

Research on the Limitations of Teacher Recruitment on Non-teacher-oriented Students

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ABSTRACT

This paper sheds light on the limitations the non-teacher-oriented students (students who do not major in Education) meet in teacher recruitment. It is inspired by the author's working experience as a tutor to help students applying for teacher. During the work experience, the requirements are strict for non-teacher-oriented students and concern them a lot. These students can hardly change their situation. Therefore, doing this research is of great value. The interview data with different groups of participants was analyzed. The interview was mainly about the requirements for majors, the written tests and the demo classes. According to the research results, except some basic requirements necessary for application, all of the participants regard the practical experience as the most significant factor to success, which is a loss in non-teacher-oriented students' education in university, but they have different attitudes towards the written tests.

Keywords: *Teacher recruitment, non-teacher-oriented students, consecutive teacher education programme, requirement, practical experience*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, some examinations have been conducted to recruit teachers for public schools [1]. However, in all kinds of recruitment, most of them have restrictions for the majors of candidates.

In China, students can be mainly divided into two general majors in universities, one is teacher-oriented, which means the students will take concurrent teacher education programme in university, and the other is non-teacher-oriented. The latter group of students will have a lot of limitations when they want to be a teacher in schools because they may lack some professional knowledge compared with the former group of students. However, the recruitment tends to be composed of two examinations, the written test, which consists of pedagogy and academic knowledge of a certain subject, and the implementation of a demo class. Even though the non-teacher-oriented students get higher scores in the same test and have some teaching experience, they may also be rejected. The reasons for conducting this exploratory study are as follows.

Firstly, the employment of non-teacher-oriented students as teachers is not satisfactory, and my personal experience in a tutorial institution to help those students

succeed enables me to look deeper into such issue. Some of these students are proficient in English and they show great interest in English teaching after several years' education in university. To students who have completed a university degree and chose to be a teacher afterwards, they tend to be more determined and hard-working because they need to make sustaining efforts to attain their goal. To be a qualified teacher, proficiency, interest and a strong will are indispensable.

Secondly, the application of teacher recruitment examination is relatively restricted. Most public schools only want teacher-oriented students, and some excellent non-teacher-oriented students can only work in private schools or training institutions. If you want to obtain the qualification, students need to spend a lot of time and energy taking the postgraduate entrance examination to change their majors, or work as a temporary contractors in schools for several years. During such periods, students may fail because of fierce competition, so that they get no access to their dream job. In China, it is called "one examination determines your life"[2].

Thirdly, there are consecutive teacher education programmes for students who have completed a university degree in foreign countries. However, there is no similar policy in China. Some private tutorial

institutions help students prepare, but many do not have training qualifications. The teaching content often focuses on how to get high scores, which is of no practical use to students.

This research focuses on some restrictions encountered by non-teacher-oriented students in teacher recruitment, which is a common and practical problem in China. To some extent, this problem can also reflect the reasons for the failure of non-teacher-oriented students in teacher recruitment. Thus, it can help better understand teacher recruitment and offer some advice for non-teacher-oriented students who want to be teachers. Interview is adopted to collect useful information about the limitations these students meet and their attitudes towards different aspects of teacher recruitment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. In China

At present, China needs to train all kinds of high-quality talents, such as cultivating talents with international vision to ensure an advanced country in science and technology, to adapt to the Information Age and to achieve global reach. Teachers are mainly responsible for cultivating these talents and determining the quality of basic education. Based on the actual needs of China, what teacher education can do is to cultivate "great teachers from a great country". In 2017, the implementation of teacher-oriented courses was officially launched. The fundamental purpose of this series of measures is to improve the quality of teacher

training [3]. However, after four years' education in university, some non-teacher-oriented students also choose to be teachers. According to the data of the employment of school graduates in 2014, the proportion of non-teacher-oriented students recruited by normal universities and entering the teacher industry after graduation are different. The proportion is respectively 11.3%, 16.3%, 38.5%, 10%, 8.2% in five normal universities administered directly by the Ministry of Education [4]. Throughout most normal universities, the employment rate of non-teacher-oriented students is relatively low. Many graduates enter the education industry, but in fact, the job does not match their majors, which also causes poor quality in job [5]. Although the Decision of the State Council on Deepening Education Reform and Comprehensively Promoting Quality Education (1999) and the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan Outline(2010) both clearly proposed and encouraged a diversified source of teachers [2], no perfect results have been changed until now. In most regions, teacher recruitment is only for teacher-oriented students or people who have several years' teaching experience, which can be shown in teacher recruitment in different areas in table 1 and table 2. In practice, the "4 + 2" Teacher Training Model of Beijing Normal University has been widely discussed, but it is difficult to implement in China [2]. Therefore, non-teacher-oriented students should take postgraduate examinations to change this situation, which is relatively hard. Meanwhile, since these students do not have practical experience or theoretical knowledge, they have to refer to some tutorial institutions for a quick completion.

Table 1. Teacher recruitment in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province in 2021.

School name	Position	Basic requirements	Detailed requirements
Nanjing Zhonghua High School	English teacher(high school)	Bachelor degree or above	For bachelor degree: English Education only; for above: English Literature, English Linguistics, Translation, English Teaching...
Nanjing Zhonghua High School	Maths teacher(middle school)	Bachelor degree or above	For bachelor degree: Maths Education only; for above: Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, Information and Computing Science, Maths Teaching...
Nanjing Foreign Language School	PE teacher(high school)	Bachelor degree or above	For bachelor degree: Physical Education only; for above: Physical Education, Sports Management, Subject Theory(PE)...

Table 2. Teacher recruitment in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province in 2021.

Position	Basic requirements	Detailed requirements	Schools
English teacher(middle school)	Bachelor degree or above	For bachelor degree: English Education only; for above: English-related majors	Kunshan Chengbei Middle School; Kunshan Zhengyi Middle School; Kunshan Loujiang Experimental School; ...
Maths teacher(middle school)	Bachelor degree or above	For bachelor degree: Maths Education only; for above: Mathematics-related majors	Kunshan Chengbei Middle School; Kunshan Gejiang Middle School; ...

2.2. Overseas

In many foreign countries, they have some consecutive teacher education programmes to support students' needs for employment. In the USA, since the 1960s and 1970s, the "alternative route" has become an effective training model. The model emphasizes that the teaching posts are for all those who have obtained a bachelor's degree, have teaching potential and wills to be teachers, and they can be teachers without or with few barriers. After the 21st century, a new teacher training model called the Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) is the most typical one. Those who have a bachelor's degree, after being hired, will study in a school for one year with pay, and will be instructed by experienced teachers [2]. In Israel, it sets the consecutive model, which focuses mostly on pedagogy following the disciplinary studies already completed by university graduates interested to go into teaching [6]. In Ireland, the consecutive teacher education programme is called second-level teacher education programme. It provides consecutive post-graduate courses. Students will follow 3 to 4 years of undergraduate studies to study relevant subjects to be qualified [7].

2.3. Research gap

Compared with other countries, China has few supporting projects, such as some consecutive teacher education programmes and relevant policies to equip non-teacher-oriented students who want to be teachers with qualifications, resulting in the failure of those students in teacher recruitment. Therefore, what helps and how to help the non-teacher-oriented students succeed in teacher recruitment is concerned in this paper.

3. PLANNING OF THE INQUIRY

According to the aforementioned content, the research will be designed as follows.

3.1. Research methodology

With regard to the research method, the first question that comes to mind is that what data will be needed. It is very necessary to consider about the nature of data before going into the method, and empirical data can be divided into quantitative and qualitative [8], qualitative data refers to the information not in the form of numbers but often words. With a view to the research gap, it is obvious that the research needs abundant information for the students' experiences for participating in teacher recruitment. At the same time, some tutors will also be involved for their opinions on what the students need and how can they help with their problems. For specific method, interview is adopted.

3.2. Sampling

For the research, the author interviewed altogether five participants. The participants were selected due to their education background and personal experience in teacher recruitment. Three are non-teacher-oriented students, among whom they all passed the written test, but finally two succeeded and one failed. One is teacher-oriented student who succeeded. The last one is a tutor from one of the most famous tutorial institutions.

3.3. Research questions

To make clear how a non-teacher-oriented student can succeed in teacher recruitment, the necessary factors to a good teacher should be worked out and some reflections on failures and successes should also be considered. Hence, the following questions for participants are designed:

- What limitations do you meet when you apply for the position?
- What qualifications do you lack for a good teacher?
- How can you improve your skills?
- What attributes to your success or what causes your failure?
- What do you think of teacher recruitment?

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The chapter analyses the interview data mainly based on the five questions mentioned above and what the participants added during the whole interview. It finds out that students are concerned about three aspects, the requirements mentioned in the recruitment, the theoretical knowledge and the practical experience. Within different groups of people, they have slightly disagreements on the same aspect and these will be illustrated in this part.

4.1. Requirements

According to the participants, they all admitted some restrictions for requirements existed. In most places, non-teacher-oriented students are not allowed for teacher recruitment.

All the candidates applying for the position should meet some requirements. For students A, B and C, they are not teacher-oriented students, so they met more obstacles. Student A is in Jiangsu province, which is known for education. She majored in accounting in university. When she applied, she found that: "most public schools have very strict requirements for

candidates, especially for middle schools and high schools, so the only way I can choose is to be a primary school teacher. By the way, not all primary schools will accept non-teacher-oriented students.” When asked about her feelings towards this, she did not think it fair, because “every non-teacher-oriented student must be determined, passionate and academic to get the position, which enables their qualifications”. Student C is from Zhejiang province, and she shares a similar experience with A, but she chose a private high school. She said “The competition was fierce, because many students who did not major in education all apply for it. We do not have other options.” Student B is in Hunan province. She also noticed there were some limitations, but the situation was comparatively better than Jiangsu and Zhejiang.

4.2. Theoretical knowledge

Based on the analysis, theoretical knowledge does not cause too much trouble for the candidates. Usually, they show little difference in written examinations. Hence, some non-teacher-oriented students and tutors do not think it important, while the teacher-oriented students tend to think it necessary.

4.2.1. Non-teacher-oriented students

In this research, students A, B and C thought the theoretical knowledge was useful for a good teacher, but they had different emphases. For theory of teaching, Student A and B both agreed its importance not only for written tests but also in school education. Student A commented: “Since the teacher-oriented students spend four years on it, it must have the value. Also, I think it can help us figure out how the problems in teaching will occur in essence and provide us with suitable approaches.” Student B is now working in a school, she insisted that the theory of teaching was of great significance. “During some holidays, we teachers are asked to take some online courses, teaching theory included.” While to Student C, she stated: “I suppose it is just important for written exams, you know that they do not account for that many scores and some questions are meaningless. In my written test, I did not distinguish myself by wasting a lot of time reciting those before. But as you can see, I passed it. If it is about the ways you treat students, I think every teacher with good personality, which is a must, can deal with problems with common sense.” For academic knowledge, they all acknowledged it was the basic but core requirement for a teacher. Student C said: “What you should teach in school is actually the academic knowledge.”

4.2.2. Teacher-oriented students

Student D is a teacher-oriented student who has been teaching in school for one year. He supposed that

everything taught in the university will be helpful. For example, he can know the mental situation of students in different stages and adopt the best ways to teach them. In his opinion, he posed a new idea to teaching theory: “In some places, the score of teaching theory is high. Therefore, the spread of scores will be small, and the possibility of being recruited through the final interview will be improved to a certain extent.”

4.2.3. Tutors

The last participant (Tutor E) is a tutor in the training schools. She helped her students with written tests and interviews. Usually, they have about half a month in total to prepare for all. Tutor E did not think teaching theory can help students a lot. “Almost all my students have the desire to be recruited, and I can help them with it by analyzing the previous exam questions and ruling out the useless one. Maybe they will use them in the future, but after they really become a teacher, they can learn it deeper. I am not sure, because I haven’t been in a school. However, the academic knowledge is vital. Throughout my lessons, I will put stress on this part.”

4.3. Practical experience

For practical experience, all the participants acknowledge its significance.

Student D thought teacher-oriented students could take part in plenty of teaching practices, which enabled them to get familiar with school teaching in advance. Student B built a link between lack of practical experiences and limitations of majors. “The biggest difference between teacher-oriented and other students lies not in theoretical knowledge but in practical experience. Sometimes, even we have experiences of teaching students, the school policy-makers do not accept that because they still assume that you are not skillful and capable.” Tutor E said: “When I teach my students how to make a demo class, they do not differ from each other in accent or some knowledge, but the teacher-oriented students are more confident.”

5. CONCLUSION

By interviewing different groups of participants and comparing with some policies abroad, the author come to the following conclusions: Students in China can hardly get the qualification to apply; they lack some practical experience; the training in some tutorial institutions is not systematic and professional.

However, in some remote cities, they may not have such strict requirements for applicants, whether non-teacher-oriented students can get equal rights with the teacher-oriented students need to be further studied. Besides, this research lacks one particular group, who

have worked in school for long years. Therefore, some of the reports need to be further verified. For future research, more research questions should be designed according to the participants, such as, as an experienced teacher, what you learned in university do you think helps you the most? When you had interviews with your examiners, do they ask about your major in university?

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