiPouya, 2020) also emphasized the short interview time as a serious injury. The results of other studies (Liakopoulou, 2011; Nabavi, 2019) indicate that teacher recruitment and selection requires time management, because ensuring

the competence of individuals should be based on specific evidence and tools. Semi-structured and in-depth interviews, teaching observation, thinking tests, and more require specialized time, time, and manpower, and in some countries (such as the United States, Australia, and Germany) are conducted in specialized centers. The implication of these studies on the system of teacher recruitment and selection in Iran is that in the executive management of recruitment, in addition to policies, there is a need for serious revision and rearrangement that this paradigm shift requires a change in the way a teacher is viewed.

Most of the problems of the absorption process are related to approachical-methodological failures. The recruitment system in the teacher education system lacks the element of competition (Mehrmohammadi, 2015). In this regard, some studies believe that competition in student-teacher education is the basis for the quality of preparation (Caena, 2014). In explaining this finding, it can be said that competition provides a basis for performance comparison, and through this, teacher education institutions can be evaluated and marked. Many teacher education systems around the world implement the talent management approach (Hosseini, 2010). The system of teacher education, in terms of the extent of its impact on the political, economic, social and cultural sectors, as well as the education of future generations of human society, requires the entry of talented and exemplary forces. This goal requires the establishment of talent management.

The last damage of the recruitment and selection process in teacher education was legal shortcomings. The laws of recruitment and employment in education have changed several times since 1307; However, the last change in this law, the Law on Service Commitments in the Ministry of Education, was approved by the Islamic Consultative Assembly in 1990. It seems that the laws in this area need to be revised based on the existing conditions and requirements and the needs of society and learners. In order to optimize this process, it is necessary to separate the employment laws and recruitment procedures from the national entrance examination and to do so through a valid and validated process.

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