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DETERMINATION OF THE ADEQUACY OF ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS IN THE NCCE 2012 MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to determine the adequacy of the admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria. The study was a descriptive survey design, guided by two research questions. The population of the study was 220 lecturers in the colleges of education in Nigeria that offer adult and non-formal education courses. The entire population was used for the study. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. Data collected were analyzed using mean statistics to answer research question one while percentage analysis was used for research question two. The findings of the study showed that all the six items of the admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 minimum standards were considered adequate by the lecturers. However, the percentage analysis showed the suggestions proffered by the lecturers, and the most frequent among the respondents' suggestions was to reduce requirement for mathematics from credit pass to pass only. Based on the findings, conclusion was made and it was recommended that the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria should reduce the requirements for mathematics from credit pass to pass only.

Keywords: Determination; Adequacy; Admission Requirements; Minimum Standards; Adult And Non-Formal Education

Introduction

The acronym, NCCE, stands for National Commission for Colleges of Education. It is the regulatory body for Colleges of Education in Nigeria. NCCE was first formed in 1989, Act amended in 1993 and revised in 2012. This revised edition is known as NCCE 2012 Nigeria Certificate in Education Minimum Standards for Adult and Non-Formal education. NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards has six sections, namely – Programme Objectives, Admissions, Facility, Structure, Human Resource and Graduation Requirement Sections. In this study, the researcher seeks to determine the adequacy of Admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for Adult and Non-Formal Education in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Admission requirements are the conditions students seeking admission into tertiary institutions must meet before entry. In the context of this study, admission requirements imply the prerequisite qualifications which a candidate must met in order to be qualified for admission into the college of education in Nigeria. Such requirements include:

1. A senior secondary school certificate or its equivalent with credit passes in four subjects (including English Language & Mathematics) in not more than two sittings. Two of the credits must be relevant to the course the candidate wishes to offer.
2. A grade II Teachers' certificate (TCII) with credit or merit in four subjects, two of which must be relevant to the course the candidate wishes to offer.
3. Associateship certificate in Education awarded by an approved institution in Nigeria or abroad.
4. All candidates wishing to be considered for admission must enroll for and write the selection examination organized by the accredited body such as Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB).

5. Successful candidates in the Pre-NCE Final examinations would be required to regularize their admission with JAMB examination.
6. Colleges have the latitude to administer additional tests for selection of their candidates (NCCE, 2012).

There are three modes of entry into the colleges of education in Nigeria:

1. Through Possession of Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE/WAEC/NECO or GCE O'level) with credit passes in four subjects including English Language & Mathematics in not more than two sittings and then sit for Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) conducted by JAMB, if passed, may or may not sit for aptitude test depending on the institution of his choice.
2. Through possession of grade II teachers' certificate (TCII) with credit or merit in four subjects, which is relevant to the course of his choice. He sits for UTME conducted by JAMB, if passed, may or may not sit for aptitude test depending on the institution of his choice.
3. Through possession of Associateship Certificate in Education awarded by an approved institution in Nigeria or abroad. Then sits for UTME, if passed, may or may not sit for aptitude test depending on the choice of his institution (NCCE, 2012).

Despite these three different modes of entry into the Colleges of Education in Nigeria, it is still regrettable and alarming that the admission of students into the Departments of Adult and Non-Formal Education in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria is still very poor. For instance, in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, only 14, 4, 14, NIL and NIL students respectively were admitted into Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Imo State. In this vein, in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019, only 27, 38, 13, 14 and 13 students respectively were admitted into Federal College of Education (Technical) Umunze, Anambra State (Source: School Records, 2019). What is responsible for the low admission? Is it that the admission requirements are too strict or that the minimum standards for Adult and Non-Formal Education are outdated and do not attract learners anymore.

According to University Admission Centre (2018), admission requirement is a process through which students enter tertiary education. This system varies from country to country and from institution to institution. In Nigeria, for instance, a student seeking admission into colleges of education must possess senior secondary school certificate or its equivalent , with credit passes in four subjects including English and Mathematics in not more than two sittings. But, in Ghana, the admission requirements into colleges of education is only passes in six subjects including English language and Mathematics. Three of the six subjects must be relevant to the programme of choice (Ghana Web Solution, 2009). Adeyemi, (2009) and Igho, Kpolovie, Osonwa, Iderima, (2014) observed that there was correlation between admission requirement and academic performance. The authors showed in their studies that there were a strong relationship between efficiency of admission requirements and performance and success in examinations.

Adequacy refers to a state of satisfactoriness or being good enough for a particular purpose or for what is required or needed. Walter (2018) defined adequacy as a quality of being good enough for a particular purpose. In this study, the adequacy of admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education is being questioned. Is it still fit or suitable for admission process in Nigerian Colleges of Education?

The respondents used in this study were experienced and less experienced lecturers (adult educators) in the colleges of education in Nigeria. These respondents may differ in their responses with regards to their years of service experience. They could as well offer useful insights and suggestions on the adequacy of the admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards. Based on this background, the researcher carried out this study to determine

the adequacy of the admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for effective curriculum planning and review. This if done well, will enhance students' enrollment in the Department of adult and non-formal education and help students acquire veritable skills for the world of work for economic growth and development.

Statement of the Problem

There is need for constant review of the admission requirements of any programme to affirm its efficacy in bringing about desirable behavioural changes in a learner. The admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards has lasted for nine years without a review. Within this period, a lot of socio-cultural and technological changes have taken place in the educational system in Nigeria. Therefore, its adequacy needs to be determined to find out whether, it is still relevant to the needs and aspirations of the learner and society.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided the study:

1. How do lecturers in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria rate the adequacy of admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education in Nigeria?
2. What suggestions could be proffered to improve the admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education in Nigeria?

Research Method

The design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Nigeria. The population of the study was 220 lecturers in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The total population was studied because the population was small and manageable. The instrument used for the study was adopted questionnaire, titled, Adequacy of Admission Requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards Scale (AARNMSS). The AARNMSS has six items, structured on a 5-point rating scale of Very Adequate (VA) 5 points; Adequate (A) 4 points; Fairly Adequate (FA) 3 points; Inadequate (INAD) 2 points; Very Inadequate (VINAD) 1 point. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement of items by ticking on the weighted five points scale. The instrument was duly validated by two experts, one from the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, the other from the Department of Science Education, all in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach alpha method was used to ascertain the reliability coefficient in AARNMSS which is 0.80. A total of 220 copies of questionnaire were produced and distributed to the respondents. Only 203 copies were completed and returned, representing 92.2%. The data analysis was, therefore, based on the 203 completed and returned copies of the questionnaire. Mean Statistics was used to analyze research question one while frequency table and percentages were used to analyze research question two.

The decision rule for research questions was determined using true limits of numbers in a five point scale response categories. In respect of the decision rule, 3.50 mean point and above were regarded as adequate while 3.49 and below were interpreted as inadequate.

Research Question one: How do lecturers in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria rate the adequacy of admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-Formal Education?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Lecturers on the Adequacy of Admission Requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards (N = 203)

S/N	Items on Admission Requirements	N	X	SD	Remark

1	A senior secondary school certificate (SSCE/WAEC/NECO/NTC/NBC or GCE O'level with credit passes in four subjects (including English Language & Mathematics) in not more than two sitting. Two of the credits must be relevant to the course the candidate wishes to offer.	203	3.78	1.27	Adequate
2	Grade II Teachers' Certificate (TCII) with credit or merit in four subjects, two of which must be relevant to the course the candidate wishes to offer.	203	3.87	1.07	Adequacy
3	Associateship Certificate in Education awarded by an approved institution in Nigeria or abroad	203	4.02	0.82	Adequacy
4	All candidates wishing to be considered for an admission must enroll for and write the selection examination organized by an accredited body such as JAMB	203	4.04	0.94	Adequacy
5	Successful candidates in pre-NCE final examination would be required to regularize their admission with JAMB	203	3.93	1.04	Adequate
6	Colleges have the latitude to administer additional tests for selection of their candidates	203	3.79	1.00	Adequate
	Cluster Mean		3.90		

Results in Table 1 show that the lecturers rated the six items in the admission requirements as adequate.

Research Question Two: What suggestions could be proffered to improve the Admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for Adult and Non-Formal Education?

Table 2: Percentage Analysis of Suggestions by Lecturers to improve the requirements in the section of Admission Requirements (N = 15)

S/N	Suggestions by Lecturers on Admission requirements	Frequency	Percentage %
1	A credit pass in English language only	3	20.00%
2	Reduction of the requirements for mathematics to pass instead of credit	5	33.33%
3	Increase in Credit passes	1	6.66%
4	Admission of candidates with one year certificate course in adult education	1	6.66%
5	Oral interview for admission	2	13.33%
6	Admission based on evidence of skills related to adult education	1	6.66%
7	Use of only O'level certificates no UTME requirement	1	6.66%
8	Accommodation of equivalent foreign certificates for admission	1	6.66%
	Total	15	100%

Table 2 shows the percentage responses of the suggestions by the lecturers on admission requirements. Out of 203 lecturers, only 15 made suggestion in this section. The most frequent among the respondents is the reduction of requirements for mathematics to pass instead of credit.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study shows that the six items on the admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria were considered as adequate by the lecturers. This confirms the appropriateness of the admission requirements and provided data to affirm its suitability. When the admission requirements in any school is the

global pre-requisite, students will no doubt strive for excellence. This will invariably lead to increase enrollment and adequate adjustment in the world of work. This finding is in agreement with the reports of Adeyemi, (2009) and Igho, Kpolovie, Osonwa and Iderima (2014) who confirmed that there is a direct connection between admission requirements and academic performance. The authors showed in their studies that there were a strong relationship between admission requirements and performance and success in examinations.

However, although the admission requirements were rated adequate by lecturers, most Departments of Adult and Non-Formal Education in Nigeria still suffer poor enrollment syndrome. Ghana Web Solution (2009) believed that reduction in the number of credit passes will enhance admission into Colleges of Education. Ghana Web Solution recommended six passes in six subjects including English Language and Mathematics for admission into College of Education. In the same vein, the suggestion by the lecturers which has the highest frequency is reducing the number of credit passes for admission and admitting students who have pass in mathematics.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that admission requirements in the NCCE 2012 Minimum Standards for adult and non-formal education in the colleges of education in Nigeria were adequate. However, it could be improved upon by reducing the number of credit passes for admission and by admitting students who have only pass in Mathematics as suggested by the lecturers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. In order to enhance the admission of students in the Department of Adult and Non-formal Education in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria should reduce the requirement for mathematics from credit pass to only pass.
2. The Federal Government of Nigeria should equally allow for credit pass in English language only for admission into Colleges of education in Nigeria instead of four credit passes in four subjects. This may open doors for eligible students to apply for admission in the Department of Adult and non-formal education in the Colleges of Education in Nigeria.
3. The Federal Government of Nigeria should adequately fund, develop and expand adult and non-formal education in Nigeria to become a theatre of skill acquisition where students will learn different kinds of trades and skills so that they will be self reliant and self employable after graduation.

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