UTME and Post-UTME Scores as Predictor of Academic Performance of University Undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstracts
The poor cognitive performance of university undergraduate in recent time can be traced to university admission system. Candidate who met admission requirement in the Senior Secondary School Certificate or its equivalent are seen as would-be university undergraduate. Also same candidate who attained a high level of performance in the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and Post-Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (PUTME) are presumed to be capable of pursuing chosen course of study successfully in the university. This study investigated the extent to which UTME and PUTME scores predict academic performance of university undergraduates.

Descriptive research survey was used. The population of the study consist all the undergraduate students that were admitted into the university. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 1650 students from those that were admitted in 2011/2012 academic session. A self-developed proforma was used to collect student UTME and PUMTE scores along with Grade Point Average (GPA) for eight semesters. Two research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated. The data collected were analysed with the use of t-test.

The result showed that the performances do have effect on their academic performance in the university. Also PUTME exercise is effective in selecting the right candidate for admission.

It is therefore recommended that PUTME exercise/process in the university needed to be strengthened to effectively select candidate for admission.

Keywords: UTME, PUTME, Academic Performance, University undergraduate.
 Word Count: 223

INTRODUCTION

The Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) is a standardized examination which the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) conducts every year to select candidates for university admission. The cut-off mark is determined by the JAMB while names of all candidates are sent to the institution of the candidates choice when in return recommend candidates that score above the cut-off mark to JAMB to be admitted. The candidates for UTME are required to have five credit passes as not more than two sitting in Mathematics, English Language and three other subjects at the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) or the General Certificate Examination (GCE) ordinary level in not more than two sitting (Tenibiaje,2009). The SSCE and GCE are coordinated by the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC). The SSCE is also awarded by the National Examination Council (NECO).

INTRODUCTION OF POST UTME SCREENING BY UNIVERSITIES

Amatareotubo (2006) described how the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced the policy of post JAMB screening exercise by universities in 2005. The policy was viewed by Badmus and Idoko (2008) for all tertiary institutions to screen candidates after their JAMB result and before admission is granted (Aliu, 2008; Idoko, 2008; Badmus, 2008). Candidate with score of 180 above in UTME would then be shortlisted by JAMB and their names and scores sent to the University of the Candidate's Choice, which would screen again using aptitude test or oral interview. Universities are free to use any method in the screening exercise as it was done in the former University of Education, Ikere-Ekiti (TUNEDIK) where the Post-UTME was done with both Objective and essay test (Busayo 2010). The University of Education Ikere-Ekiti was officially opened in may 2008 to allow prospective candidate to apply, those who earlier applied to JAMB, wrote the 2008 UTME and those who attained the prescribed national minimum score were ask to apply to TUNEDIK provided they met the minimum entry requirements (Busayo, 2008; Zebulon, 2011). TUNEDIK conducted two Post UTME screening examinations, the first was an objective test based on the subject /course area of the candidate, while the second examination was an essay test for those who passed the first examination. Zebulon (2011) expressed that the essay examination revealed the inadequacies of some of the candidate, many who scored high marks in UTME and the first screening examination performed poorly in the essay test. Busayo (2010) stated that the result of the two examinations was computed to determine eligible candidate for admission.

Makinde (2009) viewed that two examinations are not too many to sieve qualified candidates from those who cheated to pass UME. Post-UME is the screening procedure for admitting students to an institution to ensure that such students are able to receive tuition and pass whatever examination that will prove them qualified to pursue their careers (Bakare and Ajibolade 2010; Aina, 2015).

Benue state university which was established in 1992 has been on the queue with other universities in Nigeria searching for qualitative candidates (Achor, Aligba and Omananyi, 2010). At the moment, candidates seeking admission into Universities write UTME, and Post-UTME screenig test in addition to their Senior School Certificate result (Ojerinde, 2009; Daniel ,2005b; Daniel, 2005a).According to Hakkinen (2004), majority of the candidates that were qualified but could not gain admission into courses of their choice often opt for one year pre-degree programme. Samba, Achor and Ogbeba,(2010) viewed that for the science ,the preliminary science programme is for one calendar year intended to brush up the candidate to do well in UTME, and PUTME screening test and improve their knowledge of the four science subjects and English Language (Aina, 2015).

In the view of Ogbeba (2010) and Aina (2015) since year 2010, the degree awarded institutions have lost confidence in the UTME scores and complained about the poor performance of students in the first year university examination, though admitted with high UME scores. Achor, Aligba and Omananyi (2010) agreed that this culminated into the current practice of making candidates to write Post-UTME screening in their respective universities of choice.
Ajaja (2010) was of the opinion that the lapses noticed in process of admission of candidates into Nigerian universities, through the University Matriculation Examination (UME) and the expected roles of universities in the society which is currently on the decline, necessitated the

call for an alternative method of admitting students into Nigeria universities. This call resulted in granting universities the power to conduct post-UME screening tests (Ajaja, 2010; Ajaja, 2008). It was believed by the proponents that PUME screening test will ensure quality and when the best students are admitted, Salim (2006) believed that quality admission will produce better quality of graduates. Jeje and Olagoke (2006) said that such students will be committed to their studies, while Alutu and Aluede (2006) agreed that there will be decreased in examination malpractices and "sex for marks". The PUME is the only way the university can monitor the students they take in on admission Aina, (2015).

Akoja and Onmuegbuna (2008) stated that the said exercise was embarked upon as a result of lack of trust in the genuineness of UME results which candidates often parade. Ajaja (2008) gathered that some candidates who had flaunted high scores in their UME results often perform woefully when offered admission. Daniel (2005b) was of the opinion that many candidates recruit other persons (Mercenaries) to write the test on their behalf. Therefore, the attempt by universities to ensure that the candidates offered admission were those who sat for the examinations gave rise to the post-UME test (Oguntuase, 2010). Oguntuase (2010) observed that students who scored 300 and above were not teachable because they could not defend their scores but those who scored between 180 and 230 were in most cases those that wrote the examination themselves. Oguntuase (2010) opined that it reflects in the results they get in the post-UME test.

Justification for Post-UME Screening
Before the introduction of post-UME screening, virtually all candidates who scored 200 and above secured admission almost automatically to the university of their choice (Busayo, 2011; Owalabi, 2011).With post-UME, deficiencies of the candidates are exposed, especially when they are asked to write (Busayo,2011; Aina,2015). Post –UME is the screening procedure for admitting students to an institution to ensure that such students are able to receive tuition and pass whatever examination that will prove them qualified to pursue the careers of their choice.
Screening students before admitting them had been a practice in of all institution from the base to the apex of our educational system since the introduction of education in our country. This had continued in all our institutions until the early 1970s when admission into tertiary institutions especially became based on passing the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination. To have discontinued screening examination for admission to tertiary institution was a deviation from the norm. This deviation brought a cankerworm known as examination malpractices (Owolabi, 2011). This cankerworm attained such a level that it became difficult to eradicate and no one could rely on results released by JAMB. The Federal Ministry of Education had to introduce the post-UME examination and screening process in 2005 (Owolabi, 2011; Busayo, 2011).

In the study conducted by Busayo (2011) in one of the Nigerian universities, only 87 of the sampled 200 candidates who scored 200 marks and above in JAMB/UME representing 43.5% passed the post-UME screening test, the remaining 113, representing 56.5% performed poorly, scoring less than 40% in the post-UME screening. This set of candidates would have been admitted on merit to their first or second choice of university, if there was no post-UME screening. Hence post-UME screening should not be discarded, but should be strengthened.
The University of Lagos Parents' forum (Tenibiaje, 2009) observed that the post-UME screening

revealed many students who scored high in JAMB examination but scored zero in post-UME examination. Many of them were not even able to communicate intelligibly in English Language when interviewed. The examination also highlighted the atrocities perpetrated by special JAMB/UME centres, which dished out high marks to students who never wrote the examination (Omananyi, 2010).

Candidates who met admission requirement in terms of passes (in the required subjects) at not less than credit level on the SSCE or its equivalent, and attained a high level performances in UTME and PUTME are presumed to be capable of pursuing chosen course of study successfully in the university. This assumption is open for question. Hence this study investigates how UTME and Post-UTME scores serve as predictor of academic performance of university undergraduates students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university. Also to find out the relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university. Two research questions were raised: (1) what is the relationship between the UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university? (2) What is the relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university? Also, two research hypotheses were formulated: (1) there is no significant relationship between UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university; (2) there is no significant relationship between Post-UTME scores of students in each semester in the university. The selection of the right candidates for university education would bring about the production of the right human recourses, if the UTME and PUTME predict students' academic performance in university accurately, the lecturers will find it easier to teach and lecture the students. There will be discipline among the students which is a vital ingredient for learning. The community and the nation will get sellable products as workforce from the university. This paper was delimited to the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Science and Faculty of Social Science and Management of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba- Akoko, Ondo state Nigeria. The reason for the only 4 Faculties was that they admitted students for 4-years course. Also for the researcher to have in-depth knowledge of the work.

Methodology
The design for this research is descriptive. A self-developed proforma was used to collect student's Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) scores, Post-UTME scores and academic performance from 100level year 1 to 400level year 4. The population consisted all the students that were admitted into Faculties of Arts, Education, Science, Social and Management Science and Law for 2011/2012 academic session. A sample of 1650 students in 4 of the Faculties except Faculty of Law that does not admit students for four years course. These set of students that were involved completed their course of study in the 2014/2015 academic session. A self-developed proforma was used. The proforma was in two parts, the first part was the academic records of the students, where matriculation number, faculty, department each student belongs, the course of study, year of admission into the university and year of graduation were recorded. The second part was the input variables of the students. The UTME and post-UTME scores were recorded. And last of the input variables was the students' GPA from year one 1st semester to year four 2nd semester. Permission was sought for from the university to consult student's records. From the records, the required pieces of information were collected. The

collected data of the students were summarized to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used for the two hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant relationship between UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university. Information provided on Table 1 below shows the testing of the hypothesis.

Table 1: Test of Significant relationship between UTME scores and GPA semester by semester for the students that were involved in the research

	2011/2012		2012/2013		2013/2014		2014/2015	
	GPA 1st semester	GPA 2nd Semester	GPA 3rd Semester	GPA 4th Semester	GPA 5th Semester	GPA 6th Semester	GPA 7th Semester	GPA 8th Semester
UTME scores	-0.013	-0.199[xx]	-0.192[xx]	-0.206[xx]	-0.073[x]	-0.072[x]	-0.068[x]	-0.039
Significance level	0.648	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.012	0.O13	0.019	0.076

[x]- Correlation is significant at 0.05 level
[xx]- Correlation is significant at 0.001 level

The relationship between UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university was analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation as shown on Table 1 above. The values of UTME scores in all the eight semesters are negative. The GPA for 2nd, 3rd and 4th semesters are significant at 0.001 while it is significant at 0.05 in the 5th, 6th and 7th semesters. The hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university. The result is as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Test of Significant Relationship between Post-UTME scores and GPA scores semester by semester for the students that were involved in the research

	2011/2012		2012/2013		2013/2014		2014/2015	
	GPA 1st semester	GPA 2ND semester	GPA 3rd semester	GPA 4th semester	GPA 5th semester	GPA 6th semester	GPA 7th semester	GPA 8th semester
Post-UTME	-0.017	-0.102[xx]	-0.066[x]	-0117[xx]	-0.055	-0.039	-0.075[xx]	-0.031

Significance Level	0.543	0.000	0.020	0.000	0.050	0.0175	0.009	0.281

[x-] Correlation is significant at 0.05 level
[xx-] Correlation is significant at 0.001 level

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analysed the relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their GPA in each semester in the university. The analysis shows that the significant levels of the relationship are greater than 0.05 in 1st and 8th semesters, while the obtained values for the relationship are less than 0.05 in the 2nd,3rd,4th,5th,6th and 7th semesters. The values of the relationship from 1st semester to the 8th semester were negative. Therefore the hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion and Findings
Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant relationship between UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university. The findings support that of Ajaja (2010) that there is no significant relationship between the scores of students that were admitted into the university with UME and their GPA scores in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th semester in the university, while the finding disagrees with that of Afolabi et al (2007) that UTME scores correlate with the academic performance of students in the university. The finding of Omodara (2004) agreed that the UME scores had significant relationship in the GPA scores in 3rd, 5th and 8th semesters in the university. Also, the finding of Oladokun et al (2008) disagreed that the unreliability of the UME scores had positive significant relationship between the students that were admitted with UME and their undergraduate academic performance in the 1st semester in the university.

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their performance in each semester in the university. The finding is that the relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their GPA in each semester in the university shows no significant difference for the 1st and 8th semester only. It agrees with the finding of Ajaja (2010) that the Post-UTME scores of students had no significant relationship with their GPA in 1st and 2nd semester and their final CGPA in the university. It also agreed with the finding of Bakare and Ajibade (2010) that there is no significant relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their GPA scores in 1st and 2nd semesters in the university. The finding that there is no significant relationship between Post-UTME scores of students and their GPA scores, however disagreed with that of Ifedili et al (2010) that Post-UTME scores had significant relationship with their academic performance as reflected in their GPAs for the 2nd and 4th semesters in the university. The findings of Jeje (2011) and Olanipekun (2011) agreed that Post-UTME screening exercise sieved the candidates before admission into the university; therefore Post-UTME scores had significant relationship with their GPA scores in 1st semester in the university, as it disagreed with the findings of this paper.

Conclusion and Recommendation
The major purpose of this paper was to investigate if UTME and Post-UTME scores do predict academic performance among university undergraduates. The findings show that (1) high levels of performance students obtained in UTME do have effect on their academic performance in the

university. (2) Post-UTME exercise is effective in selecting the right candidates for admission. Based on all these findings, the follow recommendations are made (1) students should not relax much on the high level of performance attained either in UTME or Post-UTME, but should continue to put more efforts into their studies in order to sustain the prior levels of performance. (2) That Post-UTME exercise/process in the university needs to be strengthened effectively select candidates for admission. (3) That Post-UTME should not be discarded rather be given prompt attention as it sieves candidates before admission.

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