

Abstract

Quality teacher education is basic to the development of any nation. The quality of teachers will determine the output from the school system that will power a nation's social, political, economic, scientific, and technological development. This paper explored teacher educators' assessment of the two basic teacher education programmes (concurrent and consecutive) prevalent in Nigerian Universities. Sample was composed of 210 teacher educators drawn from three Nigerian universities. Data were analysed using mean to indicate their ratings of the two models. The findings indicated that the lecturers (teacher educators) rated the two models as good; although the concurrent was rated higher in the areas of education and practical components, while the consecutive was rated better in the area of subject content component. Recommendations were made on the need to implement the two models properly.

Introduction

Education is the only means of developing natural potential of an individual which ordinarily may be hidden if untapped. Similarly, education assists individual to transfer the knowledge acquired in schools to real life situation in solving future problems and coping strategies to equip them for future challenges. Quality education can only be assured through good and competent teachers. Teachers are indispensable in the achievement of the goals of the school system. This is because they occupy an important

position in the implementation of the school curriculum. They are the managers of the instructional activities within the school system. This is even exemplified in the assertion of the National Policy on Education that no nation can develop above the quality of its teachers (FRN, 2004). A competent teacher should be able to relate subject content to practical life. Teachers are very vital in ensuring quality production of students wealthy in learning and character. There is no alternative to quality teachers if a nation is to achieve excellent performance in all sectors. nation must provide qualified, competent, and capable teachers in her classrooms. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the quality of the teacher and there should be connectivity between schools and teacher education. Study has shown that there is a very strong relationship between teacher's quality and students' performance (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Any success or otherwise that can be attributed to the educational system in Nigeria is a function of quality teacher, because the teacher is central to the development of educational system (Ukeje, 1996). Wikipedia (2006) defined teacher education as "the policies and procedures designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the school and in the classroom" (para. 1). The document further divides teacher education into initial teacher education, induction, and teacher development or continuing professional development. The initial teacher education refers to education given to prospective teachers before their entry into classroom as full teachers. Induction involves the process of providing adequate training and support to a teacher during the first few years of teaching, while teacher development or continuing professional development refers to in-service training programme for serving teachers. Researches have shown that there is a link between the quality of teachers and their capability to increase students' performance. A research conducted in the United States of America for 15 years established that students that were taught by graduate education teachers performed better as much as five times in learning gains than their counterparts taught by non-education graduates. In another research in Tennessee and Texas, students performed as much as 54% higher in reading and mathematics for three years due to the quality of their teachers (Milken Foundation for Education Technology, 2007).

The preparation of teachers through teacher education programme is based on certain models. In the Nigerian universities there are two major models of teacher— education curricula. These are concurrent and consecutive teacher education models. In the concurrent teacher education curriculum student

teachers undergo education through exposure to core curriculum contents and skills in their subject disciplines, that is, contents in their teaching subjects (e.g. Economics, Yoruba, Physics, etc.), and core education courses and pedagogy. In the concurrent model student teachers are simultaneously exposed to both academic subject and ways of teaching (NVikipedia, 2006). It should be underscored that there are two variants of the concurrent model.

These are single basic subject approach (e.g. only Economics) as obtained in Obafemi

Awolowo University, Ile Ife and University of Uyo, Uyo, and the two subjects approach (a major e.g., Economics and a minor e.g., Geography) as practiced in University of Ilorin, Ilorin and the University of Ibadan, Ibadan. Thus, student teachers are exposed to courses in subject areas and education simultaneously.

The consecutive model of teacher education is the one that involves the recipients to have had a bachelor degree (B.Sc., B.A, B.Agric. B.Engnr., or B.Tech.) in a subject discipline (e.g., Mathematics, History, Agriculture, Woodwork, Metal Work, etc.), and then later enrol postgraduate diploma (PGDE) in education. That is, a teacher first obtains a qualification (usually a University degree), and then follows up for a further period to gain additional qualification in teaching (Wikipedia, 2006), to ensure certification as a qualified teacher. The content of the PGDE programme includes primarily core education courses and pedagogy (Theory and practical). The PGDE programme, in most cases, is run as a part time or sandwich programme.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate teacher educators perception of two university based teacher-education curricula (concurrent and consecutive models), for the preparation of Nigerian secondary school teachers. Specifically this study is designed to:

1. Assess the views of teacher educators on the adequacy of the teaching subject components of the two teacher education curriculum models.
2. Assess the views of teacher educators on the adequacy of education components of the two teacher education curriculum models.
3. Assess the views of teacher educators on the adequacy of the practical teaching components of the two teacher education curriculum models.
4. Explore the opinion of education lecturers on the improvement required in the pre-service teacher professional preparation.

Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study, the following research questions will be addressed.

1. What are the views of education lecturers on the adequacy of the teaching subject component of the concurrent and consecutive teacher education programme?
2. What are the views of education lecturers on the adequacy of the education components of the concurrent and consecutive teacher education programme?

3. What are the views of education lecturers on the adequacy of the practical component of the concurrent and consecutive teacher education programme?'
4. What are the opinions of education lecturers on the improvement required in the pre-service teacher professional preparation?

Methodology

This study is a descriptive research, using the survey method, which investigates a phenomenon and reports on it as it is and it encompasses measurement procedures that involve asking questions from respondents.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques: The target population of this study consisted of teacher educators in Nigerian universities. Purposive sampling technique was used to select all the teacher educators from the Faculties of Education in three Universities. Participation for the lecturers was voluntary.

Research Instruments: Researcher-designed questionnaire, Questionnaire for Teacher Educators on Models of Teacher Education Curricula (QTEMTEC), was used to gather the research data. The questionnaire contains three major Sections A, B, and C. Section A, on respondents' demography, contains seven major items. Section B of the questionnaire focuses on the perception of the lecturers on the quality of student teachers exposed to the models focusing on the major components. The section contains 32 items on components of teacher education: education (17 items), subject content (12 items), and practical component (two major items, with sub-items). The Likert type response modes of Very Well (5 marks), Well (4 marks), Adequately (3 marks), Poorly (2 marks), and Very Poorly (1 mark) were used for the section. Section C 20 items address teacher educators' perception of suggested improvement for teacher education programme. Like Section B the Likert four point scales are used. These are Very Important (4 points), Important (3 points), Minor Importance (2 points), Not Important (1). In addition, an additional open ended item asked for their personal view on improvement they may suggest.

In order to ensure the validity of the research instruments, copies of the draft of the instrument were given to and six teacher educators for their comments on the face and content validity. Based on their suggestions corrected copy was tested for reliability. Copies of the questionnaire was administered twice (three weeks intervals) on equivalent respondents who were not part of the final sample, using 20 'education' from Kwara State College of Education. Responses from respondents during the two administrations of the instruments were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula. The overall value of .89 was obtained.

Procedure for Data Collection: The researcher and two research assistants personally administered copies of the questionnaire on teacher educators. Respondents were persuaded to respond immediately where possible. This was done so as to enable the researcher to have a high response rate to administered copies of the questionnaire. In most cases the researcher and the assistants made several visits to the field before the copies of the filled questionnaire were retrieved.

Data Analysis Techniques: Research questions 1 to 4 were answered using mean and qualitative analysis.

Results and Discussion of Findings

A total of 350 questionnaire copies were administered on teacher educators, out of which 267 were returned and only 210 (60%) were found useful for the analysis.

Research Question 1: What are the views of teacher educators on the adequacy in terms of quantity and quality of the education components of the two teacher-education programmes?

Table 1: Teacher Educators' Views on the Adequacy of Education Components of Teacher Education Programme

Variables	No.	Concurrent	Consecutive
Teacher Educators	210.00	3.85	2.94

The ratings of the teacher educators as regards the adequacy of teacher education component are reflected in Table 1. Teacher educators as professionals have better understanding of the contents of the two programmes. They rated the concurrent teacher education programme higher than the consecutive. In their ratings, concurrent had a mean value of 3.85, while they also rated the consecutive to be 2.94. This indicated that the teacher educators rated the teacher education component of the concurrent model higher than the consecutive. However, the rating even for the consecutive was above 2.50 which is still well above the mid-point of the maximum obtainable of point of 2.50. The teacher educators observed that although the education contents of the two models

are the same, yet they noted that the implementation for the concurrent was better. They opined that teachers exposed to the consecutive have less time for real instruction compared with the students exposed to the concurrent model. They also noted that the long period of exposure which student teachers in the concurrent have to interact with each other, interact with teacher educators, and the longer period of

exposure to pedagogical experiences stand the concurrent programme in better stead.

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Research Question 2: How do teacher educators view the adequacy of the teaching subject component of the concurrent (In/ consecutive) teacher education programme?

Table 2: Teacher Educators Views on the Adequacy of Teaching Subject Components of the Two Teacher Education Programme

Variables		Mean Concurrent	Mean Consecutive
Teacher Educators	210.00	3.37	3.87

The ratings of the lecturers are as reflected in Table 2 and it reveals that the teacher educators rated the subject content for the consecutive model higher than the concurrent. The teacher educators' ratings had the mean value of 3.37 for the concurrent and 3.87 for the consecutive. These results indicated that most of the lecturers still rated both models high in terms of subject content quantity and quality. However, their ratings were higher for the consecutive teacher education programme.

Research Question 3: What are the views of teacher educators on the adequacy of the practical teaching component of the concurrent (In/ consecutive) teacher education programme?

The results of the analysis related to this question are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Teacher Educators' Views on the Adequacy of Practical Teaching Components of the Two Teacher Education Programme

Variables		Mean Concurrent	Mean Consecutive
Teacher Educators	210.00	3.75	3.18

Teacher educators mean ratings of the practical aspects of teacher education programme (concurrent and consecutive) are as shown in Table 3. The teacher educators rated the concurrent to be higher with a mean value of 3.75, while they rated the consecutive to have a mean value of 3.18. This shows that they rated the

concurrent higher than the consecutive model; however, both models were rated to be adequate, because they were rated above 3.0.

Research Question 4: What are the opinions of teacher educators on the improvement required in the pre-service teacher professional preparation ?

On the required improvements in the concurrent teacher education programme teacher educators' perceptions were also considered. The responses of the teacher educators are as reflected in Table 4. Their responses confirmed the position of the practising teachers as they indicated need for improvement of teacher education programme as mean values for all their responses were above 2.50 for most of the items. In their rating the highest mean values were 4.10 for more years for teacher education programme, more subject content for student teachers (3.45), and 3.44 for the inclusion of special education component. The least value was 2.73 for flexible pathway to teacher education programme. It can be deduced from the responses of the teacher educators that there should be improvement in teacher education programme.

SIN	Items	Mean value
1	More hand-on approach to teacher education	3.25
2	programme.	3.45
3	Extend the number of years for teacher education.	
4	More classroom experience on teaching and less time on theory.	3.30
5	More subject content component.	4.10
6	More teaching on methodology (pedagogy) of teaching.	3.28
7	Inclusion of content in the area of special education. Do more to teach classroom management skills, especially, in areas related to management of students' behaviour. Incorporate more hands-on experience on the use of instructional media.	3.44
8		3.30
9		32
10	More involvement between advisors/educators and students.	3.29
	More counsellor service for student teachers.	3.21
12	Financial assistance to students to encourage students' entry into the field of education.	3.41
13		3.37
14	More time on teaching student teachers on how to assess students' learning.	3.19
15	Increase the number of months for students' teaching practice.	3.44
16	Improvement in the language competency of the student teachers.	3.52
17	Develop student teachers' numeracy to perform basic numerical task.	3.00
18	Provide flexible learning pathways for student teachers.	3.45
19	Teach student teachers on how to reflect upon their professional knowledge.	3.37
		3.19

Encourage students to develop activities that cater for the learning needs of students with diverse social, cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.

Develop in student teachers the ability to locate suitable curriculum materials and teaching resources.

3.30

Table 4:
Teacher

GrandTotal

Table 5: Teacher Educators' Views on the Improvement Required in Consecutive Teacher Education Programmes

SIN	Items	Mean Value
1	More hand-on approach to teacher education programme.	3.66
2	Extend the number of years IUr teacher education.	3.08
3	More classroom experience on teaching and less time on theory.	3.30
4		2.87
5	More subject content component.	3.54
6	More teaching on methodology (pedagogy) of teaching.	3.44
7	Inclusion of content in the area of special education. Do more to teach classroom management skills, especially in areas related to management of students' behaviour.	3.30
9	Incorporate more hands-on experience on the use of instructional media.	3.32
10	More involvement between advisors/educators and students.	
11	More counsellor service for student teachers.	
12	Financial assistance to students to encourage students' entry into the field of education.	3.37
13	More time on teaching student teachers on how to assess students' learning.	
14		3.44
15	Increase the number of months for students' teaching practice	
16	Improvement in the language competency of the student teachers	3.52
17	Develop student teachers' numeracy to perform basic numerical task.	3.58
18	Provide flexible learning pathways for student teachers.	3.41
	Teach student teachers on how to reflect upon their professional knowledge.	3.37
19	Encourage students to develop activities that cater for the learning needs of students with diverse social, cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.	3.19

	Develop in student teachers the ability to locate suitable curriculum materials and teaching resources.	
	Grand Total	3.34



On the required improvements in the consecutive teacher education programme teacher educators' responses are as reflected in Table 5. They noted the need for improvement in every item. In fact, the least mean response value was 2.78 that was above the midpoint of 2.50. In their rating, the highest mean values were 3.66 for more hands-on experience for student teachers, 3.58 for flexible pathway to teacher education, 3.52 for the development of student teachers numeracy skills, and 3.54 for more on the area of pedagogy for student teachers enrolled in the consecutive programme. It can be deduced from the responses of the teacher educators that there should be improvement in the consecutive teacher education programme. However, there was the fear that the extension of the number of years for teacher education would lead to an increase in the number of student teachers for most areas of the school curriculum, particularly for those who had an initial degree before they enrolled in the consecutive education programme.

Discussion of Findings

The findings indicated that teacher educators (education lecturers) rated the education component of the two models to be good, although the concurrent model was rated higher; these findings presuppose that the education components of the two models are good. This can be explained based on the fact that the education components were derived from the same National University Commission (NUC) authorised document, Approve Minimum Academic Standard (AMAS). The difference is only in implementation. While the concurrent education component takes 2, 3 or 4 years, the consecutive takes place within an academic session. The findings agree with the position of Darling-Hammond, et al (2005), which indicated that certified teachers are better trained than teachers who had alternative certification. In addition, the finding which indicates that the consecutive education model is equally good supports the position that the alternative certification of the teachers can promote teachers education programme (Darling-Hammond et al, 2005).

As regards the subject content of the concurrent, most of the respondents rated them to be adequate in terms of quantity and quality. Although, most of them rated the subject content of the consecutive model to be better than that of concurrent. The content was equally rated as good and adequate. This finding contradicts the position of Okebukola (2005), who opined that the current teacher education programme in Nigeria in the area of subject content is inadequate. This is supported by the position of Okeke (2005), who

noted that concurrent teacher education model offers opportunity for the combination of traditional education content and pedagogical skills, thereby offering opportunity for intellectual synthesis and personal development.

The findings also revealed that although the consecutive is supposed to be more grounded in terms of contents, some of the candidates who enrolled in consecutive

teacher education had no knowledge related to the school curriculum. For instance, candidates with knowledge in disciplines like forestry, survey, marine engineering, and so on, teaching curriculum based school subjects. These groups of people will produce little or nothing in terms of quality teaching and assessment of their teaching subject as observed in the opinion of O-Saki (2005).

As regards the practical components of the two models of teacher education, practising teachers, school administrators and teacher educators rated the concurrent model to be better than the consecutive model, although they also rated the consecutive to be good. This finding agrees with the findings of Darling-I-Iarmound et al (2005). The respondents in their perception believed that the long period for practical experience allowed for better and quality aspect of practical in teacher education programmes. In most cases teacher educational institutions under the concurrent model expose teachers to several aspects of practical experiences (microteaching, peer teaching and teaching practice). While for the consecutive it is mainly the teaching practice, thereby reducing the intensity of practical aspect of the consecutive. These findings on the low quality aspects of consecutive model compared to the concurrent agree with the position of O-Saki (2005).

The findings from the study indicated that the education, subject content and the practical components of the two teacher education programmes are adequate in terms of quantity and quality. In spite of these findings, the respondents agree that there are classrooms for improvement.

Majority of the respondents noted that the concurrent teacher education model requires improvement, particularly, in the subject content component. This position supports the assertion of Okebukola (2005), who advocated extended year for concurrent programme so as to improve classrooms practices of teachers, particularly in the area of content knowledge. It also agrees with the ideas of Walsh (2002); Walsh and Jacob (2007), who had criticised the concurrent model in the area of subject content component. However, Darling-Hammond (2000) supports the concurrent as the content is believed to be relevant to the school curriculum, while those who go for the consecutive are believed to have degrees in discipline, which are superficially related to the subject in the secondary school curriculum.

As for the consecutive, most of the respondents agreed that there is need for improvement in the education and practical aspect components. This is because the

consecutive is believed to have weak pedagogical base. This agrees with the position of Fafunwa (1974) who asserted that student teachers enrolled in the consecutive programme as having a thin layer of education (education and practical component) spread on top of their earlier degree programme and thus less pedagogical skills.