

Relationship between Admission Policies, Students' Academic Performance and Retention in Colleges of Education in North-West Zone, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study is on admission policies, students' academic performance and retention in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria, the study was guided by three research Objectives and hypotheses. The study employed a descriptive survey research design of correlational type. The population of the study were drawn from states-own Colleges of education in North-west, Nigeria which comprised of Admission Officers (7) Teachers (378) and students (333) to serve as sample of the general population. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used respectively. Hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Result indicated that there was no significant correlation between the variables. The study concluded that Admission policies, five credits passes at O-level, Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5, students' retention and students' academic performance may not depend on each other. This is because a students can have a 5 credit O level before entering the college but eventually have a low academic performance after entering college due to some circumstances that may include; lack of seriousness, sickness, lack of concentration, absenteeism from school among others. Study recommended among others that; Colleges when students meet the admission requirement of having 5 credits before entering the college, they should try as much as possible to maintain or improve after entering college by reading, attending classes, paying attention and focusing, asking lecturers question when they are lost and so on. Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 should be considered for admission if they have other requirements.

Keywords: Admission, Policies, Academic Performance, Retention, Colleges of Education.

Introduction

Education in Nigeria is an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development. It has witnessed active participation by non-governmental agencies, communities, and individuals as well as government intervention (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Going by the call of the United Nation on "Education for All", the Nigerian government sets aside certain regulations that a candidate must fulfill to enable him/her access to higher institution of learning if he/she wishes to propel. Policies are laid down rules and regulations that govern the affairs of a particular activity. Also, Admission policies on the other hand are laid down rules and regulations on how admissions are sought and obtained amid rigorous process in higher institutions like Universities, Colleges of Education and

Polytechnics among others. The prime aim of these policies was to select the best students who are intellectually sound and robust to undergo their studies irrespective of their backgrounds: gender, social, racial, religious and financial considerations. Colleges of Education are learning institutions that produce qualified teachers who will teach at Primary and Secondary levels of education. The regulation of entry qualification is one of the quality assurance measures in colleges of education. The essence of this measure is to ensure that only candidates with the mental capacity to pursue and complete a course of study in a tertiary institution are admitted into this level of education (Israel & Israel, 2014). Academic performance of students has always been the area of concern for educational institutions as it is a key indicator of institutional quality (Abdullah & Mirza, 2018). Academic performance has been defined by Kaggwa (2003) and the World Bank (2002) as the quality and quantity of knowledge, skills, techniques and positive attitudes, behaviors and philosophy that students achieve. This achievement is evaluated by the mark or grade that students attain in tests or examinations done at the end of the topic, term or year or education cycle (World Bank, 2002). Therefore, the quality of the grades and the number of students that pass in various grades, determine the level of academic performance. Hanson (2000) reported that Students performance is affected by different factors such as learning abilities, gender and race. Simmons, Musoba and Choong (2005) concluded that family income level, attending full time, receiving grant aid and completing advanced level classes in high school having statistically significant effects on college persistence among first generation college students.

Students' retention on the other hand, plays significant role to successful life career upon which an individual could build his/her self. Most students' poor academic performance; institutional factors such as provision of enabling school environment, adequate and quality academic staff, infrastructures and facilities for quality teaching and learning, government policy on admission and selection process among others are some of the reasons adduced for students graduating from school without acquiring the relevant knowledge and skills that are pre-requisite for assessing student quality (Curtis, Samuel, Octavia & Finzen cited in Agboola, Adeyemi & Ogbodo (2014). The quality of students before and after their admission is a critical issue and the challenge that has been facing the university/College administrators as well as other stakeholders. It is estimated that 35% of university students will leave higher education before completing their studies (Al-Saud, 2006). Lack of congruence between students and institution attributes which often lead to the non-social integration of students that decrease their institutional commitment has been attributed to low quality of students and their non-persistence in most institutions. It is through admission process that students who are at risk of failure and those that are most likely to drop-out can be identified early, while the institution provides support services that can foster students' academic and social commitment and integration (Tinto, cited in Al-Saud, 2006). It has also been revealed that retention at the first-to-second year stage is very crucial since students often dropped out at this stage (Rivas, Sauer, Glynn & Miller, 2007 and Ochuba 2000). Consequently, it has been affirmed that student quality in terms of their

academic performance, retention and graduation rate could be predicted by examining the criteria by which students were admitted (Agboola, et al 2014 cited in Adeyemi, 2001; Allen & Sherry, 2008 & Agboola, 2011).

The retention of students in their higher education studies has been a topic of interest since the establishment of formal education systems (Aljahani, 2016). Students withdrawing from their studies before completion is costly for the higher education system overall, the individual students and their families, and for their societies. Despite its longstanding nature and propelled by the large scale changes that have occurred in higher education over recent decades, student retention is currently receiving increased attention globally. The changes in higher education have led to a focus on the quality, impact and outcomes of higher education systems. Retaining students in their studies until completion, rather than them "dropping out," is seen as a significant measure of the effectiveness of academic programs and processes. Retention is an institutional-level measure of success, and that persistence is an individual or student-level measure of success (Hagedorn, 2005). It is seen as the measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelors (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions, this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall (Anonymous, 2021). Further noted that the notion of retention is grounded in student success. Retention related activities focuses on providing a campus environment where students successfully complete their goals and complete their academic program/certificate/diploma or graduate from an institution.

Statement of the Problem

Access to quality education is non-compromise right of every Nigerian. The overall philosophy of Nigeria's education was culminated into believe that: education is an instrument for national development; to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education; education fosters the worth and development of the individual, for each individual's sake and for general development of the society; every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal educational opportunities irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities each according to his/her ability; there is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive, united Nigeria; to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individuals direction to education.

In contrast, the dwindling fortune of education is the source of concern of everyone, home and abroad. There is no gain-saying the fact that the problem of falling standard of education is not only transparent in the number of products of every stratum of the educational system, but also in the quality of the products. It is true that the English and

general knowledge of an average NCE graduate 15 to 20 years back is not comparable with today's. The attrition rate among colleges of education students is a source of concern, more so, colossal failures amongst students is source for concern of everyone (stakeholders) in education industry. Huge chunk of resources is invested in the sector in terms of time, money, human and material resources, but the recent academic performances of students have not been encouraging and fruitful. It is however observed that retention at the first-to-second year stage is very crucial since increasing attrition rates were observed among the freshmen at this stage at all levels of education.

Poor academic performance of students however, in most of Nigerian Colleges of Education has been attributed to poor secondary school background and lack of goal and institutional commitment on the part of students, while the institution's negligent attitude in providing and fostering an academically healthy environment for its students, lack of quality teaching and learning activities that will motivate students in their study programme. Also, the inconsistent admission policy of the government that fails to comprehensively assess student attributes in order to identify early students quality at inception among others have been adduced for the seemingly low quality of students. Consequently, in Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto, which is one of selected schools, it is indicated that, the 2018/2019 admission exercise conducted, only 35% of the students offered to read science oriented courses and 65% are of art related courses which contravened one of the admission policy. In the same vein, in 2019/2020 academic session it is observed that, only meager 28% students scored above average in their semester examination and 72% of the said students scored below average this pose a serious threat to future of education industry. However, if the above situation tends to be in existence in schools, the students' retention as well as quality output will no longer be realized. This is dangerous because the implication is that the products/output will be substandard. Yet these are the future of human resource of the nation. This therefore seriously needs to be addressed.

It is not yet established whether a relationship exists among Admission policies, students' academic performances and retention in Colleges of Education in North-west zone of Nigeria. This has therefore prompted the need to carry out this study with a view of finding out how admission policies correlate with students' academic performances and retention in Colleges of Education in North-west Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The main thrust of this study is to find out the relationship among admission policies, students' academic performances and their retention in Colleges of education in North-west zone, Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study are however to:

- i. Find out whether five credits passes at O-level requirements into Colleges of Education has any relationship with students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

- ii. Discover whether pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 has any relationship with students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.
- iii. Find out whether five credits passes at O-level as requirements into Colleges of Education has any relationship with students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between five credits passes at O-level and students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 and students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between five credits passes at O-level and students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Admission refers to a systematic process of offering a study slot(s) to a particular student(s), in this research admission also, is the process where admission slots are offered to students to study various courses in Teacher Training Colleges. Several definitions were given by different scholars to what admission means. According to Joe, Kpolovie, Osonwa and Iderima (2014), see Admission as the acceptance of a candidate on meeting some basic criteria to study a programme at any level of an educational institution. Students' academic performance is a key feature of education because it is a yardstick that one troll measure education system. It is considered to be the centre around which the whole education system revolves. Narad and Abdullahi (2016) opined that the academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. Signh, Malik and Signh (2016) also argued that academic performance of students have a direct impact on the socio-economic development of a country. Similarly, Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Behanu (2011), asserted that students' academic performance serve as a bedrock for knowledge acquisition and development of skills. Additionally, Farooq et al (2011), emphasized that the top most priority of all educators is academic performance of students. According to Narad and Abdullahi (2016), academic performance is the knowledge gained which is assessed by marks by a teacher and/ or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specified period of time. Retention refers to the ability of admitted students into colleges of education to cope with any learning difficulties up to the graduation stage. It also refers to students who enrolled at a college of education and stayed there until they graduated. In this study, it was measured as whether or not students returned for the second year. The retention of students in their higher education studies has been a topic of interest since the establishment of formal education systems (Aljohani, 2016).

Despite its longstanding nature and propelled by the large scale changes that have occurred in higher education over recent decades. Retaining students in their studies until

completion, rather than them “dropping out,” is seen as a significant measure of the effectiveness of academic programmes and processes. Retention is an institutional-level measure of success, and that persistence is an individual or student-level measure of success (Hagedorn, 2005). Wambugu and Emeke (2008) averred that, there is a correlation between entry qualification and academic performance, they further revealed entry qualification is not the only variable that predicts performance in the cases where applicants have less than excellent mean grades, the contributions of other criteria such as age, work experience, past academic performances and participation in co-curricular activities at secondary school could be explored before an outright acceptance or rejection of students. Also, NCCE in 1993 published what could be described as their quality manual for Colleges of Education by name "Guidelines for Academic Programmes". Prominent among the stipulated guidelines are those dealing with students entry requirement. The existence of a positive relationship between entry qualification and students' performance makes it mandatory to regulate this quality measure. Such regulation is required in order to secure a good match between the abilities and aptitude of applicants and demands of the programme. Among the factors considered in the admission of students into Colleges of Education in Nigeria are ages, number of papers/subjects passed at credit levels at School Certificate or ordinary level examinations. Also, it is stated by FRN (2014), that the inability to absorb many candidates who met the cut-off point and have 5 O'level requirement in West Africa Senior School Certificate (WASSC), Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) and National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) are problems not only in Colleges of Education but in the Universities due to the policy on carrying capacities which necessitated that, before any admission be given there should be adequate and spacious learning facilities for each category of institution. Brat and Stafolani (2002) also observed that the measurement of the students' prior educational outcomes or performance is the most important indicator or determinant of the students' future academic performance.

Mohammed, Abel and Philemon (2019) posit that students' entry qualification, students' mode of entry have significant relationship with students' academic achievement in Gombe State tertiary institutions. Bratti and Staffolani (2013) observed that a student's future accomplishment largely depends on his/her previous educational outcomes where a greater past appearance indicates that the student will perform better academically in future undertakings. Several researches have been conducted in numerous universities throughout the world to discover the factors that contribute to poor academic performance. Okpilike (2011) Finds that education undergraduate students who gained admission through pre-degree (PD) programme performed relatively better than those who gained admission via Joint Admission and Matriculation Examination. His study concluded among others that the pre-education undergraduates were exposed to more advanced course content during the period of PD year than their JAMB counterparts most of whom were taught only O level content; the PD undergraduates are more accustomed to the rigors of University studies during their PD year unlike most of their JAMB

counterparts that got admitted direct from their secondary schools; the screening procedure that PD undergraduate students underwent is more valid than that of JAMB admitted students. The majority of these research concentrate on the three intervening elements: parents (family causal factors), teachers (academic causal factors), and students (student causal factors) (personal causal factors) (Diaz, 2003), socio-demographic background especially education of the parents, profession and family income as the key predictive variable that affects students' academic performance Altschul, I. (2012) and Wu, C. D. et al. (2014). Parents with higher education understand the importance of education and hence try to provide every support including proper guidance to their children. In addition, Joe, Kpolovie, Osanwa and Iderima (2014) found that graduates who were admitted through the Preliminary Programmes performed significantly better than their counterparts who were admitted through the UTME/PUTME in all the Faculties except in Agricultural Science and Engineering.

Einolander and Vanharanta (2015), they posited that student retention focused on students' academic abilities to predict their retention. However, their research indicates that academic goals, self-confidence, institutional commitment, social support, and particular contextual influences like institutional selectivity and financial support, in addition to social involvement, all have a positive relationship on student retention. They further stressed that Students who cannot develop these factors are more inclined to drop out. It also indicated that the strongest factors seem to be academic-related skills, academic self-confidence, and academic goals. However, the study has shown that academic performance can only account for half of the variance in dropout rates. The study argues that integration into the social environment plays a major role in commitment to a particular academic institution. Also, an important factor concerning commitment is the students' level of motivation toward their studies.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design of correlational type. A research design is a plan for collecting and utilizing the data collected so that the desired information can be obtained (Resnik, 2000). According to Salawu (2012), it can be used to know if a relationship exists between variables but does not indicate it causes.

Table 1 indicated population of the study. Comprised of admission officers of Colleges of education in North-west Nigeria (State-own Colleges of Education), members of academic staff (teachers) of the said Colleges and students specifically NCE two who wrote Edu 224 (Education Administration, Planning and Supervision).

Table 1: Showing the Population of the Study

S/No	Colleges	Admission officers	Teachers	Students	Total
1	C.O.E, Gummel	1	234	1670	1905
2	Kaduna State C.O.E, Kafanchan	1	526	5678	6205
3	Sa'adatu Rimi, C.O.E	1	796	11321	12118
4	Isah Kaita, C.O.E	1	556	4560	5117
5	Adamu Augie, C.O.E, Argungu	1	162	3606	3769
6	Shehu Shagari COE, Sokoto	1	724	10857	11582
7	C.O.E, Maru	1	194	2673	2868
	Total	7	3192	40365	43564

Source: Field data, (2023).

Table 1 presented population of the study. The table revealed that from C.O.E. Gumel: 1 admission officer, 234 teachers, 1670 students make up the population. Kaduna state C.O.E Kafanchan: 1 admission officer, 526 teachers and 5678 students. Sa'adatu Rimi C.O.E: 1 admission officer, 796 teachers and 11321 students. Isah Kaita, C.O.E: 1 admission officer, 556 teachers and 4560 students. Adamu Augie, C.O.E Argungu: 1 admission officer, 162 teachers and 3606 students. S.S.C.O.E Sokoto: 1 admission officer, 724 teachers and 10857 students. C.O.E Maru: 1 admission officer, 194 teachers and 2673 students.

To determine the sample size for admission officers, purposive sampling technique was used. To determine the sample size for teachers of these institutions, a proportionate simple random sampling was used. To obtain sample size for students a proportionate random sampling technique was also used since students encompassed all students from different schools in their respective Colleges to determine the sample size of the students. The sampled Colleges has different schools but the study limited to only three schools such as; School of Languages; Sciences and Arts and Social Sciences in which proportionate sampling technique was employed in drawing the sample students to form the respondents of the study.

Three (3) instruments were used to collect data in this study and they include:

- Admission policies questionnaire (APQ) for admission officers.
- Students' academic performance rating scale (SAPRS).
- Students' retention scale (SRS).

A researcher designed four Likert scale type of questionnaire for Admission Policies, Students Retention Scale (SRS) were the major instrument that were used in data collection. The closed-ended questionnaire type was issued in order to generate information of Admission policies and students retention. Data obtained from the field concerning admission policies, students' academic performance of NCE 2 result of EDU 224

and retention scale responses of NCE 2 and 3 students was entered in a computer and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to compute the descriptive statistics of respondents demographic information, responses to the questions raised in the questionnaire and rating scales, responses were presented in tables in line with research objectives using simple frequency count and percentage, along line mean scores were used for research questions and inferential statistics was also computed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) technique to test the null hypotheses of the research at 0.05 level of significance. Responses on Question items on Admission policies questionnaire (APQ) were later correlated with that of Students Academic Performance rating scale (SAPRS) Admission Policies Questionnaire (APQ) and Retention Scale (SRS) in order to find out the magnitude of relationship among variables.

Results

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between admission policy on five credit passes at O-level and students' academic performance in colleges of education in North-west, Nigeria.

Table 2: Admission Policy on Five Credit Passes at O-Level and Students' Performance in Colleges of Education

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-Value	P-Value	Decision
Credit Passes	370	2.22	0.45				
Policy				1	-0.025	0.657	Not rejected
Students' Performance	370	2.28	0.42				

Source: Field survey (2023)

As indicated in Table 2, the calculated p-value using Pearson Product Moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance was 0.657 which is greater than the significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between admission policy on five credit passes at O-level and students' academic performance in colleges of education in North-west, was not rejected. This shows that no relationship existed between admission policy on five credit passes at O-level and students' academic performance in colleges of education in North-west, Nigeria. In other words, admission policy on five credit passes at O-level was not a predictor of students' academic performance, having five credits in O level may not lead to increase in students' academic performance in colleges of education in North-west, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 and students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

Table 3: Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 and Students' Academic Performance in Colleges of Education

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-Value	P-Value	Decision
Pre-NCE CGPA	370	2.86	0.358				
				1	-0.012	0.829	Not rejected
Students' Performance	370	2.28	0.42				

Source: Field survey (2023)

As indicated in Table 3, the calculated p-value using Pearson Product Moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance was 0.829 which is greater than the significance level. Therefore, the hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between admission policy on five credit passes at O-level and students' academic performance in colleges of education in North-west, was not rejected. This shows that no relationship existed between Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 and students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. In other words, Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 was not a predictor of students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. By implication, Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 may not lead to increase in students' academic performance.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between five credits passes at O.level and students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

Table 4: Five credits passes at O.level and Students' Retention in Colleges of Education

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-Value	P-Value	Decision
Five Credit Passes	326	2.22	0.417				
				1	0.081	0.144	Not rejected
Students' retention	326	1.98	0.468				

Source: Field survey (2023)

As indicated in Table 4, the calculated p-value using Pearson Product Moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance was 0.144 which is greater than the significance level. Therefore, the hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between five credits passes at O.level and students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria, was not rejected. This shows that a no relationship existed between five credits passes at O.level and students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. In other words, five credits passes at O.level was not a predictor of students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. By implication, five credits

passes at O.level may not lead to increase in students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The Findings from Table 2 revealed that there is no significant relationship between five credits passes at O.level and students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. This means that having five credit passes at O level do not have any effect on students' academic performance ($r = -0.025$ $p\text{-value} = 0.657 > 0.05$). This contradicts the findings of Wambugu and Emeke (2008) which stated that, there is a correlation between entry qualification and academic performance, they further revealed entry qualification is not the only variable that predicts performance in the cases where applicants have less than excellent mean grades, the contributions of other criteria such as age, work experience, past academic performances and participation in co-curricular activities at secondary school could be explored before an outright acceptance or rejection of students. Also, NCCE in 1993 published what could be described as their quality manual for Colleges of Education by name "Guidelines for Academic Programmes". Prominent among the stipulated guidelines are those dealing with students entry requirement. The existence of a positive relationship between entry qualification and students' performance makes it mandatory to regulate this quality measure. Such regulation is required in order to secure a good match between the abilities and aptitude of applicants and demands of the programme. Among the factors considered in the admission of students into Colleges of Education in Nigeria are ages, number of papers/subjects passed at credit levels at School Certificate or ordinary level examinations. Also, in contradicting this findings it is stated by FRN (2004), that the inability to absorb many candidates who met the cut-off point and have 5 O'level requirement in West Africa Senior School Certificate (WASSC), Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) and National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) are problems not only in Colleges of Education but in the Universities due to the policy on carrying capacities which necessitated that, before any admission be given there should be adequate and spacious learning facilities for each category of institution. Bratti and Staffolani (2013) also observed that the measurement of the students' prior educational outcomes or performance is the most important indicator or determinant of the students' future academic performance. But contrary to these, this study found that, having 5 credits O level passes does not guarantee that a student will have good academic performance. A student may have five O level credit but still not have good academic performance in the college due to some circumstances these might be as result of hardworking and devotion by side of student having successfully admitted and he/she develops fear of been dropped. In contrary to this finding also, Mohammed, Abel and Philemon (2019) posit that students' entry qualification, students' mode of entry have significant relationship with students' academic achievement in Gombe State tertiary institutions.

Findings from Table 3 revealed that there is no significant relationship between Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 and students' academic performance in Colleges of Education in North-west

Zone, Nigeria. This means that having Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 does not have any effect on students' academic performance ($r = -0.012$ $p\text{-value} = 0.829 > 0.05$). This is because a student can have a low CGPA in Pre-NCE and improve later if given proper attention and the student is willing to change and improve. So having a low CGPA in pre NCE cannot rule out that, students cannot have a good academic performance if he/she is given the opportunity to go to the next stage. Bratti and Staffolani (2013) observed that a student's future accomplishment largely depends on his/her previous educational outcomes where a greater past appearance indicates that the student will perform better academically in future undertakings. In contrast also, Okpilike (2011) founds that education undergraduate students who gained admission through pre-degree (PD) programme performed relatively better than those who gained admission via Joint Admission and Matriculation Examination. His study concluded among others that the pre-education undergraduates were exposed to more advanced course content during the period of PD year than their JAMB counterparts most of whom were taught only O-level content; the PD undergraduates are more accustomed to the rigors of University studies during their PD year unlike most of their JAMB counterparts that got admitted direct from their secondary schools; the screening procedure that PD undergraduate students underwent is more valid than that of JAMB admitted students. The majority of these research concentrate on the three intervening elements: parents (family causal factors), teachers (academic causal factors), and students (student causal factors) (personal causal factors) (Diaz, 2003), socio-demographic background especially education of the parents, profession and family income as the key predictive variable that affects students' academic performance and these finding has already been supported by various studies Altschul, I. (2012) and Wu, C. D. et al. (2014). Parents with higher education understand the importance of education and hence try to provide every support including proper guidance to their children. In this study, considering the factors such as fathers' education level and family contribution found significantly correlated with their academic potential and achievement. Family income is another important determinant of academic achievement, particularly studying at a private university, where education is fairly expensive. In addition, Joe, Kpolovie, Osanwa and Iderima (2014) found that graduates who were admitted through the Preliminary Programmes performed significantly better than their counterparts who were admitted through the UTME/PUTME in all the Faculties except in Agricultural Science and Engineering.

Findings from Table 4 revealed that there is no significant relationship between five credits passes at O-level and students' retention in Colleges of education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. This means that having five credits passes at O-level does not have any effect on students' retention in Colleges of Education in North-west Zone, Nigeria. ($r = 0.081$ $p\text{-value} = 0.144 > 0.05$). A student can read very hard for the purpose of his O-level exam and forget everything afterwards. This is to show that having 5 credits O-level does not mean that a student still retained in the College after giving him/her admission. A student can have low retention due to some factors which include; Family background, Individual attribute and

Pre-college schooling that directly influence academic performance. Family background could be as a result of a child not seeing the importance of education or holding it with high esteem as a result of the fact that those before him or her didn't take it seriously. Because of this, he/she will not attach any importance to his lesson to the extent of keeping it or retaining in the college. Again, some students are naturally dull, even if you teach and rehearse with them, they hardly remember which will help them to proceed to next stage of learning. Einolander and Vanharanta (2015), they posited that student retention focused on students' academic abilities to predict their retention. However, their research indicates that academic goals, self-confidence, institutional commitment, social support, and particular contextual influences like institutional selectivity and financial support, in addition to social involvement, all have a positive relationship on student retention. They further stressed that Students who cannot develop these factors are more inclined to drop out. It also indicated that the strongest factors seem to be academic-related skills, academic self-confidence, and academic goals. However, the study has shown that academic performance can only account for half of the variance in dropout rates. The study argues that integration into the social environment plays a major role in commitment to a particular academic institution. Also, an important factor concerning commitment is the students' level of motivation toward their studies.

Conclusion

Admission policies, five credits passes at O.level, Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5, students' retention and students' academic performance may not depend on each other. This is because a students can have a 5 credit O-level before entering the college but eventually have a low academic performance after entering college due to some circumstances that may include; lack of seriousness, sickness, lack of concentration, absenteeism from school among others. The same applies to other variables. Poor academic performance of students however, in most of Nigerian Colleges of Education has been attributed to poor secondary school background and lack of goal and institutional commitment on the part of students, while the institution's negligent attitude in providing and fostering an academically healthy environment for its students, lack of quality teaching and learning activities that will motivate students in their study programme. Also, the inconsistent admission policy of the government that fails to comprehensively assess student attributes in order to identify early students quality at inception among others have been adduced for the seemingly low quality of students.

Recommendations

The study recommended the following:

- a. Colleges when students meet the admission requirements of having 5 credit before entering the college, they should try as much as possible to maintain or improve after entering college by reading, attending classes, paying attention and focusing, asking lecturers question when they are lost and so on.

- b. Pre-NCE CGPA of 1.5 should be considered for admission if they have other requirements. This is because a student who has CGPA of 1.5 may end the highest in the class after NCE because it may not dullness that made the students have a lower grade during his pre NCE as there are other reasons that can make a student have poor academic performance at any point in time. And even if it is dullness, the student can change for the better later on.
- c. In order to ensure the retention of students with 5 O-level credits, they should always engage in tutorials, revisions, practical, group discussions and any order activity that will make them perform wonderfully which will guarantee them to remain in their colleges

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