

IMPACT OF GENDER ON UTME, PUTME AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

This study aimed to find out the impact on the UTME scores, PUTME scores and students' Academic Achievement across Gender. One research question and a research hypothesis that focused on the objective were formulated to guide the study. The research design for the study was Ex-post-facto design, which was used for structuring and collection, analysis and interpretation of data. The population of 804 level two (200L) undergraduate students who were admitted in 2014/2015 academic session through PUTME from two Faculties (Education and Humanities) of Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, and the sample of 260 was used for the study and was obtained from the Research Advisors (2006). Multistage Sampling Technique was employed. The data collected were analyzed using, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The PPMC revealed that there is no significant difference among UTME, PUTME, CGPA and Gender, in such a way that, between CGPA and UTME: males have $r=0.034$ with $p=0.651$ while females have $r= -0.073$ with $p=0.527$, between CGPA and PUTME: males have $r=0.803$ with $p=0.000$ while females have $r=0.855$ with $p=0.000$, finally, between UTME and PUTME: $r= -0.012$ with $p=0.876$ for males while $r= -0.135$ with $p=0.242$ for female. Based on the above findings, the study revealed that there is no significant relationship among gender in students' scores in UTME, PUTME and Academic Achievement (CGPA).

Keywords: Impact, UTME scores, PUTME scores, Academic Achievement, Gender

Introduction

The introduction of Post Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (Post-UTME) in 2005 has become a contemporary issue in Nigeria. There has been massive public reaction from all segments of the country. The academic cliques are fighting for its continuity, parents and students are having mix feeling about it. The Government itself seems to be divided on the whole matter. The executives introduced the policy as remedy to the decay in educational standard in higher institution of learning in the country, the legislative arm of government views it as an avenue for Universities to make 'quick' money and have been clamoring for the scrapping of the Post UTME screening (Sams, 2010). The public reaction to Post-UTME came to its peak when the House of Representative sent a report to Federal Ministry of Education and the National Universities Commission (NUC) advising them to cancel the Post- UTME screening exercise. The law makers based their argument on the public outcry of extortionism by some Universities in conduct of the test (Badmus, 2011).

Gender refers to the difference in sex (that is, either male or female) and how this quality affects their dispositions and perception towards life and academic performance. The difference in gender as it

affects students and academic achievement is inconclusive (Buadi, 2010). This has necessitated the need to find out if there is any significant gender difference between male and female undergraduates as reflected in their academic achievement. Gender is one of the factors influencing students' academic achievement.

Studies on gender dimension to academic achievement of students are increasingly featuring across disciplines. According to (Ajaja, 2010), the influence of Post UTME on the science education students' found non-significant gender difference between male and female students admitted through Post UTME. He further indicates that the Students scored almost similar mark irrespective of their sex differences. Another study conducted by (Abubakar & Dokubo, 2011) on Age and Gender as predictors of academic achievement of College Mathematics and Science Students found that age had lower positive correlation than gender with their dependant variable CGPA. However, gender revealed a significant correlation with Students CGPA. Another study conducted by (Emaikwu, 2012) found that there was statistical significant difference in the Mean academic performance of males and females students and that academic performance of males students was higher than their female counterparts.

Meanwhile, Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) is an examination body which is charged to conduct entry examinations for tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In 1978 the Federal Government integrate the JAMB and charged with the responsibility of conducting entrance examinations into the Universities in Nigeria known as University Matriculation Examination (UME) which was later in 2010 changed to Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). Possession of minimum of five credit passes in any of these Public Examinations is a pre-requisite for sitting for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) conducted by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Candidates' admission or placement into Nigerian Universities irrespective of whether the University is Federal, State or Private owned is contingent on meeting the prescribed cut-off mark in the UTME. Since the year 2000, these degree awarding institutions have lost confidence in the UTME scores and have complained about the poor performance of students, even though they were admitted with very high UTME scores. Of recent, the prospective candidates are further required to undergo University screening examinations as a condition for eventual admission.

It is believed that these entry qualifications and entrance examinations will positively predict candidates' performance in the Universities. Several professionals and researchers in education have argued that the glorious days of high academic performance and enviable achievement among Nigerian undergraduates have reached a vanishing point and have therefore called for an education summit to rectify the situation (Ige & Nwokocha, 2012). It is also surprising to note that graduates from Nigerian Universities who happen to go for further studies abroad are often made to face further examinations before being admitted. The foregoing present problem considering the fact that Nigerian Universities in recent past had been adjudged to produce world-class graduates who have distinguished themselves in their areas of calling. As a remedy, there have been persistent calls from different quarters for the re-examination of the present modes of selecting candidates for admission into the various degree programmes in Nigerian Universities with a view to determine the credibility of each of the admission criteria. This is based on the belief that it is axiomatic that nation without a strong educational base is bereft of hope and future (Ebiri, 2006).

The respective Universities introduced Post UTME in 2005 to screen the qualified candidates that got the required points in JAMB. The result of such screening exercise is used to admit qualified candidates

who are expected to perform wonderfully in their academic endeavor. The introduction of Post UTME had led to massive public reaction from all segments of the country. The academic clique is fighting for its continuity, parents and students are having mix feeling about it. The Government seems to be divided on the whole matter, this is because, the executives who supported the introduction of the policy, viewed it as a remedy to the decay in educational standard in higher institutions of learning in the country, the legislative arm of Government views it as an avenue for Universities to make “quick money” and have been clamoring for the scrapping of the Post UTME screening (Sams, 2010). The present study is to determine whether gender have impacts on the UTME scores, Post UTME scores and the academic performance of the students in the Nigerian Universities.

Statement of the Problem

The main problem of the study is the impact of gender on UTME scores, PUTME scores and the students’ academic achievement. Based on this problem, this research focused on the impact of gender on UTME scores, PUTME scores and students’ academic achievement in the Nigerian Universities.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to:

1. find out if the UTME scores, PUTME scores and Academic Achievement’s relationships are invariant across gender of the students of Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Research Question

To guide the course of investigation in this study, answer was sought to the following question:-

1. Are the relationships examined invariant across gender in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina?

Research Hypothesis

The following research hypothesis was formulated to guide the researcher in achieving the above stated objective and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance:

Ho1: The UTME scores, PUTME scores and Academic Achievement relationships are invariant across gender in Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina.

Methodology

The research design for this study was Ex-post facto design which was used for structuring the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. The population of this study comprised all the students admitted in to the Faculty of Education and the faculty of Humanities of Umaru Musa Yar’adua University through Post UTME in 2014/2015 academic session. The actual number of students admitted in to the two Faculties during this session was put at 804. The sample size of the study used is two hundred and sixty (260) students comprising both males and females across the two faculties. Cluster sampling technique was employed as one of the probability random sampling. The research designed pro-forma was used for data collection. The data was collected directly from the office of Examinations and Records of the University upon approval by the registrar. The researcher used Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 version. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data collected.

Results of the Study

Hypothesis

Ho. The UTME scores, PUTME scores and Academic Achievement relationships are invariant across gender of the students in Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina

Table 1. Correlation between CGPA, UTME and PUTME among the Female Students

Ralationship	N	Correlation(r)	Sig 2-tailed (p)
CGPA VS UTME	77	-0.073	0.527
CGPA VS PUTME	77	0.855	0.000
UTME VS PUTME	77	-0.135	0.242

Table 2. Correlation between CGPA, UTME and PUTME among the Male Students

Ralationship	N	Correlation(r)	Sig 2-tailed (p)
CGPA VS UTME	183	0.034	0.651
CGPA VS PUTME	183	0.803	0.000
UTME VS PUTME	183	-0.012	0.876

Table 3. The Summary of the Correlation between CGPA, UTME and PUTME among Gender of the Students

Variables	Males		Females		Decision
CGPA VS UTME	0.034	0.651	-0.073	0.527	No Difference
CGPA VS PUTME	0.803	0.000	0.855	0.000	No Difference
UTME VS PUTME	-0.012	0.876	-0.135	0.242	No Difference

The correlation between CGPA, UTME and PUTME scores as regards to gender of the students was tested using Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The result indicates that there is non-significant difference between males and females scores in UTME Academic Achievement, this is because, the correlation coefficient (r) for Males is 0.034 with p=0.651 while for females their correlation coefficient is -0.073 with p=0.527. The result also revealed that there is nosignificant difference between males and females' scores in PUTME and Academic Achievement, this is because, the correlation coefficient (r) for males is 0.803 with p=0.000 and for females r=0.855 with p=0.000. The result also showed that, there is also nosignificant difference between males and females scores in UTME and PUTME, this is because, the correlation coefficient for males is -0.012 with p=0.876 while for females is -.0.135 with p=0.242. Generally speaking, there is nosignificant difference between males and females as regards to scores in UTME, PUTME and Academic Achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

Discussions

Based on the finding of this research, there is no significant difference between Male and Female students admitted through Post UTME Screening with regards to scores of UTME and Academic Achievement. This further revealed that both males and females earned the required pass marks in UTME before being qualified to sit for PUTME. There is also nosignificant difference between males and females with regards to scores of PUTME and Academic Achievement, similarly, this showed that

both sex earned the prerequisite marks in Post UTME before being admitted into level one of their degree programme. Finally, there is no significant difference between males and females as regards to scores in both UTME and PUTME, this revealed that both sex were able to acquire the required points in both UTME and PUTME before they were admitted into level one of their degree programme. This finding also corroborated the work of (Ajaja 2010) who also found that there is no significant difference in CGPA scores between Males and females students admitted through Post UTME.

The finding of this research also contradicts the work of Emaikwu (2012) who found that there was statistical significant difference in the Mean academic performance of males and females students and that academic performance of males students was higher than their female counterparts.

The finding of this study also agrees with the work of (Okoh, 2014) who found no significant difference between males and females in their academic performance. This clearly shows that neither males nor females outperformed one another.

Conclusions

Based on the above findings it is concluded that, there is no significant influence of gender on UTME, PUTME and Academic Achievement (CGPA).

Recommendations

The recommendations based on the findings are as follow;

1. The Government should make it law that only those who passed PUTME, regardless of the gender, are to be admitted in every Nigerian University.
2. The federal ministry of education should organize workshops, seminars and conferences to enlighten the public, both males and females, on the importance of PUTME screening exercise.
3. Hence, the UTME is considered less important, the government should expand her life span for both males and females from one year to at least four (4) years.

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