



## **Mode of Entry and Final Year Undergraduate Academic Performance in the Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife**

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### **Abstract**

The study sought to determine the influence of mode of entry on final year undergraduate academic performance in the Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State. The study adopted ex-post-facto design. Two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study comprised all the students who were admitted in 2008/2009 academic session in the Faculty of Education. The instrument for data collection was Undergraduates Cumulative Grade Point Average (UCGPA) records. The sample size was 359 students selected through proportionate simple random sampling techniques. Collected data were analyzed using, chi-square and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). It was revealed, among other things, that, there was a significant influence of the mode entry on final year CGPA in favour of Direct-entry and Pre-degree. It was equally revealed that there was no interaction influence of sex and mode of admission on final year students' CGPA. It was recommended, among others things, that JAMB and universities should review undergraduate admission examinations to ascertain the reliabilities of such examinations.

**Keywords:** Mode of entry, academic achievement, education

### **Introduction**

The concept of academic performance is inevitable in any formal educational institution. Academic performance expresses the learning achievement of an individual or a group at the end of an academic programme. It is a criterion for ascertaining the capabilities of a student from which his potentials could be inferred. According to Cambridge University Reporter ([CUR], 2003), academic performance is often defined based on students' examination performance. Generally, academic performance is used to determine how well an individual is able to assimilate, retain, recall and communicate his knowledge of what has learnt. Academic performance is also seen as yearly overall performance which is evident in the students' cumulative grade point average (Jayanthi, Balakrishnan, Ching, Latiff & Nasirudeen, 2014). Academic performance has close relationship in meaning with academic achievement and academic attainment. Academic performance is the demonstrated achievement of learning as opposed to the potential for learning. In summary, academic performance is the achievement of knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects usually determined by test scores or marks assigned by the teachers.

Teachers and school administrators major target is to ensure improvement in students' academic performance. To hit this target, different researchers have investigated factors that could influence students' academic performance. For instance, Omede (2003) investigated the influence of entry qualification of students on their academic achievement and observed that Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) entrance examinations could not significantly, predict students' academic achievement in Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa. There could be many factors that influence students' performance. These include the quality of the school and students' academic background. In order to ensure that those students who have aptitude to pursue university degrees are admitted into universities, examinations are normally used for screening students before admission. With increase cases of university dropouts in Nigeria, it becomes pertinent to explore influence of mode of admission on students' academic performance.

The mode of admission of candidates into first degree programs in Nigerian universities are of three major forms. These include admissions through the direct entry, admissions through the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) and admission through the pedigree programme.



Admission through the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) and direct entry are being handled by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board while admission through the pre-degree programme is being handled by the universities themselves. In Obafemi Awolowo University, students are classified into Regular and Part time Students. In line with the three mode of admission, students of Obafemi Awolowo University, include the Pre degree students, Diploma Programme Students; the undergraduate students; Sandwich (Faculty of Education) students, the Masters Degree students and the Doctoral Degree students. Of all these students, majority of them are being admitted through UTME conducted by JAMB.

The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria through Act 2 of 1978 to regularize the intake of students into the universities and solve the problem of multiple admissions given to some candidates at the expense of others. Like other examining bodies in Nigeria, the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board has been subjected to series of criticisms. (Adeyemi, 2010) argued that a prediction of a future examination result could be made with reasonable success on the basis of the results of an earlier examination and that grades may serve as prediction measure and as criterion measures. Academic attainment is an important parameter in measuring success in students. Observation and reports have shown that success or high academic achievement has become herculean task to accomplish by students in recent years. Poor academic performance were recorded both at the secondary and tertiary level of education (Tenibiaje, 2009), therefore, calling for urgent measure to curtail the menace. As academic performance is tied on examination, it is expected that good admission examination should be able to predict students' future performance

However, researchers have maintained divergent views on the predictive validity of some examinations. While it seems that performance in a lower level examination has predictive value, it has been believed that, achievement in a lower level examination cannot be used to predict students' achievement in a higher level examination (Edokpayi & Suleiman, 2011; Adeyemi, 2008) These findings that the predictive validity varies considerably between colleges and different group of students have been attributed to probable statistical reasons (Ojerinde & Ojo, 2009). Similarly, Ogbebor (2012) advocated for the scrapping of continuous education by different universities (pre-degree) and the sole use of UTME conducted by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board when he opined that students admitted through modes of entry other than this perform poorly in the university. The researcher further stated that there was no need to duplicate efforts in the selection exercise to admit students to the university and this duplication of efforts, he believed, has been on in various universities in Nigeria.

Contrary to the expectations that all the students admitted into the universities in Nigeria should graduate, poor achievement has long been observed and it is being attributed to many factors such as admission of incompetent students (Emaikwu & Nworgu, 2005). In fact, the initiatives of the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board have been widely jeopardized by the widely reported cases of examination malpractices. Records indicates that in 1995 alone, the Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board cancelled the result of 81,066 candidates (21.3%) who were invoiced in cheating in the examinations. In 1998 out of 322,020 candidates who sat for the university matriculation examinations, 8,194 candidates had their results cancelled due to their involvement in various forms of examination malpractices. Similarly, findings were made by other researchers in years 2002 and 2003. From above, it appears that the objectives of establishing the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board are being defeated. This might perhaps have been the reason why many Nigerian Universities started the pre-degree programmer as alternative to the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board. Also, these and the need to quality assurance of entrants have necessitated the institutionalization of Post- UTME screening in the nation's Universities in 2005 as a means of applying the quality rule book to promote assurance and merit- driven climate for admission.

This action gained more popularity amidst the initial criticisms based on the results of a policy study carried out by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 2006 at the instance of the National Council on Educational (NCE). The study determined the extent to which public examinations conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) could predict university students' academic performances.

However, the basic requirements for direct entry are N.C.E with passes in at least two principal subjects plus credit in at least three subjects in West African Senior School Certificate Examination



(WASSCE) or National Examination Council (NECO). Also qualified for direct entry are candidates with passes in at least two subjects in the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) Advanced Level and passes in five subjects including English at the Ordinary level or “A” Level passes in at least three subjects with “O” Level passes in a minimum of four subjects. The requirement for Pre- degree and (UTME) University Matriculation Examination Entry is Senior Secondary School Certificate (S.S.C.E) at credit level in at least five subjects including English Language. Students who gain university admission via the direct entry usually register for three year degree courses while those who qualify via the University Matriculation Examination (U.M.E) usually used four years and those that entered through Pre- degree spend five years or more in the University before the award of a degree.

If the country is to achieve rapid educational development, access to schooling, for all children with greater emphasis on functional education must be provided. There should be a programme for effective monitoring of production of good teachers. Francis (2015) suggested that Joint Graduation Convocation and Certification Body (JGCCB) should be established in the country. This Body, according to the author, would ensure high quality of graduation, convocation and certification examinations so that only those that are adequately to benefit by university certificates, diplomas and degrees do graduate from the institutions. Admission of N.C.E graduates into the Faculty of Education is not automatic. Sometimes it is subjected to other variables so also the number of students is usually higher than places available for student with (SSCE) Joint Admission Matriculation Students. In view of this, the academic performance of students should be investigated viz-a-viz their entry qualifications to ascertain which of the entry qualification is a better predictor of academic performance. This will go a way to improve the selection ratio and an objective feedback to the university management on the performance of entry admission policy currently in use.

### **Statement of Problem**

There is a cue and cry over the quality of graduate produced in Nigerian universities. In Nigeria, students are admitted into universities through direct entry, UTME, and Pre-degree programme. It is expected that the students that are admitted into Nigerian universities through these three modes of entries should have solid foundation to cope with university education. Unfortunately, there is a glaring evidence that some students are not coping with university education at all. Comparability of these modes of admission of students into university seems not to be a challenge to educators; reasons being that these modes of entries adopt different assessment approaches.

The increasing rate poor quality of graduates in the country has been attributed to admission of incompetent students in university. Considering the fact that there is no single mode of admitting students into universities, the need to identify which mode of entry that influence or does not influence students academic performance becomes not only imperative, but also timely. Therefore, the thrust of this study is to investigate, the influence of mode of entry on undergraduates’ academic performance, in the Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolow University, Ile-Ife

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between students’ mode of entry into the Faculty of Education (O.A.U, Ile-Ife) and their final year undergraduate academic performance. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the extent of students’ final year performance by mode of entry into the faculty.
2. ascertain the combined influence of students’ sex and mode of entry on final year performance.

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypotheses guided the study:

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the performance of students admitted through Pre-degree, UTME and Direct Entry into the Faculty of Education.
- H<sub>02</sub>: Students’ sex and mode of admission will not significantly influence their final year performance.

### **Methods**

The research design employed in carrying out this study is the expost-facto design. To be specific, the design adopted in this study is the causal comparative Expost-Facto which is used for



discovery of possible causes of a phenomenon that is under investigation through empirical comparison of a group of subjects who possess the trait. The population for the study comprised all students of the faculty of Education, ObafemiAwolowo University, Ile-Ife who were on first degree programme in the Department of Educational Foundations and Counselling (SEC), Special Education and Curriculum Studies (SEC) and Institute of Education (IED). These students were in part II during the 2006/2007 academic session and graduated during the 2008/2009 academic session. Sample size for this study was 359 students comprised 178 males and 181 females. The students were selected using proportionate simple random sampling technique. Eighty-five(85) graduates were selected from SEC, 125 graduates from IED and 149 graduates from EFC.

The data utilized for this research were obtained through the “instrument”, UCGPA records in the Department of Educational Foundations and Counselling, Institute of Education, Special Education and Curriculum Studies and Faculty office. The relevant aspects of the previous results were copied personally by the researchers. The data collected consists of Sex, Age, Department, Mode of Entry and Final Year Result (CGPA) of the selected graduates. The data were analyzed using Analysis of Variance and Chi-Square.

The students’ CGPA scores were categorised into class of degree using the University degree for categorisation. The categorisation are CGPA of 1.00 to 1.49 ‘Pass’, 1.50 to 2.49 ‘Third Class’, 2.50 to 3.49 ‘Second Class Lower Division’, 3.50 to 4.49 ‘Second Class Upper Division’, and above 4.50 ‘First Class’. The class of degree categorisation was then cross-tabulated with the mode of entry into the three (3) selected Departments in order to reveal the level of performance of students admitted through Pre-Degree, UTME and Direct Entry in the Faculty of Education, ObafemiAwolowo University, Ile-Ife. The hypothesis was tested using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Chi-square.

**Results**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the performance of students admitted through each of Pre-Degree, UTME and Direct Entry into the Faculty of Education.

**TABLE 2: ANOVA Summary of the Strength of Each of the Three Modes of Entry in Predicting Students’ Final Year Results**

(i)- (j)Mode of Entry		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Pre-Degree	UTME	11.798	2	5.899	7.500	.001 <sup>a</sup>	Sig.
	Direct Entry						
UTME	Pre-Degree	279.996	356	.787			
	Direct Entry						
Direct Entry	Pre-Degree	291.794	358				
	UTME						

Table 2 revealed that  $F_{(7.5,356)}$  is significant at 0.001 level of significance. This is because the p-value (0.001) is less than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is a significant variation in the strength of each of the three modes of entry in predicting students’ final year performance.

**Hypothesis Two:** Students’ sex and mode of admission will not significantly influence their final year performance.

**Table 2: Influence of Students' Sex and Mode of Entry on Final Year Performance**

			Second class Upper	Second class Lower	Third class	Pass	Total
			fo (fe)	fo (fe)	fo (fe)	fo (fe)	fo (fe)
1	<b>MALE</b>	Pre-Degree	6 (6.7)	29(26.1)	13(13.3)	6 (7.9)	54(54.0)
		UTME	7 (10.6)	38(41.6)	25(21.3)	16(12.5)	86(86.0)
		Direct Entry	9 (4.7)	19(18.4)	6 (9.4)	4 (5.6)	38(38.0)
		<b>Total</b>	22(22.0)	86(86.0)	44(44.0)	26(26.0)	178(178.0)
			df= 6		P = 0.142		
$\chi^2 = 9.620^a$							
2	<b>FEMALE</b>	Pre-Degree	8 (5.8)	20(18.8)	8(10.7)	6 (6.7)	42(42.0)
		UTME	11(14.9)	44 (48.3)	32(27.4)	21(17.3)	108 (108.0)
		Direct Entry	6 (4.3)	17(13.9)	6 (7.9)	2 (5.0)	31(31.0)
		<b>Total</b>	25(25.0)	81(81.0)	46(46.0)	29(26.0)	181(178.0)
			df= 6		P = 0.221		
$\chi^2 = 8.235^b$							

Table 2 above revealed that students' sex and mode of admission did not significantly influence final year undergraduate performance, since p-value (0.142) and (0.221) are greater than (0.05) level of significance. This study concludes that the students' sex and mode of admission did not significantly influence their final year performance. In other word, there was no significant interaction influence of mode of admission and sex on final year students CGPA.

### Discussion

The results of this study, with respect to hypothesis one, shows that mode of entry had a significant influence on the final year undergraduate academic performance in the Faculty of Education of ObafemiAwolowo University, Ile-Ife. The reason for the significance difference in performance by entry mode in favour of Direct Entry graduates could be as a result of previous knowledge gained during their NCE programmes. It could equally be as a result of unreliability in the uses of UTME and Pre-degree in selection of students for admission into the university. This result is consistent with the findings of other researchers (Bamidele&Oluwatayo, 2006; Fatade et al. 2012) who affirmed that there is a significant difference among entrants admitted through different modes in their performance in the University. However, the findings negate the submission of other researchers that found no significance difference in the academic performance of students admitted into the university through pre-degree,



UTME and direct entry modes in the University (Ogbebor, 2012; Evroro 2009; Omirin, 2007). In addition, the findings equally revealed that Students' sex and mode of admission do not significantly influence final year undergraduate performance. The reason for the observed lack of interaction influence of sex and mode of admission could be that almost equal number of males and females were admitted through Direct Entry and Pre-degree. This study is in line with the findings of Goni, Yagana, Ali and Bularafa (2015) that there is no significant gender difference in academic achievement.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the pre-degree and direct entry modes of admission are the best predictor of success in the final year academic performance in the Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. This is evident in the findings that students who entered the universities through the pre-degree and direct entry modes of entry were in the largest number among students who scored the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) in the final year academic performance in the Faculty of Education. It has equally be affirmed that sex and mode of admission has no significant interaction influence on undergraduate students as measured by the students CGPA.

### Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were preferred:

1. Special attention should be given to the UTME and Pre-Degree groups to enable them catch up with the D.E. group during their undergraduate training.
2. Selection and admission of candidates should not be biased in favour of a particular category of candidates; rather each category should be given equal opportunities having seen that candidates can perform well, despite entry qualifications.
3. Students should be encouraged to enroll in college of education, after which they could seek for admission in the universities instead of seeking to gain admission into university by all means.
4. JAMB and universities should review their undergraduate admission examinations to ascertain the reliabilities of such examinations.

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