

Relationship between Students Entry Qualifications and Academic Performance in Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto-Nigeria

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Abstract: This research investigated the Relationship between Students Entry Qualifications and Academic Performance in Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto-Nigeria. The design employed was correlational of a survey type. The total number of the population was (5,800) students and the sample selected was (361) students using Krejcie and Morgan (1979) table for determining sample size. The technique used for selecting respondents was stratified random sampling. A self-designed instrument for data collection titled ‘Students Entry Qualifications Inventory (SEQI)’ was employed. Pilot study was conducted and reliability index of 0.82 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha at 0.05 significance level. There are three research questions and three hypotheses. However, the data has been analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). It was found in the study that, there was no significant relationship between entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO, NABTEB) and students’ academic performance in Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto. It was concluded therefore that, it is not in all cases that students’

entry qualifications can be used to predict academic performance in tertiary institutions. Other factors such as age, work experience and participation in co-curricular activities at secondary level could be explored before admitting students.. The paper recommends that; students with good WAEC, NECO, and NABTEB results should be given admission into the Colleges of Education and adequate measures should be taken by WAEC, NECO and NABTEB in order to improve the quality of the items and in the area of continuous assessment.

Keywords: WAEC; NECO, NABTEB, NCE, Academic Performance.

1. Introduction

In Nigeria's education system, priority is being given to qualification to secure an admission for basic, post-basic, and tertiary education. To encourage enrolment into schools in recent years, especially admission into tertiary institutions, entry procedure is made flexible to allow a wider range of candidates to pursue their higher education. The result of this comparative study on the effect of entry qualification toward academic performance will provide significant information to the academic management and academicians on the appropriate measures to improve academic performance of students regardless of their entry point qualification.

Although predicting future performance from previous achievement is difficult, many researchers have concluded that entry qualification do predict success or otherwise in high education. Ogbonnaya, Okpurukara, Iheanacho, and Ndu, (2014) reported in their study involving 390 students from two basic nursing schools in Nigeria concluded that entry qualification does have a positive correlation to academic performance. Adeyemi (2013) compared the performance of final year Bachelor of Education Degrees students who entered the university from three different examination bodies in Nigeria which were West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), the National Examinations Council (NECO) and the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB). The result indicated that students' performances in SSCE strongly determine their academic success in tertiary institution.

In a study conducted by Wambugu and Emeke (2017) on relationship between entry qualification and academic performance in undergraduate science courses at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, it was revealed that there was a significant positive correlation between entry qualification (Secondary School Certificate) and academic performance in Chemistry and Biology, even though is not the only variable that can predict performance. But the scenario seems different in the case of

Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto. Student would have nine (9) credits in Senior Secondary School Certificate (WAEC, NECO or NABTED), when given admission in the college, many of them get withdrawn in their first year. This call for urgent need to find out relationship between students' entry qualifications and academic performance in Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto-Nigeria.

2. Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this paper is to determine whether there is a relationship between students' entry qualifications and academic performance in Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto-Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

- i. Whether there is relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Business Studies (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year.
- ii. Whether there is relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Agric Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year.
- iii. Whether there is relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Integrated Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year.

3. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. Is there any relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Business Studies (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year?
- ii. Is there any relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Agric Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year?
- iii. Is there any relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Integrated Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year?

4. Research Hypotheses

In order to achieve the objectives of the study and to find answers to research questions, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Business Studies (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Agric. Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) and their performance in NCE Integrated Science (Double major) for 2016/2017 academic year.

5. Literature Review

A number of studies have been carried out on the relationship between entry qualifications and academic performance of students. Some of the studies focused on the relationship between secondary certificate examination/general certificate examinations (SSCE/GCE) and their performance in corresponding subjects at Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities. Others correlated the scores of candidates in UTME/JAMB or SSCE/GCE examination with their performance in the first year of university education. Yoloye (1982) for instance, correlated the performance of candidates JME and WASC aggregates in the same subjects with their performance in the preliminary year. He found that both JME and WASC correlated positively with performance in the preliminary year. However, he found that on the average, JME aggregate predicted success better (approximately 0.4) than WASC aggregate did (approximately 0.3).

Similarly, Abdullahi (1983) carried out a study on the predictive value of JME in selected school subjects. He sought to establish empirically, the predictive value of JME by correlating its scores with measures of first year university examination at the University of Ilorin, in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography and Economics. He discovered a significant correlation between JME and first year scores in Chemistry (0.72), Physics (0.59) and Economics (0.41) but low correlations in Geography (0.20) and Biology (0.32). However, Babalola (2015) in his study on the relationship between entry qualification and performance in A'level chemistry: A case study of school of basic and remedial studies correlated between entry qualification and performance in A 'level chemistry at the school of Basic and remedial studies, Yobe State University, Damaturu. The grade in chemistry at the West African Examination Council (WAEC) or National Examination Council (NECO) is the predictor while the criterion is the grade earned in the short-structured test administered at the end of Basic 1. As obtained from the profile of performances of the students, majority do not seem to have

transferred what they have learnt in secondary school, in other words they do not exhibit previous knowledge.

Perhaps they did not get the required experience while in school but possessed credit pass in chemistry at the final secondary school examination. Impact of gender on student performance is also revealed in this work. The findings here are in agreement with previous reports by Balogun (1993) and Kurumeh and Iji (2009). In contrast, there is only slight difference in the percentage credit passes between the two sexes in their SSCE/NECO entry qualification (85 and 87.5%). The findings from this study revealed that the set of students admitted for the program were generally not performing well and that the poor performance is more pronounced in the females. It also established that there is no correlation between the entry qualification and performance in 'A' level program.

The findings stress the need for a renewed and concerted effort towards addressing the challenges of primary and secondary education in the state and the nation at large. Opoko, Alagbe, Aderonmu, Ezema, Oluwatayo, (2014) in their study, entry qualifications and academic performance of architecture students in building structures, they found that, except for the second semester of the second year of architecture studies, there exists no correlation between admission qualification and academic performance of students. However, female students outperformed their male counterparts in all the semesters. They suggested the need for a more appropriate criteria for selecting prospective students into undergraduate architecture programmes in Nigerian universities. Such selection criteria should also attempt to match their aptitude with their attitude, the synergy of which will equip students to cope with the rigours of architectural study. Students need to develop the dexterity and analytical prowess needed for Building Structures.

The study of Wushishi and Usman (2013) relationship between senior secondary school certificate examination (SSCE) mathematics grades and final Nigeria certificate of education (NCE) mathematics students results of Niger state college of education Minna, showed a significant relationship between WASSCE entry grade in mathematics and the final NCE mathematics results. They recommended among others that State Ministry of Education should intensify more effort in conducting regular inspection of schools to ensure that effective teaching of mathematics is carried out in order to achieve the objectives of National Policy on Education which include the preparation of students for higher education (FRN, 2004). Based on the findings of their study, they concluded that the entry grades obtained by students in mathematics in WASSCE was significantly related to final NCE Mathematics result.

However, this research also found out that there was no significant relationship between WASSCE entry grade and final NCE Mathematics result based on gender. They recommended among other things that, more emphasis should be given to the teaching of mathematics in secondary and

primary schools by recruiting qualitative Mathematics teachers. In addition, faculties, departments and institutes of education in our universities as well as the colleges of education in Nigeria should include in their curriculum courses on the primary and secondary school mathematics curricula.

6. Methodology

The study adopted correlational design of a survey type. The design allows researchers to use data as collected without bias or any manipulation. The population of the study include all the 5,800 NCE three students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. From the population, Krejcie and Morgan (1979) was used to determine the sample size of 361. Simple random sampling was used to select the results used for this study. An instrument pegged ‘Students Entry Qualifications Inventory (SEI)’ was used as instrument for data collection. It was validated by experts, subjected to pilot test and reliability index of 0.82 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha at 0.05 significance level. The instrument enables the researchers to make a comparison between students’ entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO or NABTEB) and their final results as at 2014 academic year. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

7. Results

Research question 1: Is there any relationship between students’ entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO, NABTEB and GCE) and their academic performance in NCE Business Studies (Double major) for 2016/2017 academic year?

From table 1, it can be seen that r of 0.32 with $p > 0.05$ indicated that there was no significant relationship between entry qualification and academic performance among NCE Business Studies (Double major) students for 2015/2016 academic year.

Table 1: PPMC Result for the Relationship between Entry Qualifications and NCE Business Students’ Academic Performance

Variables	N	Mean	df	R	P	Decision
Entry Qualification	361	30.89	359	0.32	.383	Not Sig
Academic Performance	361	47.75				

Research question 2: Is there is any relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO, NABTEB and GCE) and their academic performance in NCE Agric Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year?

With r of 0.12, and $p > 0.05$, table 2 revealed that there was no significant relationship between entry qualification and academic performance among NCE Agric Science (Double major) students for 2016/2017 academic year.

Table 2: PPMC Result for the Relationship between Entry Qualifications and NCE Agric Science Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	Mean	df	R	P	Decision
Entry Qualification	361	20.92	359	0.12	.10	Not Sig
Academic Performance	361	33.27				

Research question 3: is there any relationship between students' entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO, NABTEB and GCE) and their performance in NCE Integrated Science (Double major) for 2015/2016 academic year?

From table 3, it can be seen that r of 0.126 with $p > 0.05$ indicated that there was no significant relationship between entry qualification and academic performance among NCE Integrated Science (Double major) students for 2015/2016 academic year.

Table 3: PPMC Result for the Relationship between Entry Qualifications and NCE Integrated Science Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	Mean	df	R	P	Decision
Entry Qualification	361	31.89	359	0.126	.361	Not Sig
Academic Performance	361	41.32				

8. Discussion

From the results, it was found that there was no significant relationship between entry qualification and academic performance among NCE Business Studies (Double major) students for 2015/2016 academic year. It was also found that there was no significant relationship between entry qualification and academic performance among NCE Agric Science (Double major) students for

2015/2016 academic year. In the same vein, result revealed that there was no significant relationship between entry qualification and academic performance among NCE Integrated Science (Double major) students for 2015/2016 academic year.

Findings of this study goes contrary to results from other studies as follows: Ogbonnaya, Okpunukara, Iheanacho and Ndu (2014) found in their study that entry qualifications have positive correlation to academic performance. Finding of this study is contrary to the finding from Adeyemi (2013) that SSCE strongly determine students' success in tertiary institutions. Finding from this study also contravene the assertion made by Wambugu and Emeka that, there was a significant positive correlation between entry qualification and students' academic performance even though it is not the only variable that can predict performance.

There is a clear indication that entry qualification does not necessarily matter when predicting students' academic performance. Results from this study is similar to the finding from Balogun (1993) and Kurumeh and Iji (2009) where results from their studies revealed that the set of students admitted for the program were generally not performing well and that the poor performance is more pronounced in the females. It also established that there is no correlation between the entry qualification and performance in 'A' level program.

9. Conclusion

It is not in all cases that students' entry qualifications can be used to predict academic performance in tertiary institutions. Entry qualifications (WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) can be good predictors of academic performance when all the processes involved are efficiently monitored. This is because what we normally consider as primary entry qualifications to secure admission into any college of education in Nigeria is one of WAEC, NECO or NABTEB. When processing of the results from the listed bodies is abused, their prediction power will no longer be there.

10. Recommendations

- I. Students with five credit passes including Mathematics and English in WAEC, NECO and NABTEB results should be admitted into the Colleges of Education.
- II. Adequate measures should be taken by WAEC, NECO and NABTEB in order to improve the quality of the items and in the area of continuous assessment.
- III. The contributions of other criteria such as age, work experience and participation in co-curricular activities and any other skills and competencies at secondary level that could be explored before admitting students in to colleges of education.

- IV. There has to be a positive attitude to the course by students as may be demonstrated by better class attendance and participation in class activities. In addition, course tutors on their own part should adopt teaching styles that clarify the course and make it less abstract. Lastly, academic and non-academic programs which generate and sustain interest of students should be explored in order to retain students and improve academic performance at colleges of education. Future studies could explore the relationship between a combination of these factors and performance in colleges of education.

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