

# Predictive Strength Of Jamb Point-Based System Of Admission Into Nigerian Universities: Implications For The Nation's Sustainable Development

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**Abstract:** This study investigated the comparative analysis of the JAMB current point-based system admission into Nigerian universities with previous modes in bids to ascertain the predictive strength of each of the modes on undergraduate students' CGPA. The study employed ex-post facto design. Using stratified random sampling technique, three hundred (300) students admitted into the Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria for 2016/2017 session were selected as sample for this study. A proforma was used to collect the data for this study. Data collected were subjected to correlation and simple linear regression analysis. The results of the study revealed that there is a low but positive and significant relationship between CGPA and UTME ( $r = 0.138, p < 0.05$ ). There is a negative and non significant relationship between CGPA and number of "O" level sittings ( $r = -0.047, p > 0.05$ ). Very low, positive and non-significant relationship was noticed between CGPA and SSCE ( $r = 0.059, p > 0.05$ ). A very low, positive and non significant relationship was noticed between CGPA and Accumulated points from (UTME, SSCE and Number of O'level sittings) ( $r = 0.072, p > 0.05$ ). Out of the four predictor variables, only (UTME) made significant contribution to the prediction of CGPA. It accounted for 22.7% of the total variance in Undergraduates' CGPA with the corresponding  $t$  ratio of 2.663. SSCE and Accumulated Points (AP) contributed (12.3% and -12.4%) respectively to the prediction of Undergraduates' CGPA with the corresponding  $t$ -ratios of 1.745 and -1.338, although, they are not significant at 0.05 level of significance. In addition to this, all the four predictor variables jointly contributed significantly to CGPA. They accounted for 3.0 percent of the total variance in undergraduate students' CGPA ( $R^2 = 0.030, F_{(3,296)} = 3.009, p < 0.05$ ). To build human capital for sustainable development, it was recommended that Universities should be empowered to continue with the conduct of PUTME which has maintained merit to certain extent.

**Keywords:** Predictive strength, Point-Based system, CGPA, UTME, PUTME, Number of O'level sittings

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the major challenges of the world today and Nigeria in particular is how to achieve sustainable development goals. Sustainable development is the type of development that meets the present needs of the present without compromising the future generation to meet their own needs (Brundtland commission, 1987 as cited in Omole and Ozoji, 2014). At present, Nigeria is experiencing economic, social, political, ethnic and religious problems because of the

act of un-sustainability. There is the problem of economic recession because of the drop in the price of crude oil worldwide. Nigerian government did not save for the rainy day when the economy was booming. Lives of innocent Nigerians are being destroyed daily. Edifices built over the years are being vandalized by irate youths. The Nigerian government is now making frantic effort on what to do to motivate people to change their underlying behaviours and activities that are problematic and detrimental to the growth and development of the nation. Hence, the present government of Nigeria came up

with a change agenda programme with the sole purpose of encouraging people to channel their energy towards contributing in alleviating the problems of poverty, promoting developmental efforts that do not pollute good ideas, stop wasting scarce resources and stop destroying lives of the innocents.

To find solutions to societal challenges, Nigeria need transformed people who can make better decisions on issues that affect the lives of the entire populace. Sustainable development requires high quality and appropriate human resources. However, building human capital for sustainable development is the main responsibility of a University (Ajibade, 2013). University remains the ivory tower of knowledge for the production of high manpower development (Siyanbola, 2014) and breaking of new grounds in knowledge creation and inventions with the intention of finding solutions to the challenges facing the world (Adebayo, 2011).

Improved quality education is the only veritable tool that can bring about sustainable development in Nigeria. Credible assessment modalities are also very central to quality education. Educational assessment is a *sine qua non* for quality education (Ukwuije, 2013). Ukwuije further stressed that no meaningful research, teaching and learning can take place in the absence of proper assessment of students before, during and after instruction. It is a task that must be done. By implication, quality assurance mechanism must be put in place in the assessment of candidates into Nigerian universities. A cursory look at Nigerian education system revealed so many policies which have gradually eroded the quality in the sector. People begin to doubt the worth of the quality of graduates being produced in Nigeria towards sustainable development. Inconsequential admission policies into Nigerian universities contributed in no small measure in eroding high quality in the education sector. Until recently, entrance examination and admissions into Nigerian Universities were decentralized. Individual Universities conducted entrance examination and admissions into their various universities. However, decentralization of University admission brought about myriad of problems such as multiple admissions of a candidate at the detriment of other candidates, irregularities and malpractices.

The Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB) was set up in 1977 in an attempt to surmount these myriad of problems. After barely twenty nine years of its operation (1977 – 2006), JAMB was again accused of incompetency in conducting credible entrance examinations into Nigerian Universities because of the poor quality of graduates being produced yearly by Nigerian Universities. This criticism came to a climax in 2006, when some Universities opted for further screening of students who were qualified for University admission based on JAMB scores. Despite strong oppositions from JAMB and members of the National Assembly of the illegality of a further UME test then, it was finally legalized on February, 2012. The major criticism against JAMB was that some students have been found to have scored high marks in the UME but failed woefully in the Post-UME.

The main objectives of PUME according to Ukwuije (2013) are to:

- ✓ end the long standing disagreement between Universities and JAMB, addressing anomalies that bedeviled the admission process;

- ✓ curb the widespread of problem of gaining admission through fraudulent means; and
- ✓ upgrade academic standards necessary for university education in Nigeria

The PUME now PUTME enjoyed wide patronage by all tertiary institutions in the country for almost a decade (2006 – 2015). Many empirical studies have shown that PUTME was a better predictor of undergraduate students' academic performance than UTME. (Salahdeen & Murtala, 2005; Obioma & Salam, 2007; Adeyemo, 2008; Chika Ifedili & Ifedili, 2010; Osakuade, 2011; Ajogbeje & Borisade, 2013; Gbore, 2013, and Lawal & Adejuwon, 2014). In a study conducted by Osakuade (2015), on the "Weighting Differentials of UTME/PUTME" the researcher tried to caution the various ratios adopted by various universities in combining UTME and PUTME scores of candidates. Equal ratio was recommended for combining UTME/PUTME scores because if higher ratio was given to UTME scores, the UTME scores could have been obtained through fraudulent means, so the students that used their ability and scored low marks could be at a disadvantage.

Recently, JAMB adopted point-based system of admission policy into tertiary institutions in Nigeria; although, some people tagged it "JAMB Inconsequential Grading Policy". With the new admission policy, candidates will be given points for their number of O' level sittings, grades in O' level subjects and scores in UTME.

"Submission of one WAEC/NECO result/sitting = 10 points

Submission of two WAEC/NECO results/sittings = 20 points

For the grading of O'level results, A1 = 6 points; B2- B3 = 4 points; C4 – C6 = 3 points

For JAMB grading, 180 – 185 marks = 20 points  
186 – 190 = 21 points ..... 251 – 300 = 34 – 43 points and 300 – 400 = 44 – 60 points

(The Punch Newspaper, July 5, 2016)

A simple illustration is shown as follows:  
John Ben scored 215 in JAMB = 26 points  
He presented only 1 NECO result = 10 points

The five subjects required for admission are scored thus:  
1(A), 2(B) and 2(C). The candidate's point is  $1 \times 6 + 2 \times 4 + 2 \times 4 = 24$  points

Therefore John Ben's total points for admission is  $26 + 10 + 24 = 60$  points" (PM Newspaper, July 7, 2016)

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

History of Point-Based system could be traced to the University of Ibadan. The institution was trying to find out the reasons why 100 level students of the University of Ibadan were performing badly (Olarenwaju, 2016). According to Olarenwaju, the result of the research at that time indicated that there was no correlation between UTME results and students' performance in their first year. The study found out that there was a significant relationship between WASCE results and students' performance and not UTME and students' performance. WASCE results were better predictor of students' performance than UTME. The response of the

University of Ibadan was to design a point-based system that included a combination of O'level results and UTME grades. The point based system was used by the University of Ibadan to select those to be invited for PUTME interaction.

Olarenwaju further stressed that the point-based system actually worked well for 5 years. However, a recently conducted study in the institution had shown that WASSCE results had stopped being a good predictor of students' performance. In view of the above information, the following general questions naturally arise:

- ✓ Can JAMB justify the points and marks allocated to examinations (WAEC/NECO, SSCE) it did not conduct?
- ✓ Will candidates admitted with one sitting O' level result perform better than candidates with two sittings O'level results?
- ✓ Will the total points candidates obtained in their O'level results truly predict their performances in their first year than PUTME?

In addressing the above raised questions, the main thrust of this paper is therefore to compare the predictive strength of this present mode of screening (point-based system) to (PUTME), which defined merit to some extent.

### RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses formulated for the study are:

- ✓ There is no significant relationship between the criterion variable (CGPA) and each of the UTME, SSCE, Number of O'level sittings and Accumulated Points (AP) from UTME, SSCE, Number of O'level sittings.
- ✓ There is no significant relative contribution of each of UTME, SSCE, Number of O'level sittings and Accumulated points to the prediction of undergraduates' CGPA

### III. METHODOLOGY

The population for this study comprised of the entire first year students admitted for 2016/2017 session in the Faculty of Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. The sample of 300 students was selected from the Faculty of Education using the stratified random sampling technique. Sample cuts across the eight Departments in the Faculty. *Ex-post facto* research design was the platform upon which the research was made. The design was deemed appropriate because data were already existing and cannot be manipulated. The management of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko adopted the point-based system for 2016/17 admission exercise with little modification as shown below:

One O'level result/sitting = 5 points

Two O'level result/sitting = 2 points

For O'level subjects, A = 3 points, B = 2 points and C = 1 point.

For JAMB result, 180 – 190 = 21 points ..... 300 – 400 = 44 – 60 points

This researcher adopted the JAMB point-based grading system on the target population.

The UTME scores, number of O'level sittings, grades in five O'level subjects and current CGPA of sample students

were extracted from the bio-data files submitted to their respective departments using a proforma. UTME scores, number of O'level sittings and 5 O'level subjects used for admission were converted to points following JAMB guidelines.

### IV. RESULTS

**HYPOTHESIS ONE:** There is no significant relationship between the criterion variable (CGPA) and each of UTME, Number of O'level sittings, SSCE and Accumulated points (AP)

Variable	UTME	SITTINGS	SSCE	AP	CGPA
UTME	1.000				
SITTINGS	0.204**	1.000			
SSCE	-0.065	-0.015	1.000		
AP	0.652**	0.739**	0.394**	1.000	
CGPA	0.138**	-0.047	0.059	0.072**	1.000

P<0.05

Table 1: Intercorrelational matrix of the CGPA and UTME, PUTME, Number of O'level sittings, SSCE and Accumulated points

From Table 1, there is a low but positive and significant relationship between CGPA and UTME ( $r = 0.138, p < 0.05$ ). There is a negative and non significant relationship between CGPA and number of "O" level sittings ( $r = -0.047, p > 0.05$ ). Very low, positive and non-significant relationship was noticed between CGPA and SSCE ( $r = 0.059, p > 0.05$ ). A very low, positive and non significant relationship was noticed between CGPA and accumulated points from (UTME, SSCE and Number of O'level sittings) ( $r = 0.072, p > 0.05$ ).

**HYPOTHESIS 2:** there is no significant contribution of each of UTME, SSCE, Number of O'level sittings and Accumulated points to the prediction of undergraduates' CGPA

Model	B	Std.error	Beta	t	Sig.t.	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.F
Constant	1.338	0.538		2.486	0.000				
UTME	0.064	0.024	0.227	2.663	0.295	0.172	0.030	3.009	0.031
SSCE	0.043	0.025	0.123	2.272	0.024				
AP	-0.019	0.014	-0.124	2.002	0.046				

P<0.05

Table 2: Summary of the multiple regression analysis of UTME, SSCE, Number of O'level sittings and Accumulated points (AP)

From Table 2, the resulting regression equation is:  $CGPA = 1.338 + 0.064 (UTME) + 0.043 (SSCE) - 0.019 (AP)$ . Number of "O" level sittings formed the excluded variable. Out of the four predictor variables, only one (UTME) made significant contribution to the prediction of CGPA. It accounted for 22.7% of the prediction of Undergraduates' CGPA with the corresponding t ratio of 2.663. SSCE and Accumulated points (AP) derived from (UTME, SSCE and Number of O'level sittings) contributed (12.3% and -12.4%) respectively to the prediction of Undergraduates' CGPA with the corresponding t-ratios of 1.745 and -1.338. Although, they are not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Regression analysis excluded Number of 'O' level sittings variable from

the regression as it has no relevance to the Undergraduate students' CGPA. In addition to this, all the four predictor variables jointly contributed significantly to CGPA. They accounted for 3.0 percent of the total variance in undergraduate students' CGPA ( $R^2 = 0.030$ ,  $F_{(3,296)} = 3.009$ ,  $p < 0.05$ )

## V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The researcher found that there is a low but positive and significant relationship between CGPA and UTME. There is a non significant relationship between CGPA and number of "O" level sittings; CGPA and SSCE results and CGPA and Accumulated points from (UTME, SSCE and Number of O'level sittings). This study contradicts the findings of Lawal and Adejuwon (2014) in which CGPA correlated positively and significantly with PUTME, Weighted average and SSCE but negatively and non-significantly with UTME. The non-significant relationship between CGPA and each of Number of O'level sittings, SSCE points and Accumulated points is not coming as a surprise. Previous studies have shown that UTME is a better predictor of CGPA than the SSCE, Number of "O" sittings. Scores or grades obtained by some students in SSCE were obtained through fraudulent means which may not be a true representation of their abilities. Also, in the case of O'level number of sittings, possession of the required number of SSCE papers for admission in two sittings by a candidate may not be categorically affirmed that such a candidate is duller than his counterpart that obtained all his required papers in a single sitting. Testing conditions may make a candidate fail a paper. Although, Ojerinde and Ojo (2009) posited that there is a significant influence of the number of O'level sittings on the predictive validity of UTME on CGPA. The reason adduced to this by Ojerinde was that the more a candidate stays at home trying to make all his papers, the more his ability drops. Contrary to this view, a student now in Nigeria can register for almost six SSCE examinations within a year.

Finding from hypothesis two revealed that Out of the four predictor variables, only one (UTME) made significant contribution to the prediction of CGPA. SSCE and Accumulated points (AP) derived from (UTME, SSCE and Number of O'level sittings) did not make any significant contribution to the prediction of Undergraduates' CGPA. Number of O'level sittings has nothing to do with the undergraduates' CGPA as it was excluded from the regression analysis. This finding also contradicts the findings of Lawal and Adejuwon (2014) where SSCE, PUTME and weighted average predicted the performance of final year academic performance at ABUAD. For accumulated points not to predict CGPA in this study is expected because there is a great disparity in the points allotted to single and double O'level sittings. Apart from this, somebody obtaining a distinction in any subject in SSCE might not be acclaimed in some cases to be superior to somebody obtaining credit in the same subject simply because grades obtained by some students nowadays in SSCE are obtained through fraudulent means from miracle centres.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

At this crucial time of economic comatose in Nigeria, the nation needs competent technical manpower capable of bringing about drastic economic transformation from the universities. Since educational evaluation is a *sine qua non* to quality education, the new point system of admission into universities might allow referrals and mediocre to have their ways. Applicants now have it at the back of their minds now that the chance of getting admission into universities is not just obtaining cut off points of 200 marks in UTME, or just five credit passes in required papers, or obtaining the required papers in two sittings. To qualify for admission now depends on using any means of scoring above 300 marks in UTME, obtaining distinctions in all the required papers, and all the required papers must be from a single O'level sitting. The only singular means of achieving this requires hardwork and good study habits. But many students seem not ready to embrace hardwork but willing to be admitted through any means. This system would eventually escalate examination malpractices in this country. The new examination policy now make people ponder on the caliber of Medical Doctors, Lawyers; Engineers and so on will be expected from our universities come year 2020. Going by the current social and economic problems in the country at present, this new point system of admission process ought to be a change we should make with caution in our educational sector, because to restructure the economy, attention should be paid to the education sector since it is the source of manpower that can make the country come out of its present challenges.

## VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of these findings, it can be concluded that UTME has more predictive strength than the Point-Based system of admission. Many studies have also shown the supremacy of PUTME over UTME. To build human capital for sustainable development:

- ✓ Federal Government should annul this new point system of admission, universities should be more empowered to continue with the conduct of PUTME, which has maintained merit to some extent.
- ✓ Although, point system also made significant contribution to the prediction of CGPA in this study, but PUTME predicted CGPA more than the accumulated points. If point system should be retained at all, further studies is recommended or better still, infallible criteria which will give equal opportunities to all applicants and enthrone at least an atom of meritocracy in the admission policy should be sought for and employed.
- ✓ Number of O'level sittings should not be considered in admitting students into Nigerian Universities. If at all used, there should not be much disparity in the number of points allotted to single and double sittings.
- ✓ Quality enhancement mechanism should be put in place in our secondary schools.

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