

Teacher Educators' Perception of the Influence of the Two Models of Initial Teacher Education Programme on the Quality of Student Teachers' Teaching

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Abstract: The main purpose of this study is to determine teacher educators' perception of the influence of the two models of initial teacher education programme on the quality of student teachers' teaching. The study was a descriptive survey and population comprised all teacher educators that teach student-teachers in the concurrent and consecutive models of initial teacher education programme in Alvan Ikoiku Federal College of Education Owerri and Federal College of Education (T) Omuku totaling 82. The entire population was purposively sampled. Four research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The 35- Item questionnaire used was validated and had a reliability index of 0.87. Data generated were analysed using simple percentages and one way Analysis of Variance. Results show that teacher educators have a positive perception of the influence of the concurrent model of initial teacher education on the quality of student- teachers teaching. Results show that differences exist in their perception of the concurrent and consecutive models in other indices of quality teaching examined: mastery of subject matter, teaching and classroom management skills. Recommendations made among others include that the two models of initial teacher education programme should be retained but curricular review suggested include increasing the depth of content coverage, extending of the duration of the programme to ensure mastery.

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Introduction

The teacher is the pivot of the education system since he/she greatly influences the quality of the output of the education system that drives the nation's social, political, economic, scientific, and technological development. This was why Anderson and Dyke (1972) quoted in Ijioma, Izuagba, Afurobi & Ifegbo,(2014)stated that the cornerstone of good education is its teachers, as fine building and equipment, special services and resources will only provide favourable learning environment but they definitely mean little if the learning experiences are directed by incompetent teachers. In other words the effectiveness of any educational system depends greatly on the quality of its teachers because they interpret, enact and evaluate the curriculum. Supporting this Darling –Hammond (2006) affirms that:

The importance of powerful teaching is increasingly important in contemporary society. Standards for learning are now higher than they have ever been before, as citizens and workers need greater knowledge and skill to survive and succeed. Education is increasingly important to the success of both individuals and nations, and growing evidence demonstrates that—among all educational

resources—teachers' abilities are especially crucial contributors to students' learning, p14.

Since they are charged with the development of the manpower needs of the nation, it is a great challenge to design policies and programmes that can effectively educate and train quality teachers capable of helping students acquire the expected attitude and competencies required in the knowledge driven labour market. In the same vein, the fluid nature of knowledge due to rapidity of technological development and the collapse of territorial boundaries due to globalization have impacted greatly on the social, economic and political systems; and all these have posed great challenges to the education system. These have made it imperative for quality teachers to be produced and employed in order to adequately prepare learners for the varied challenges of life. Little wonder Musset, (2010) argues that any education reform in the 21st century that does not take into account the great influence of the knowledge economy on teacher education should be condemned as ineffective and irrelevant.

The above underscore the importance of quality teacher education programme given the impact of its products on the lives of people and national development. This is why in many nations, teacher education programme is re-structured and reinvigorated in order to equip teacher-trainees with a

strong subject-matter and pedagogical knowledge, the ability to collaborate with students/colleagues/administrators, and the capacity to continue developing these skills and relate these to the context of the schools in which they teach for effectiveness, (Darling-Hammond, 2000; OECD, 2005; Ashimole, 2011). In other words, teacher education is a continuum that starts with initial teacher education and continues with the in-service teacher education that runs all through the teacher's career. Hence, to teach is to be involved in lifelong learning, principally because teaching is a complex task, demanding intellectual work, that cannot be effectively accomplished without continuous learning and adequate preparation, (Eurydice,2010).

It is for this obvious need for the quality of teachers that the Federal Government formulated a teacher education programme guided by these laudable objectives, FRN (2013).

- To provide highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all level of our educational system.
- To encourage further the spirit of inquiry and creativity in teachers
- To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and enhance their commitment to the National objective.
- To provide teacher with adequate intellectual and professional background for their assignment and to changing situations not only in the life country but also in the wider world
- To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession

It further designed a teacher education programme that makes provision for pre-service and in-service teacher education, though, ideally both pre and in-service teacher education should be conceived of, and organised as, a seamless continuum since effective teaching demands lifelong learning. Unfortunately, it is not so in Nigeria, as not all teachers in the system benefit from in-service training,(Adebile, 2009; Adeosun, 2012;Udofia &Ikpe (2012), however, the reasons for this is beyond the scope of this work.

The pre-service or initial teacher education programme is for student teachers who have never taught before and it has two basic models.:

- The concurrent teacher education programme
- The consecutive teacher education programme

In the concurrent model, academic subjects are studied alongside education and professional studies throughout the duration of the course which lasts for four years. This is the most favoured model of teacher education at present in Nigeria as it has more candidates than other models, (Ihebuzor, 1987; Felix,

2011). In this model, the undergraduate teacher trainee takes courses in education and in his/her major teaching subject area simultaneously for a four year period. An example of this programme is Bachelor of Education - B.Ed or BA Ed/ B,Sc Ed. In this model, the student teachers are exposed to the content of their special teaching subject by specialist teacher in their various subject disciplines e.g English language, physics, history etc. In addition, they are equally exposed to the general theory and practice of education by teachers that specialised in education, in a way that equips better with methods, strategies, techniques and resources to use in teaching their special subjects, (Yusuf 2011;Adeosun, 2012). Darling-Hammond (2000) strongly supports this model of initial teacher preparation because the student teacher's special subject area is relevant to the school curriculum unlike many student teachers in the consecutive model whose first degree discipline have no relevance to the school curriculum e.g forestry, marine engineering etc., (Yusuf, 2011). However, other scholars like Xiaobin (1999) and Okebukola (2005) argue that graduates of this model (concurrent model)do not have adequate knowledge of the subject content they teach given the fact that they were not exposed to the depth of the discipline. They also argued that though subject matter studies and professional studies are taught concurrently, there is no guarantee that the two areas are related in any pedagogically fruitful manner in the prospective teachers mind to adequately equip them with the pedagogic -content knowledge required for effective teaching. To remediate this, Okebukola suggested that the duration of the programme should be extended by one year to enable them improve on their subject content knowledge as well as classroom practices.

In a consecutive programme, candidates obtain a first degree, HND or a Masters degree in Sciences or Arts after which they enroll to study in a faculty of education for one session to receive their Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PDGE) or Professional Diploma in Education (PDE). Recently, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria introduced the PDE as an equivalent of the PGDE and designed the Post Doctoral Diploma in Education (PDDE) for holders of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) without teaching qualification TRCN (2012:17). Put differently, student teachers in the consecutive model of teacher education have acquired a minimum of first degree in a subject area and by implication have mastered the substantive content of their proposed teaching subjects before enrolling to study education for certification. Yusuf (2011) argues that though they may be strong in their special subject area, for some, their first degree subjects are not relevant to the

primary or secondary school curricular and most of them have a weak pedagogical base, p163.

Though the entry qualifications for the concurrent and consecutive models differ, their curricular offerings have almost the same structure. The entry qualification to the concurrent model requires a minimum of credit passes in five subjects which must include English language, Mathematics and the student's teaching subject. While for the concurrent model, candidates are required to have a minimum of a first degree or HND, however, the document is silent on the class of the degree. As stated earlier, the curricular of the concurrent and the consecutive have almost the same structure but differ in depth and breadth of content coverage. The structure focuses on four major areas:

- Foundational studies in education- this includes philosophy of education, history of education, educational psychology, curriculum and instruction, administration, guidance and counseling, a study of the needs of exceptional children, education technology, measurement and evaluation and sociology of education etc.

- General Studies: This includes Use of English, Introduction to Computer, and other emergent issues like population education, Gender studies etc

- Student's special subject and methodology: this refers to the subject the student teacher will teach either in the primary school or secondary school.

- Teaching Practice: this is the period the student teacher is expected to relate theory to practice. During this period he /she is assigned a class to teach under the supervision of the classroom teacher who acts as the cooperating teacher and a supervisor (e.g. from the university or college of education or NTI). The credit unit is 6. Whereas in the concurrent model, the student- teachers go for the teaching practice twice- in first semester of their second and final year for six weeks in each; in the consecutive model students go on teaching practice once and the duration is six weeks.

In spite of the fact that the two models of initial teacher education make provision for a flexible entry into initial teacher education programme, especially when faced with the challenge of shortage of teachers; each of the above models however, has its strengths and limitations. In the concurrent model:

- It is believed that students that are attracted to this model may have strong feelings of becoming a teacher, (Sultana, 2005).

- It is seen as the easiest way of getting students enrolled in teacher education programme due to the current social status of teachers (Ihebuzor, 1987; Felix, 2011)

- This model has several benefits such as it allows a more integrated learning experience, since pedagogical training and subject-matter (content knowledge) training take place at the same time, (Xiaobin,1999; Okebukola,2005; Yusuf, 2011; Adeosun 2012)

- Teachers produced through this model are better grounded in content and pedagogy (Xiaobin,1999; Okebukola,2005; Yusuf, 2011).

- Given the duration of their programme their level of preparedness for teaching practice is higher and better,(Okebukola,2005; Yusuf, 2011)

- Some cooperating teachers of these student teachers believe that student- teachers in the concurrent model are more committed to teaching than student-teachers in the consecutive model and that concurrent students are more prepared for teaching, (Xiaobin 1999).

- They can easily fit into the primary and secondary education level on graduation unlike products of the consecutive model(Xiaobin, 1999)

- They form a majority of teachers in the education system, (Ihebuzor, 1987; Felix, 2011).

On the other hand, it is believed they do not have in-depth knowledge of the subject they teach (Okebukola, 2005; Yusuf, 2011) coupled with the fact that many of them entered the profession because they do not have alternative and as such they contribute more to the high attrition and turnover rate in the teaching profession. It is also less flexible than consecutive models, since the students are required to decide if they want to become teachers at a very early stage in their university studies which makes it difficult to change profession later in life, (Musset, 2010).

For the consecutive model, some of the advantages include:

- Graduates of this model have sound knowledge of the logic and structure of the subjects they teach,(Xiaobin 1999; Musset, 2010)

- Students- teachers in this programme come from different fields of life and hence bring a greater variety of experiences to teaching and learning in a faculty of education, (Xiaobin 1999; Musset, 2010)

- They have a reasonable sense of commitment as they joined the teaching profession after they have explored other fields, (Ihebuzor 1987)

- They are more mature and responsible as student teachers

- They can convert to other professions more easily, if they change interest. This flexibility in relation to their coursework also makes them better equip if there is a change in labour market conditions, (Musset, 2010).

On the other hand, it is believed that they have a poor knowledge of the teaching techniques and pedagogy in general, (Xiaobin,1999; Okebukola,2005; Yusuf, 2011); since they studied in two different cycles, where they learned two different aspects of the teaching profession (their teaching subjects -in their first degree and education theory in their professional course) their learning process is fragmented, rather than integrated, (Musset, 2010). In addition, they may find it difficult to fit into the primary education level, and even in the secondary schools as their first degree discipline may not feature in the school curriculum, (Xiaobin, 1999; Yusuf, 2011). However, in spite of the lapses identified above, there is no consensus among scholars on which of the two models best equips the student-teacher for effective teaching.

Problem of the study

Many teacher educators are worried about the inability of student teachers in both models of initial teacher education programme to clearly show competence in either their special teaching subject and in facilitating learning. It is either that they were not properly exposed to the structure and the substantive content of their special subjects that led to the shallow knowledge they exhibit during teaching practice or the curriculum is defective, (Adeosun 2012). This development has a very important pedagogic implication as the depth of teacher's knowledge of subject matter contributes to teacher effectiveness. Results on several studies in this area (Xiaobin,1999; Darling-Hammond 2000; Okebukola 2005; OECD, 2005; Obanya 2007) argue that lack of in- depth knowledge of subject matter tends to lead a teacher to closely control the framing of a particular learning session, in order to ensure that students do not lead him or her into unfamiliar aspects of the discipline. Such teachers tend to avoid open-ended questioning techniques; consequently, the tendency is to dominate the lesson using frontal teaching strategy/methods.

In addition to the above are student teachers' poor knowledge of methods, strategies and resources to use in teaching different concepts in their subject, since effective teaching demands that the teacher uses apt strategies/techniques/resources that suit each concept he/she teaches rather than using one method/strategy in teaching all concepts. The two issues raised are of great challenges to effective teaching since quality teaching and learning requires sound knowledge of the breadth and depth of the discipline as well as competence in pedagogy. It is this gap that Shullam quoted in Izuagba & Afurobi (2013), Izuagba, Eke & Ezenwa (2014) refers to as pedagogic-content knowledge required by every teacher for effective and efficient teaching. This does not just mean sound knowledge of the subject matter and

knowledge of the methods/ strategies used in teaching rather it subsumes the ability to blend them in ways that promote comprehensive learning in the learners. Specifically, Shulman (1986) argues that a good teacher needs to have "pedagogical content knowledge", which he describes as including "the most useful forms of representation of... ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations—in a word, the ways of representing and formulating the subject that makes it comprehensible to others" (p. 6.).

Since teachers need to have sound pedagogic-content knowledge in the implementation of the curriculum for the objectives couched to be achieved, it becomes imperative to examine if the curricular of the concurrent and consecutive teacher education model incorporate these to adequately prepare the student teachers for the task ahead. It is also important to note that the efficiency of the teacher education programme is the main determining factor in the success or failure of the education system to meet the nation's needs and aspirations. In the light of this that this study is carried out to find out teacher educators' perception of the influence of these two models of initial teacher education programme on student-teachers' quality of teaching. This study is therefore delimited to the following indices of quality teaching:

- Mastery of the subject matter
- Apt use of instructional resources
- Teaching and classroom management skills

Purpose of the study

This research sets out to find out teacher educators' perception of which of the models of initial teacher education programme (consecutive and concurrent models) that is likely to produce quality teachers for the education system. Specifically, this study sets out to do the following:

1. Find out if there are differences in the mastery of the subject between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models of teacher education programme.
2. Find out if there are differences in the use of apt instructional resources in teaching between student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models.
3. Find out if there are differences in the teaching and classroom management skills displayed during teaching practice between student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models.

Research Questions

1. What is the nature of teacher educators' perception of the influence of the two models of initial teacher education on the quality of student teachers' teaching?

2. To what extent do differences exist between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their mastery of the subject matter they teach?

3. To what extent do differences exist in between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching?

4. To what extent do differences exist between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on the classroom management skills they display during teaching practice?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their mastery of the subject matter they teach.

2. There is no significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching.

3. There is no significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on the classroom management skills they display during teaching practice.

Methods

This is a descriptive survey designed to gather information from teacher educators. Population of the study comprises all teacher educators teaching in the consecutive and concurrent models of initial teacher education programmes of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri and Federal College of Education(T) Omuku totaling 82. The entire population is purposively selected because of the number. Sample size of 82 was therefore used for the study.

The instrument was a 35-item structured questionnaire which was face validated by experts in initial teacher education programme. Their input was taken into consideration in the final draft. Instrument was further subjected to test-retest reliability using teacher educators outside the study population. Data generated were subjected to Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and a coefficient index of 0.87 was realized signifying a high reliability.

The instrument had five sections A.B.C D and E. The A section dealt on the demography of respondents while B, C, D and E dealt with the perception of teacher educators of the influence of the consecutive and concurrent models of initial teacher education on

quality of teaching, mastery of subject matter, apt use of instructional resources, teaching and classroom management skills respectively. Options provided for respondents in section B, C, D and E were a four-point scale with strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and disagree.

The instrument was administered on 82 teacher educators on a face to face basis; this ensured a high return of completed copies of the questionnaire. Data generated were assigned the following weights thus: SA (4), A (3), SD (2) and SD (1) for positive responses and the reverse for negative ones. Percentages and one way Analysis of Variance were used for analysis of data

Results

Research Question 1

What is the nature of teacher educators’ perception of the influence of the two model of initial teacher education on the quality of student teachers’ teaching?

Table 1: Nature of teacher educators’ perception of the influence of consecutive and concurrent models of teacher education on quality of student teachers teaching.

Model	Perception			
	Positive		Negative	
	F	%	F	%
Consecutive	36	(44)	46	(56)
Concurrent	50	(61)	32	(39)

The above table shows that 46 or 56% of teacher educators had negative perception of the influence of consecutive model of initial teacher education programme on the quality of student-teachers’ teaching while 36 or 44% had a positive perception. 32 or 39% of teacher educators had negative perception of the influence of concurrent model of initial teacher education programme on quality of student teachers’ teaching while 50 or 61% had positive perception.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their mastery of the subject matter they teach.

Table 2: One way Analysis of Variance of difference between student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models on their mastery of the subject matter they teach.

Source of variance (SV)	Sum of squares (SS)	Degree of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F-cal	Level of significance	F-critical	Decision
Between Groups	608576.4	1	608576.4				
				57.76	0.05	4.96	Significant
Within Groups	10182	10	101.82				
Total	618758.4	11					

Since F-cal = 57.76 is greater than the F-critical = 4.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected and the conclusion is that there is significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their mastery of the subject matter they teach.

Hypothesis 2.

There is no significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching

Table 3: One way Analysis of Variance of the difference between the student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching.

Source of variance (SV)	Sum of squares (SS)	Degree of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F-cal	Level of significance	F-critical	Decision
Between Groups	628688.8	1	628688.8				
				3.65	0.05	4.75	Accepted
Within Groups	172149	12	1434575				
Total	800837.8	13					

Since F-cal = 3.65 is less than the F-critical = 4.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on the teaching and classroom management skills they display during teaching practice.

Table 4: One way analysis of variance of difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on the teaching and classroom management skills they display during teaching practice.

Source of variance (SV)	Sum of squares (SS)	Degree of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F-cal	Level of significance	F-critical	Decision
Between Groups	7596227	1	608576.4				
				200.8	0.05	4.60	Significant
Within Groups	37816	14	101.82				
Total	7624043	15					

Since F-cal 200.8 is greater than the F-critical = 4.60 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected and the conclusion is that there is significant difference between student teachers in the

consecutive and concurrent models based on teaching and classroom management skills they display during teaching practice.

Discussion

The study tried to determine teacher educators' perception of the influence of the two models of initial teacher education on the quality of student-teachers' teaching. Data was generated from the questionnaire administered on 82 teacher educators in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, and Federal College of Education (T), Omuku, Rivers State, who are currently teaching student-teachers in consecutive and concurrent models of initial teacher education. Results show that 61% of teacher educators showed a positive perception of the influence of concurrent model while 56% showed a negative perception of the influence of consecutive model of initial teacher education programme on the quality of student teachers' teaching. The difference in their perception was adjudged to be significant. The positive perception of the concurrent model according to anecdotal records seem to portray factors such as length of time student-teachers spent on teaching practice, number of years spent in pursuance of the degree in the teaching subject and interaction with teacher educators. This finding supports Xiaobin (1999), Okebukola (2005), Yusuf (2011) and Adeosun (2012), however, Yusuf (2011) adds that teachers produced through this model contribute more to the high attrition and turnover in the profession because they entered the teaching profession early coupled with the fact that they did not have an alternative at that point in time.

The comparison of teacher trainees produced through the consecutive and concurrent models based on their mastery of subject matter they teach (Hypothesis 1) showed that F_{cal} 57.76 was found to be greater than $F_{critical}$ 4.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their mastery of the subject matter they teach. This result supports the earlier result of teacher educators showing positive perception to concurrent than consecutive model based on mastery of the subjects they teach. This result contradicts Okebukola (2005) and Yusuf, (2011) who agreed that student teachers in the concurrent model do not have in-depth knowledge of the subjects they teach while those in the consecutive model have sound knowledge of the logic and structure of the subjects they teach, (Musset, 2010). Though Xiaobin (1999) added that this limitation is limited to those whose first degree subjects are not in the primary and secondary school curricular.

The comparison of the consecutive and concurrent models made based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching showed the F_{cal}

3.65 to be less than the $F_{critical}$ 4.75 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted and upheld. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching. This finding agrees with Xiaobin (1999), Okebukola (2005), Musset (2010) and Yusuf (2011) who argued that student teachers in both models have a poor knowledge of the teaching techniques and in pedagogy in general. They posit that whereas in the consecutive model the duration for professional studies and practice is short while in the concurrent model the two areas are not related in any pedagogically fruitful manner in the prospective teachers mind to adequately equip them with the pedagogic -content knowledge required for effective teaching.

Table 4 shows the result of the comparison between student- teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models of initial teacher education programme based on teaching and classroom management skills they display during teaching practice. Analysis of data generated showed F_{cal} 200.8 to be greater than $F_{critical}$ 4.60 at 0.05 significant level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld. The conclusion is that there is significant difference between student teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on the teaching and classroom management skills they display during teaching practice. Anecdotal recorded also point to the differences in the duration of teaching practice and acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge. This result supports Xiaobin (1999), Okebukola (2005) and Yusuf, (2011) who argued that student teachers in the concurrent model are better prepared to teach since the programme allows a more integrated learning experience and a blend of pedagogical training and subject-matter (content knowledge) training taking place concurrently than the consecutive model whose learning process is fragmented, rather than integrated, (Musset, 2010).

Conclusion

The study set out to find out teacher educators' perception of the influence of the two models of initial teacher education programme on the quality of student -teachers' teaching. The findings show that teacher educators have a positive perception of the influence of the concurrent model of initial teacher education programme on the quality of student teachers' teaching. In addition, teacher educators show a positive perception to consecutive than the concurrent model based on mastery of the subjects they teach. Whereas a no significant difference was found

between student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on their apt use of instructional resources in teaching, however, significant difference was found between the student-teachers in the consecutive and concurrent models based on the teaching and classroom management skills they display during teaching practice. The student-teachers in the concurrent model were perceived as better prepared to teach due to the integrated experience they had. The conclusion is that teacher educators have positive perception of the influence of the concurrent model of initial teacher education on the quality of student teachers teaching.

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing, the following recommendations were made:

1. The two different models of initial teacher education programme should be retained but their content should be reviewed thus:

✓ There is need to increase the depth of coverage of the teaching subject area to enable students in the concurrent model be adequately exposed to structure and substantive content of the discipline they teach.

✓ There is need to also to increase the duration of the programme to ensure mastery.

✓ The content of the professional/pedagogy should be broadened for the consecutive model student-teachers to enable them acquire the necessary skills for effective teaching.

✓ There is need to increase the duration of the programme especially the teaching practice duration to effectively sharpen their practice.

✓ Admission of students in to the consecutive model should be restricted to only candidates whose first degree discipline are related to the primary/secondary school curriculum and candidates with third class and pass should be excluded.

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