

## **Prediction of South Eastern Nigerian Students' Under Graduate Scores with Their Ume and Post-Ume Scores**

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**Abstract:** *The study looked at the relationship between Joint University Matriculation and the performance of students in 300 level, 400 level and 500 level students who were admitted into 6 (Six) Nigerian Universities in 2005. A correlational longitudinal survey design was adopted. A preform was used to collect the data from the students' files. Their cumulative grade point average and JAMB UME and Post UME Scores were collected. The population is made up of 3280 students selected by a combination of stratified and sample random and purposive sampling techniques.*

*Results show that both JAMB UME and Post UME did not predict performance as measured by cumulative grade point averages in the years under study. It is recommended that both examination be maintained.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Evaluation in education, especially those of public examination are for selection and placement. The essence of this examination is to identify those who have successfully completed a particular level and to identify those who qualify for the next level. Admission into Nigerian universities like other universities of the world is through a selection mechanism. In Nigeria, selection into institutions of higher learning is done through entrance examination in addition to basic qualifications namely West African School Certificate (WASC) or West African Senior Secondary School Certificate (WASSCE), General Certificate of Education (GCE), National Examination Certificate (NECO). These examinations according to Iwuji (1990) are scholastic aptitude tests which are meant to predict or forecast performance in future. Tracing the origin of selection process, Sawyer (1963) pointed out that it dates back to 1948 when University College, Ibadan introduced selection examination in order to admit its students. Other universities and institutions of higher learning followed suit.

The essence of these selection processes is to admit students who are able to scale through university examinations. This implies that there should be a high correlation between selection examination scores and performance of students during their university education. In other words, selection examination scores should be able to predict performance in the universities.

Predictive validity is the degree to which one variable (predictor) is able to forecast future performance of another variable (criterion). Nkpa (1997) explains predictive validity as the extent to which predictions made by an instrument are confirmed by the later behaviour of the respondents. It is concerned with prediction of future performance.

Over the years, the introduction of mass literacy programmes, proliferation of private and public schools have provided for more students to be admitted into institutions of higher learning (Obemeata, 1986).

There is also increased number of students who are enrolled into secondary schools. FME (2004) report shows that enrolment has increased from 1.8m to 2.2m from 1998 – 2002 in our secondary schools. In this regard, more students are now desirous of entering into institutions of higher learning. Ayodele (2005) opined that gaining admission into institutions of higher learning was a glorious thing and marked the beginning of personal fulfillment for those who laboured or struggled through secondary education. He recalled with nostalgia when admissions into universities were based on performance in advanced level of General Certificate of Education conducted by University of London in the late 60's and early 70's. He observed that the number of students who wanted to enter the universities then were not many compared with the spaces available within the existing universities. He observed that gradually the demand for university education was outstripping the available spaces. So many students started competing for the limited spaces. This, he believed is the genesis of the problems associated with admissions. For the period between 1986/87 to 1991/92, out of a total of 1,539,893 candidates who applied to JAMB, only 265,480 or 17.26% were placed in the universities (Abdulramam 1992).

In 1978, 96,884 candidates sat for the first JAMB UME while in 1997, the number had risen to 338,472 (Guardian Thursday 30, 1998). This represents about 350% increase. In the year 2001, 842,072 wrote the JAMB UME and only 95,199 (11.3%) were admitted into Nigerian universities (FME 2004). In 2005, over 800,000 candidates applied and 147,000 which is about 18.4% were admitted (Onyekakeyah 2005). In the year 2007, a total of 520,777 males and 390,876 females totaling 911,653 candidates took JAMB UME while in 2008, 1,052,112 candidates sat for UME and only 250,000 will be admitted into 92 universities as was revealed

by the present JAMB boss, Professor DibuOjerinde during a press release (Olatunji 2008). The number of candidates who applied for admission into Nigerian universities has continued to increase without the capacity to absorb them in the university increasing in the same ratio.

With increased awareness for education, and admission spaces not being commensurate with the number that have been applying, came the apparent craze for certificate which has brought about a number of problems and atrocities perpetrated by students at the various levels (Uwadie, 1997, JAMB 2003). These include the cancellation of university matriculation examination (Onuoha, 2005) among others. Along this line, Scholar (2001;10) pointed out that a major employer in the telecommunication sector lamented that the present day Nigerian graduates lack basic skills and that the last well trained corps of Nigerian graduates left the university system in the mid 1980's. One persistent question raised is, does JAMB UME predict performance in undergraduate programmes? A number of studies have been carried out to determine the relationship between JAMB UME scores and performance in university examinations determined by cumulative grade point averages (CGPA). These include:-Nwana (1981), Yoloye (1982), Modu (1983), Abdullahi (1983), Akinnawo (1983), Agbonifo and Dimowo (1985), Ukwuije (1990), and Ajonuma (2004). The results have been conflicting and inconclusive. Obioma and Salau (2007) found out that public examinations in Nigeria have credibility problems.

It was in the light of the escalating malpractices characterizing public examinations that the then Minister of Education, Mrs. ChinweObaji in 2005, during her meeting with the committee on admissions into degree awarding institutions, stated that all candidates seeking admission into universities must sit for the university matriculation examination conducted by JAMB. In addition, universities are to further screen their candidates (Guardian, 2005).

This gave rise to the post university matriculation examinations (POST-UME).

The POST-UME is a further screening of the candidates by the individual universities after meeting the JAMB cut-off point. A number of persons have expressed their views for and against it. Onuoha (2005) in support said that over 500,000 students take JAMB UME every year and half of the results are not released which according to him is a waste of time energy and money. He highlighted that students who fail JAMB UME still find their way in the universities while the right candidates are not admitted by JAMB. He suggested that both JAMB and Universities have contributed to these problems through their personnel which include JAMB workers and even clerks in the typing pools of universities. Nwachukwu (2006) identified no significant relationship between the JAMB UME and POST-UME scores. He opined that there was no form of examination malpractice in the POST-UME screening tests in the year 2005/2006 admissions.

Speaking on JAMB UME and against POST-UME screening Examination, Oloho (2006) said it is unconstitutional and it will take the universities back to status quo encouraging again the reason for which JAMB was introduced like waste of resources, multiple and unharmonized admissions. Akoni (2006) believes that the POST-UME is also characterized by examination malpractice and other forms of malpractice. Opaleye (2006) is of the opinion that if the reason for instituting the POST-UME is examination malpractice, then West African School Certificate Examination should also face the same music as JAMB. Ayodele (2005), Onyechere (2005) and Oloho (2006) believe that POST-UME will make parents and guardians to spend more money and it will also cause increase in extortion on the part of unscrupulous university staff. JAMB (2006), speaking of POST-UME said JAMB had suggested a number of measures to reduce examination malpractices like the "TYPE" system, introduction of passport among others. Idika, Ayang and Joshua (2007), while lending support to the POST UME screening added that it must be done with caution to avoid making it to be another JAMB UME. From the foregoing arguments for and against JAMB UME and POST-UME screening examinations, it is desirable that meaningful decision be made based on empirical investigation. This study therefore provides empirical evidence of the predictive validity of the JAMB UME and POST-UME screening examination scores in Nigerian universities in the South-East.

At the end of secondary education, candidates who wish to be admitted into the universities are required to have passed at credit level in the West African School Certificate (WASC) or National Examination Council (NECO) certificate. In addition to this, they are required to sit for JAMB UME and to pass at acceptable levels.

By the year 2005, many universities felt the need to screen candidates further after the JAMB UME for students to be admitted into these universities. The reason is that it is believed that the JAMB UME has not been able to predict performance as a result of examination malpractices. Public examinations in Nigeria are said to have lost credibility as they are plagued by examination malpractices (Obioma and Salau, 2007). They recommended that the candidates have to sit and pass POST-UME screening examinations at acceptable levels. Whether the recently introduced POST-UME will be more predictive of undergraduate performance than the JAMB UME is ascertainable by empirical investigation. From literature, little or no studies have been carried out to ascertain this. The gap in knowledge is what the present study intends to fill. The problem of this study posed as a question is: to what extent would JAMB UME and POST-UME scores of the students admitted predict performance in undergraduate examinations?

The researcher had carried out a study on the same students and found that UME was a better predictor of performance in 100L and 200L (Akanwa and Onofeghara 2009).

The study is to find out which of UME and Post UME will predict performance in the subsequent years of 300Level, 400L and 500level for students who studied Law.

Six null Hypotheses guided the study.

There is no Significant relationship between the JAMB UME and Cummulative Grade Point Averages in their 300L

There is no Significant relationship between the JAMB UME and Cummulative Grade Point Averages in their 400L

There is no Significant relationship between the JAMB UME and Cummulative Grade Point Averages in their 500L

A significant relationship does not exist between Post UME and Cummulative Grade Point Averages in their 300L.

A significant relationship does not exist between Post UME and Cummulative Grade Point Averages in their 400L

A significant relationship does not exist between Post UME and Cummulative Grade Point Averages in their 500L

## II. Method

A correlational Longitudinal Survey involving a cohurt of students admitted by selection examinations of JAMB UME and Post UME screening in three Universities (ASBSU, Imo and UNN in South East Nigeria in 2005.

The population consists of 3280 students who were selected by a combination of simple random sampling, stratified random sampling and Purposive Sampling Techniques. Data were collected using a proforma to collect cumulative grade point averages of the students of Biological and Physical Sciences, Business Education and Law for 300 level, 400 level, 500 level for Law alone. Data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). t-test was used to test for significance using SPSS.

## III. Result

Table 1: Pearson's Correlation Matrixes of JAMB UME Scores POST UME Scores Cumulative Grade point averages of 300L, 400L and 500L.

Variables	300L	400L	500L	SEX
UME	.167	.002	-0.052	-.201
POST UME	.253	.379	.071*	- *
N = 3280				

- Significant at 7%

## IV. Discussion

Results showed that both JAMB UME and the Post UME did not predict performance from 300 level to 500 level for law students. These agree with the findings of Ukwuje (1990), Joe (1988). Akanwa&Onofephara(2009). However, the findings of Nwachukwu (2006), Akanwa&Onofepharar (2009) showed that Post UME predicted 100 level and 200 level performance as measured by the cumulative grade point averages of the years. This is because at these points,m the university environment and all the other intervening variables like peer pressure, examination malpractices, cultism, and craze for certificates and desire to leave the University with good grades in order to get good jobs can actually alter the performance of the students.

## V. Conclusion

Neither JAMB UME nor Post UME actually predicts performance as the students get to 300 levels, 400 level and 500 level. However, both are good selection examinations and showed be maintained.

## VI. Recommendations Of The Study

Based on the finding of the study, the researcher makes the following suggestions;

1. JAMB UME should be retained as one of the selection modes but the POST-UME screening should be continued as a means of further screening to ensure that better qualified candidates are admitted.
2. JAMB should ensure that all factors which lower credibility of UME are properly addressed.
3. The POST UME should be retained and the Universities should ensure its credibility.

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