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Perceptions of Parents and Tutors on the Implementation of the Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board (JUPEB) Programme in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of parents and tutors on the implementation of the Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board (JUPEB) Programme in Nigeria within the scheme of numerical archetype of the descriptive survey research design. The 73 study participants consisted of 28 parents and 45 tutors of the current JUPEB candidates enrolled in three JUPEB Centres in South-West Nigeria during 2019/2020 academic session. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were put forward to guide the study. Data collected through JUPEB Teaching Staff Questionnaire (Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.89) and JUPEB Candidates' Parents Questionnaire (Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.93) were coded on the SPSS version 24 in which the research questions were answered using percentage and mean while the null hypotheses were tested using an independent samples t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that the parents and the tutors had significantly different perceptions of the challenges that candidates face with the JUPEB programme. Also, both of them had positive rating of the programme implementation, though their ratings also significantly differed. Based on these findings, it is recommended that parents should be inundated with the activities of JUPEB Programme from time to time through town hall meetings to keep them abreast of the development in JUPEB Centres.

Keywords: Perception, parents, tutors, Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board, JUPEB, University, Education

Introduction

University education in Nigeria started in 1948 with the establishment of the first university-level institution in the country as a college, affiliated to the University of London. Aside those Nigerians trained outside the country, the University College, Ibadan was the only institution responsible for the production of higher-level workforce for the country between 1948 and the time of Nigeria's (Fatade, Nneji, Awofala & Awofala, 2012). At Independence in 1960, Nigeria could only boast of two universities: University College, Ibadan weaned as University of Ibadan and University of Nigeria, Nsukka with a total student enrolment of less than 2000 (Fatade et al., 2012). Since then, University education in Nigeria has gradually expanded as the country now has 174 universities (43 Federal, 52 State, and 79 private) (National University Commission, 2020). As at 2007, access to university education in the country was low as only about 5% of applicants were often offered admission (Babalola, 2007) but in 2015, of the 1,424,628 applicants, only 384,442 representing 26.9% were admitted (Otoja & Obodumu, 2017). Thus, though access to university education is increasing, it is still grossly inadequate. The Joint Admissions & Matriculation Board (JAMB) admits candidates through (i) the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) into the 100 Level and/or (ii) the Direct Entry (DE) into the 200 Level. The DE mode requires a candidate to possess one of the following qualifications in subjects relevant to the course of study: General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level, Interim Joint Matriculation Board (IJMB), Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Diploma Certificate from some universities running Foundation /Diploma/Pre-Degree programmes.

However, in 2011, due to the complaints from the JAMB about the varied quality of the Diplomas from the universities, the then Minister of Education, Prof. Ruquayat Ahmed Rufai directed JAMB not to admit candidates with such Diplomas into the DE programmes. After protests by the Committee of Vice Chancellors (CVC), the minister accepted the establishment of a general examination body for candidates from the universities' Diploma programmes, which birthed the Joint Universities Preliminary Examinations Board (JUPEB) with an approved curriculum for its examinations. In December 30, 2013, JUPEB was approved by the Supervising Minister of

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Education, Barrister Nyelsom Wike, as *a national examinations body to facilitate Direct Entry admissions into various university courses globally based on a well-balanced curriculum*. JUPEB is expected to “contribute to government’s effort in expanding access to tertiary education and quality products from the University system”. Through the CVC, JUPEB was formally established by a consortium of 10 among the first-generation federal universities led by the University of Lagos on April 3, 2014. The JAMB later joined the Board as a partner. Each candidate on the JUPEB programme registers for a one-year intensive training in three subjects, which are prerequisites to the intended course of study before taking the national examinations. JUPEB conducted its first examinations for candidates in four universities by August 2014 and has done so annually in June since 2015 till 2019. The 2020 examinations could not hold in June due to the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria leading to the total closure of all institutions of learning throughout the country for five months. The 2020 examination later held in October.

The JUPEB has the responsibility of conducting standardized examinations for the candidates who have been exposed to a minimum of one-year approved courses within the JUPEB syllabus and are seeking Direct Entry admissions into universities at the 200 Level in Nigerian and partner foreign universities. The governing board of JUPEB is currently chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, University of Lagos. Other members are:

- Vice-Chancellor of all partner universities
- Two Vice-Chancellors of affiliate universities (on rotation)
- Representatives of
 - The Honourable Minister of Education
 - Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB)
 - National Universities Commission
 - The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) or National Examinations Council (NECO)
- Registrar/Chief Executive, JUPEB

JAMB has offered Direct Entry admissions into various courses in Nigerian universities to those candidates with good grades in the JUPEB Examinations. Also, some foreign universities, notably in the UK, USA and China have admitted candidates from the programme (Ajeyalemi, 2018).

However, since the formal establishment of the JUPEB Programme in 2014, there have been no empirical investigations on the perception of JUPEB Programme by its stakeholders. In this study, perception is viewed as a means of deciphering information collected through the senses to make generalization and intelligible connotation about the world (Montebon, 2014). Nevertheless, perception is frequently connected with creating connotation out of physical things or manifestations and it is more of an inner process. Therefore, individual perception may grow into an abstraction (Montebon, 2014). When an individual’s perception is premised on imperfect and undependable information, it is paralleled with actuality and this may influence the behavior of the individual generally. Stakeholders are groups of people or individuals that are influenced by the success or failure of an institution or organization (Freeman, et al., 2010). Freeman (1984, 2004) define a stakeholder as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. Parents influence the implementation of the JUPEB syllabus through various means, i.e. indirectly monitoring the lessons taught at the JUPEB centres by asking their wards some necessary questions, occasional visit to the centres, liaising with tutors and centre administrators, providing their wards with the necessary materials and resources needed in the centres. They also monitor and evaluate the wards’ academic progress. Therefore, parents indirectly through their children can benefit from or be harmed by the operations of JUPEB and, thus, have a moral claim on the examination body. If candidates on the JUPEB Programme are not well supported by their parents, they may find it difficult to make progress on the Programme and this may affect their chances of securing DE admissions into the nation’s universities. They are therefore critical stakeholders of the JUPEB Programme whose perceptions on JUPEB should be considered important for the effectiveness and progress of the examinations body.

In recognition of the roles of parents as significant stakeholders in the JUPEB programme, some centres from time to time engage parents and guardians in preparing their candidates for the JUPEB Examination. One example of such is the University of Ilorin JUPEB Centre who organises JUPEB Management-Parents meeting to update the parents on the conduct and performance of their children. At the second of such meetings held in June 2019, the Vice Chancellor

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of the university reiterated the significance of JUPEB in achieving the admission goal of the candidates, thus, charging parents to ‘work on their children and make sure they study hard in preparation for their examinations’ (<https://www.unilorin.edu.ng/index.php/fnews/6719-jupeb-monitor-your-wards-abdulkareem-tasks-parents>). Other Centres also do have occasional meetings with parents.

Without adequate teaching on the JUPEB Programme by the tutors, the one-year intensive programme for students seeking DE admissions into Universities courses at the 200 Level in Nigerian universities may be in jeopardy. Tutors are principal factors in the examination system, especially in ensuring that the direct entry goals of the JUPEB examinations are achieved. As stakeholders, they perform a number of roles in the implementation of the JUPEB programme. Generally, they implement the JUPEB syllabus by impacting knowledge to students and creating an environment for learners to learn effectively, thus they serve as learning mediators. They strive to cover the JUPEB syllabus, activate and support the prescribed content of the syllabus with the relevant teaching materials. They also organize tutorials to help weak students. In addition, they serve as counsellor or confidant to students, sometimes as surrogate parents for students who are mostly teenagers. Also, they are expected to establish positive relationship with the JUPEB candidates, provide guidance where needed and have personal concern for the welfare and progress of the candidates. They also conduct regularly continuous assessment for the candidates in order to stimulate in the candidates an effective study habit and prepare them effectively for the JUPEB examinations. Within the JUPEB examinations, centre-based assessments form a percentage of the candidates’ grade in final examinations.

Since curriculum implementation requires the input of these stakeholders, the perceptions of parents and tutors on the JUPEB Programme are considered important as these could help in refocusing the entire JUPEB Programme in the near future.

Research Objectives

The study examined the perception of two stakeholders i.e. the parents and tutors in the implementation of the JUPEB programme. Specific research questions guiding the study are:

1. How do Parents and Tutors rate the implementation of the JUPEB Programme?
2. How do Parents and Tutors perceive the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme?

Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the rating of the implementation of the JUPEB Programme by parents and tutors.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the perception of parents and tutors on the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme.

Methodology

This study involved a quantitative research paradigm within the blueprint of the descriptive survey design. The volunteer participants were 73, which included 28 parents and 45 tutors of the current JUPEB candidates from one state university and two private universities in south-west Nigeria. Table 1 below showed the frequency and percentage of the participants. Two valid and reliable instruments namely JUPEB Teaching Staff Questionnaire (JTSQ) (Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.89) and JUPEB Candidates’ Parents Questionnaire (JCPQ) (Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.93) were developed for this study. The instruments were created using Google forms because at the time of data collection there was a total lockdown of the country occasioned by the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic.

The website URLs of Google form questionnaires were sent to the Centre Directors of the participating universities via email and WhatsApp for onward transfer through either WhatsApp or email to the current JUPEB candidates and the JUPEB teaching staff. The current JUPEB candidates were instructed to make the JCPQ available to their parents

for online completion while their tutors completed the JTSQ online. The responses of both the parents and tutors were coded on the SPSS version 24 and the coded data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage for the research questions. The null hypotheses in the study were tested using an independent samples t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1:
Respondents (Parents and Tutors) involved in the Study

	Frequency	Percent
Parents	28	38.4
Tutors	45	61.6
Total	73	100.0

A total number of 73 respondents participated in the evaluation of the JUPEB Programme. 28 (38.4%) of the respondents are JUPEB candidates' parents while 45(61.6%) are teaching staff.

Research question 1: How do Parents and Tutors rate the implementation of the JUPEB Programme?

Table 2:
Parents and Tutors' Rating of the Implementation of the JUPEB Programme

S/No	Statement	Parents		Tutors	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1.	Products of the JUPEB programme are of high quality	2.92	0.81	3.40	0.62
2.	The two semesters for the programme are adequate	3.61	0.70	3.18	0.77
3.	JUPEB Examination Fee is moderate	3.52	0.75	3.07	0.68
4.	The tutors are competent to teach on the JUPEB programme	2.89	0.83	3.69	0.47
5.	The syllabus used for teaching the candidates are of relevance to the degree programme	3.29	0.53	3.73	0.45
6.	Tutors are qualified to teach on the JUPEB programme	3.25	0.44	3.84	0.37
7.	My ward's centre has adequate resources to run the JUPEB programme	3.14	0.76	3.76	0.43
8.	Graduates of the JUPEB programme have access to university education	3.32	0.67	3.80	0.44
9.	Average Mean	3.24		3.56	

Table 2 showed that parents and tutors rated the products of the JUPEB programme of high quality with a mean of 2.92 and 3.40 respectively, two semesters for the programme are adequate with a mean score of 3.61 and 3.18, tutors are competent to teach on the JUPEB programme has 2.89 and 3.69 mean scores respectively, graduates of the JUPEB programme have access to university education with a mean score of 3.32 and 3.80 respectively. An average mean score of 3.24 and 3.56 were determined for the parents and tutors rating of the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. This implies that parents and tutors rated the implementation of the JUPEB Programme positively using a benchmark of 2.50.

Research question 2: How do parents and tutors perceive the challenges candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme?

Table 3:

Parents' and tutors' perception of challenges candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme

S/No	Statement	Parents		Tutors	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1.	Inadequate remuneration of tutors	2.68	0.90	2.58	1.07
2.	Candidates not showing up for classes as and when due	2.54	0.96	2.62	0.81
3.	Late registration of candidates in my Centre	2.53	0.79	2.33	0.83
4.	Work overload for tutors	2.68	0.86	1.98	0.84
5.	Inadequate time to cover the syllabus	2.96	0.78	2.38	0.98
6.	Tutor incompetence in the implementation of the syllabus	2.43	0.88	1.60	0.72
7.	Inadequate teaching facilities at my Centre	2.71	0.90	1.73	0.75
8.	Inappropriate orientation for the candidates about the programme	2.54	0.85	1.82	0.74
9.	Inappropriate tutor-candidate ratio	2.53	0.76	1.56	0.59
10.	Non-conducive teaching and learning environment	2.67	0.92	1.69	0.70
11.	Poor secondary school background of candidate	2.64	1.02	2.76	0.88
12.	Negative attitudes of candidates towards learning and examination	2.32	0.91	2.80	0.87
13.	Lateness to examination centres by invigilators	2.68	0.77	1.60	0.65
14.	Poor communication between centre and candidates	2.57	0.82	1.64	0.71
15.	Inappropriate invigilators-candidate ratio	2.52	0.74	1.63	0.77
16.	Inadequate facilities for examinations	2.61	0.91	1.47	0.59
17.	Tuition fee in my centre is high	2.93	0.81	1.82	0.68
	Average Mean	2.61		2.03	

Table 3 above revealed that parents and tutors perceived that inadequate remuneration of tutors has a mean score of 2.68 and 2.58 respectively, candidates not showing up for classes as and when due has a mean score of 2.54 and 2.62 respectively, late registration of candidates in centres has a mean score of 2.53 and 2.33 respectively. JUPEB candidates parents' perception of the challenges that candidates faced in the Implementation of the JUPEB Programme had an average mean score of 2.61 while the tutors' perception of the challenges candidates faced in the Implementation of the JUPEB Programme had an average mean score of 2.03. Adopting a benchmark of 2.50, which is the halfway point for the 5 point Likert Scale used for rating, a submission was made that the parents had an above average perception of the challenges the candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. However, the tutors had a below average perception of the challenges the candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme.

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the rating of the Implementation of the JUPEB Programme by parents and tutors

Table 4:

Difference in the Rating of the Implementation of the JUPEB Programme by Parents and Tutors

	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	Sig	
Parents	28	25.67	3.01	71	4.16	0.000	Accepted
Tutors	45	28.47	2.63				

From Table 4 above, it can be deduced that there was a significant difference in the rating of the implementation of JUPEB Programme by parents and tutors. This is reflected in the result: $df(71) t= 4.16, p<0.05$. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was a significant difference in the rating of the implementation of JUPEB Programme by parents and tutors at 0.05 alpha level.

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the perception of parents and tutors on the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme.

Table 5:

Difference in the Perception of Parents and Tutors on the Challenges Candidates Faced in the Implementation of the JUPEB Programme

	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	Sig	
Parents	28	44.75	9.77	71	4.91	0.000	Accepted
Tutors	45	34.02	8.33				

From Table 5 above, it can be deduced that there was a significant difference in the perception of parents and tutors on the implementation of JUPEB Programme. This is reflected in the result: $df(71) t= 4.91, p<0.05$. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was a significant difference in the perceptions of the parents and the tutors on the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme at 0.05 alpha level.

Discussion

The have confirmed that both the parents and tutors had different perceptions of the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. While the parents had a high perception of the challenges the candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme, the tutors had a low perception of the challenges the candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. These results could be ascribed to the fact that more parents than tutors perceived inadequate remuneration of tutors as a challenge that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. In addition, more parents than tutors perceived inadequate time to cover the syllabus, work overload for tutors, inadequate teaching facilities at the Centres, lateness to examination centres by the invigilators, non-conducive teaching and learning environment, inadequate facilities for examinations, poor secondary school background of candidates and high tuition fees by centres as challenges candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme.

Also, the study showed that both the parents and the tutors rated the implementation of the JUPEB Programme positively. Like the parents, the tutors rated the products of the JUPEB Programme to be of high quality, JUPEB examination fee is moderate and tutors are competent to teach on the JUPEB Programme. In addition, both the parents and the tutors rated the syllabus used for teaching the candidates to be relevant to the degree programme, tutors are

qualified to teach on the JUPEB programme, centres have adequate resources to run the JUPEB programme and graduates of the JUPEB programme have access to university education.

Further, there was a significant difference in the perception of the parents and the tutors on the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme in favour of the parents. This result might be because more parents than tutors perceived inadequate remuneration of tutors as challenge candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. In addition, more parents than tutors perceived inadequate time to cover the syllabus, work overload for tutors, inadequate teaching facilities at the centres, lateness to examination centres by the invigilators and non-conducive teaching and learning environment as challenges candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. Again, more parents than tutors perceived inadequate facilities for examinations, poor secondary school background of candidates and high tuition fees by centres as challenges candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme.

Finally, the study indicated that there was a significant difference in the rating of the implementation of the JUPEB Programme by parents and tutors in favour of the tutors. Although, both the parents and the tutors rated the implementation of the JUPEB Programme positively, more tutors than parents rated the implementation of the JUPEB Programme higher in the area of products of the JUPEB Programme are of high quality and tutors are competent to teach on the JUPEB Programme. In addition, more tutors than the parents rated higher that the syllabuses used for teaching the candidates are relevant to the degree programme, tutors are qualified to teach on the JUPEB programme, centres have adequate resources to run the JUPEB programme and graduates of the JUPEB programme have access to university education.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have shown that both the parents and tutors had different perceptions of the challenges that candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. While the parents had a high perception of the challenges the candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme, the tutors had a low perception of the challenges the candidates faced in the implementation of the JUPEB Programme. This may be because parents rely on their wards or children to get reports of happenings from their centres, which may sometimes not be a true account or an over bloated one. This therefore call for the need by the JUPEB centres to engage directly and frequently with parents of their candidates. It was also shown that both the parents and the tutors rated the implementation of the JUPEB Programme positively, which may be a true attestation to the quality standards that JUPEB has instituted, as well as the monitoring and supervision mechanisms put in place. The fact that in most centres, the programme tutors are university lecturers most of whom have PhDs may also be responsible for the high-quality implementation of the programme. There was a significant difference in the rating of the implementation of the JUPEB Programme by both the parents and the tutors. Based on these findings, it is recommended that parents should be inundated with the activities of the JUPEB Programme from time to time through town hall meetings to keep them abreast of the development in JUPEB universities centres.

Recommendations

The study recommended that:

1. JUPEB centres should relay information/ reports directly to parents of their candidates
2. Tutors should commence lectures early enough so as to cover JUPEB syllabus

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