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TEST ALIGNMENT OF ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS AS PREDICTORS OF FINAL GRADES OF STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined test alignment of entry qualifications as predictors of final grades of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Four research questions and hypotheses were formulated for the study and tested at .05 alpha level using regression statistical technique. The entry qualifications and final grades of 2,504 final year students were randomly sampled from 12 tertiary institutions in Nigeria and used as the data for the study. The findings of the study showed that the entry qualifications (WASSCE, NECO, NBTCE and UTME) are not effectively aligned with the courses of students in tertiary institutions to ensure good final grades. It was concluded that alignment should be adopted and implemented effectively since test alignment of entry qualifications with courses of students in tertiary institutions is very important as it can be used to ensure and predict good final grades of students. It was recommended among others that what students learn in secondary schools should be built upon in tertiary institutions rather than learning starting from a totally different point that is abstract to the students because students' interest and enthusiasm would be developed and maintained leading to effective learning and better academic achievements.*

KEYWORDS: test alignment, entry qualifications, predictive validity, final grades

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education is very crucial for the socio-economic and technological development of any country. It provides the skilled manpower needed to transform the resources within a country into wealth. But this is achieved when tertiary education provides the right quality training and skills required at the right quantity. Every year, thousands of students are admitted into Nigerian tertiary institutions but just a fraction of these large number of students are able to graduate in time and with good grades (Ubani, 2006). For decades now, there have been concerns about the validity and reliability of entry qualifications of students and their final grades in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This appears to be a national issue in view of the ongoing debates that most Nigerian graduates from tertiary institutions within the country are unemployable. To achieve a strong correlation between students entry qualifications and their final grades and ameliorate this problem, there is therefore the need to properly align the courses in a program (what the students should know and what are important) to the entry qualifications of the students and hence the need for test alignment (Deke and Haimson, 2006).

Entry qualifications are requirements (examinations) which prospective candidates must sit for and pass for them to be offered admission in tertiary institutions. The entry qualifications include the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE), Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE), Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and National Business and Technical Certificate Examinations (NBTCE). The possession of minimum of five credits pass in any of these public examinations is a prerequisite for sitting for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination. Candidates' gaining admission into Nigerian tertiary institutions is contingent on meeting the prescribed cut of mark in the Unified

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Tertiary Matriculation Examination. It is believed that these entry qualifications will positively predict candidates' performance in the tertiary institutions. Grades assigned to students in courses are based on an instructor's judgement of a student's achievement.

Cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is the final grade of a student in a program of study and is calculated to represent numerically a student's quality of achievement and refers to the overall grade point average calculated by dividing the number of points earned in all the courses attempted by the total credit hours in all attempted courses. This average is used to determine the ranking and licensure of students as professionals in their programs of study and admission decisions for further studies. Predictive validity comes into play when a test is used to predict the likelihood of some future performance. It indicates the extent to which an individual's future level on the criterion is predicted from prior test performance. Prediction of future academic success falls within the realm of predictive validity. According Kothari (2013), predictive validity evidence indicates how well an assessment can predict scores obtained at a later time through the use of either the same measure or a different measure. Predictive validity also tells how accurately test data can predict criterion scores that are obtained at a later time (Udoh, 2014).

Testing proponents have suggested that students' retention and final grades in a program of study will be enhanced through the alignment of courses to entry qualifications (Deke and Haimson, 2006; Howell *et al*., 2010). A closer look at college admissions and entry qualifications concludes that the alignment of high school course work and assessments with those in higher education is a necessary step in preparing students to successfully enrol in a tertiary institution and complete the course of study. Early *et al.*, (2014) stressed the importance of linking higher education placement examination to courses taught in tertiary institutions because it leads to better final grades of undergraduate students.

To determine the effectiveness of predictive validity between entry qualifications and final grades of students in tertiary institutions, there is need to look at the success rate students achieve in specific programs. Ideally, if students are properly placed into courses for which they are most suited, they should perform successfully in those courses if the contents are properly aligned to their entry qualifications. Therefore, to predict the inconsistencies found in the outcomes of students who graduate from secondary schools into tertiary institutions and tertiary education itself, there is need to properly measure their outcomes by aligning their entry qualifications to the necessary and important course requirements and valid assessment items in order to properly and adequately predict their final grades

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine if entry qualifications are effectively aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades in Nigeria. Specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine whether WASSCE is well aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.
2. Examine if SSCE is properly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.
3. Ascertain whether NBTCE is effectively aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.

Print ISSN: 2054-6297(Print), Online ISSN: 2054-6300(Online)

4. Assess whether UTME is effectively aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.

Research Questions

1. Is WASSCE well aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?
2. Is SSCE properly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?
3. Is NBTCE effectively aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades?
4. Is UTME effectively aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?

Hypotheses

1. WASSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.
2. SSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institution to validly predict their final grades.
3. NBTCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.
4. UTME is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.

LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

In the context of education, alignment can be broadly seen as the degree to which the components of an educational system such as standards, curriculum instruction and assessments work together to achieve desired goals (Ananda, 2003; Early, Rogge and Deci, 2014). Most recently, alignment studies examined the degree to which curricular, instruction and assessment address the same content (Webb, 2009). Alignment is not particularly new to the field of educational assessment as alignment between assessment and a set of content standards in a subject area has long been recognized as evidence of assessments validity (Resnick, Rothman, Slattery and Vranek, 2003; Daniels and Schouten, 2011). Hence the process of establishing the relationship between a test and content standards is required for any assessment to be considered rigorous, high quality and valid.

Test alignment is critical factor of ensuring test validity, the degree to which evidence supports interpretation of test scores. It affects the scores and grades of students, and so can be used to predict the entry qualifications and final grades of undergraduate students. Test alignment is increasingly used to make an objective inference about the ability of an individual to succeed in some future test endeavour. It is desirable when educators and educational administrators need an objective method of assessing students that is not influenced by biases. Test alignment is seen as a relatively simple, straight-forward method to document learning growth, evaluate individual achievement and ability. However, in the view of some scholars, test alignment is used to allocate opportunity and reinforce existing knowledge between the high schools and tertiary institutions (Wise, Becker, Gladden, Handy and Thacker, 2007; Howell, Kurlaender and Grodsky, 2010).

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Clearly, a disconnection between the secondary and college education systems exists, and much has been written about the poor transition for students between secondary and postsecondary educational systems (Conley, 2008). Others point to more structural aspects, such as lack of formal linkages between secondary and postsecondary systems in terms of governance structure, accountability, information and data systems (Kirst and Venezia, 2004; Ting, 2011). The disconnection between high school and college is also reflected in academic subject matter contents which lead to poor academic achievement in colleges (Shulock and Moore, 2007). Through the increased alignment of test to instruction based on entry qualifications of students, advocates believe that tertiary institutions will improve their effectiveness and hence students' outcomes.

Alignment of test to instructions based on entry qualifications yields direct benefits to the students, faculty and college as a whole (Roach, Elliot and Webb, 2005). Creating alignment using entry qualifications will improve students' retention of the appropriate materials taught, outcomes and success at various levels of the curriculum (Herman, Webb and Zuniga, 2007). Another argument advanced in favour of expanded use of test alignment is that students are less likely to drop out if they are taught courses that are not too many and unnecessary for a particular program of study due to the frustration that accrues to the students because the students cannot meet up with the demands of a loaded course activities (Ferguson, 2010).

Evaluation of the courses offered at the tertiary institutions of learning calls for the need to align tests to the instructions so that students' entry qualifications and final grades can be predicted. The curriculum and instructions should be aligned to the previous knowledge and skills of students so that the students can continue to learn and build upon what they have already known. The course of study for the students should be in consonance with what the students need to learn and what they should know, but not diversions from the students' entry qualifications and program of study so that at the end of the study, the final grades of the students can be a valid predictor of the entry qualifications. Several studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between entry qualifications and final grades of students in universities (Adeyemo, 2008; Adeyemi, 2013). But according to Izuaba and Afurobi (2009), these significant relationships do not mean good final grades. It is important to align the entry qualifications to the courses in the programs in tertiary institutions to adequately predict the final grade of students. Simply offering admission and enrolling students in the courses of study is not enough to produce students with good CGPA, rather tertiary institutions can also improve a student's chances of attending and completing tertiary institutions with good CGPA by ensuring that entry qualifications as an entry qualification match those of tertiary institutions (Cabrera and La Nasa, 2001; Mcgehee and Griffith, 2012).

Tertiary institutions admit students into various programs based on their entry qualifications with the hope that the students based on this result will obtain a good CGPA but forget that this entry qualification is not a cumulative measurement of the entire secondary school career of a student but is calculated based on students' scores gained at the final year of the secondary school system only, and so the need for tertiary institutions to properly match their instructions and assessments to students' entry qualifications in order to increase the probability of obtaining excellent CGPA (Balfanz and Legters, 2006). Test alignment of entry qualifications can be used to predict the final grade of undergraduate students and it becomes important especially as students get admitted into tertiary institutions because it provides a system for monitory students' entry qualifications set system levels proves support and interventions for

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students to keep on track to tertiary institution requirements (Noble, Schiel and Sawyer, 2004; Balfanz and Boccanfuso, 2007).

Test alignment of entry qualifications to the desired materials and the selected learning activities, and the associated assessment can be recognized as a crucial element of good teaching which may result in good learning and consequently good academic achievement. William (2006) asserts that for secondary school students' previous knowledge to be built upon, meaningfully engaged and the learning gap abridged and good academic performance achieved, tertiary institutions should focus their curriculum to the needs and requirement of the students. The entry qualifications syllabi should be aligned to the curriculum of the various programs in tertiary institutions so that there can be a match between them will enable the students to learn with ease and comfort, thereby improving their chances of getting good grades in their courses and subsequently good final grades (Ifedili, 2008).

The course contents and curriculum of entry qualifications should be in tandem with that of the tertiary institutions so that they can work in consonance with each other to produce a smooth and comfortable transition from secondary to tertiary institution and to the larger society for the students (Ifedili, 2008). When this happens, good students' final grade can be validly and reliably predicted. Thus educators and administrators of education ought to develop learning materials and content that provide unique information regarding undergraduate student's knowledge, skills and abilities in the various courses in a program of study in agreement with the objectives of the various programs in tertiary institutions in order to accurately predict undergraduate students' CGPA (Martone and Sireci, 2009). Venezia and Kirst (2005), explain that for undergraduate students to achieve high CGPA, their learning in tertiary institutions should be based/built upon what they learnt in high school, and their assessment items must measure domains specially outlined in course content as they were taught and the contents must sample numerous domains to give under graduates a high probability of responding correctly to many items as this can predict their CGPA.

In a research on the comparison of high school assessments to standards for success in university courses in California conducted by Brown and Conley (2006) using a sample of 80 final year students from 6 universities, regressed the transformed raw scores of the students' high school certificate examinations and the university final grades of the students. The researchers found a weak and uneven alignment between the two set of scores and stated that the test contents from the high school assessments and the knowledge and skills needed for university success were not properly aligned to predict a high success in university education. They concluded that the disjuncture between secondary and college education systems in California exists and pointed to more structural aspects such as lack of formal linkages between secondary and post secondary systems in terms of governance structure, accountability, information and data systems and advocated for the use of test alignment to enhance performance by both lecturers and students.

Brown and Niemi (2008) investigated the alignment of high school certificate examination (California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)) and California Standard Test (CST) and college assessments in Chicago using 42 final level students selected from 4 universities. They regressed the raw scores of the examinations and the final level grades and reported a strong correlation between the certificate examination scores and the final level students' grades. The researchers reported that the two examination scores were able to predict validly

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the final grade of the students and that high school students were instructed in and tested on subject matter contents that aligned well with the expectations of universities; and recommended that alignment should be emphasized and implemented in universities since the result of their finding suggested that alignment between high school test and college university programs may be a necessary condition to adequately prepare students for the transition and success from secondary to post secondary education.

METHODOLOGY

This ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Ex-post facto design is a design that the researcher cannot manipulate/control the variables because the variables have already occurred but can only report what has happened or what is happening. Inferences about relationships among variables are made, without direct intervention, from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables. This design is suitable for the study as it allowed the researcher to retrieve and use already available results of entry qualifications and final grades (CGPA) of final year students from the tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Entry qualifications and final CGPAs of graduates of 2015/2016, 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 academic sessions from 12 tertiary institutions across Nigeria were used for the study. Three tertiary institutions each were sampled from the 4 geopolitical zones (North, South, East and West) that make up Nigeria. The number of students who had WASSCE was 968, SSCE was 1024, NBTCE was 512 and UTME was the entire sample size of 2,504 since all of them had to enrol for it because it is a compulsory entry requirement. The data used for this study were the entry qualifications and final grades of graduates from their various departments in 12 tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The students' entry qualifications and final CGPAs which formed the data for this study were collected from the sampled tertiary institutions with the help of research assistants. The students' grades in WASSCE, SSCE and NBTCE were converted into raw scores. These raw scores were used alongside with that of UTME. The students' total raw scores as used in this study are the sum of the raw scores in five best relevant subjects to their program of study. The criterion was the CGPA at the end of graduation of the students. These data were gathered from the official academic records of the students selected for the study in their various departments. The research questions and hypotheses were analyzed using regression statistical technique. The hypotheses were tested at .05 alpha level. SPSS version 20.0 was the software used in the analysis.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Research Question 1

To what extent is WASSCE aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?

Print ISSN: 2054-6297(Print), Online ISSN: 2054-6300(Online)

Table 1: Regression analysis of the extent of alignment of WASSCE and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions

Variables	n	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
WASSCE (X)	968						
		.214	.016	.015	.221	23.5	2.00
CGPA (Y)	968						

The result in Table 1 shows the coefficient of correlation to be .214 which means that there is a weak positive relationship between WASSCE (predictor variable) and CGPA (criterion variable) of students in tertiary institutions. The coefficient of determination (.016) indicates that 1.6% of CGPA is predicted by WASSCE. WASSCE when taken against CGPA yields a positive regression coefficient of .221 which means that for every unit increase in WASSCE, there is a corresponding .221 unit increase in CGPA. The t-value (23.5) shows that WASSCE contributes poorly to CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 1

WASSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades.

Table 2: Regression analysis of alignment of WASSCE and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

R	R square	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
.214	.016	.015	.221	23.5	2.00

ANOVA

Sources of variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Between groups	6.258	1	6.258	15.796	.017
Within groups	382.708	966	.396		
Total	388.966	967			

*Significant at P < .05, N = 968

From the result in Table 2, the F-cal (15.796) with p (.017) at degree of freedom of 1 and 966 at .05 alpha level is not significant. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected and it holds that WASSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict the final grades (CGPA) of students.

Research Question 2

To what extent is SSCE aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?

Print ISSN: 2054-6297(Print), Online ISSN: 2054-6300(Online)

Table 3: Regression analysis of the extent of alignment of SSCE and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions

Variables	n	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
SSCE (X)	1024						
		.211	.013	.012	.204	19.6	2.42
CGPA (Y)	1024						

The result in Table 3 reveals the coefficient of correlation to be .211 which means that there is a weak positive relationship between SSCE (predictor variable) and CGPA (criterion variable) of students in tertiary institutions. The coefficient of determination (.013) indicates that 1.3% of CGPA is predicted by SSCE. SSCE when taken against CGPA yields a positive regression coefficient of .204 which means that for every unit increase in SSCE, there is a corresponding .204 unit increase in CGPA. The t-value (19.6) shows that SSCE contributes poorly to CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 2

SSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students of tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades.

Table 4: Regression analysis of alignment of SSCE and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

R	R square	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
.211	.013	.012	.204	19.6	2.42

ANOVA

Sources of variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Between groups	5.424	1	5.424	13.624	.024
Within groups	406.886	1022	.398		
Total	412.310	1023			

*Significant at P< .05, n = 1024

The result in Table 4 reveals the F-cal (13.624) and p (.024) at degree of freedom of 1 and 1022 at .05 alpha level is not significant. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected as it means that SSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict the final grades (CGPA) of students in tertiary institutions.

Research Question 3:

To what extent is NBTCE aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?

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Table 5: Regression analysis of the extent of alignment of NBTCE and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions

Variables	n	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
NBTCE (X)	512	.209	.030	.028	.248	25.7	2.10
CGPA (Y)	512						

The result in Table 5 indicates the coefficient of correlation to be .209 which means that there is a weak positive relationship between NBTCE (predictor variable) and CGPA (criterion variable) of students in tertiary institutions. The coefficient of determination (.030) indicates that 3.0% of CGPA is predicted by NBTCE. NBTCE when taken against CGPA yields a positive regression coefficient of .248 which means that for every unit increase in NBTCE, there is a corresponding .248 unit increase in CGPA. The t-value (25.7) reveals that NBTCE contributes poorly to CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 3:

NBTCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.

Table 6: Regression analysis of alignment of NBTCE and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

R	R square	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
.209	.030	.028	.248	25.7	2.10

ANOVA

Sources of variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Between groups	5.977	1	5.977	15.776	.070
Within groups	193.213	510	.379		
Total	199.190	511			

*Significant at < .05, n = 512

Table 6 reveals the F-cal (15.776) with p (.070) at degree of freedom of 1 and 510 at .05 alpha level is not significant. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected and it implies that NBTCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict the final grades (CGPA) of students in tertiary institutions.

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Research Question 4

To what extent is UTME aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions in order to validly predict their final grades?

Table 7: Regression analysis of the extent of alignment of UTME and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

Variables	n	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
UTME (X)	2504						
		.286	.033	.032	.250	26.9	2.13
CGPA (Y)	2504						

The result in Table 7 indicates the coefficient of correlation to be .286 which means that there is a weak positive relationship between UTME (predictor variable) and CGPA (criterion variable) of students in tertiary institutions. The coefficient of determination (.033) indicates that 3.3% of CGPA is predicted by UTME. UTME when taken against CGPA yields a positive regression coefficient of .250 which means that for every unit increase in UTME, there is a corresponding .250 unit increase in CGPA. The t-value (26.9) reveals that UTME contributes poorly to CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis 4

UTME is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades.

Table 8: Regression analysis of alignment of UTME and CGPA of students in tertiary institutions.

R	R square	Adjusted R^2	β	t	SE
.286	.033	.032	.250	26.9	2.13

ANOVA

	SS	df	M	F	Sig
Between groups	.838	1	.838	2.097	.148
Within groups	999.899	2502	.400		
Total	1000.738	2503			

*Significant at < .05, N = 2504

Table 8 reveals the F-cal (2.097) with p (.148) at degree of freedom of 1 and 2502 at .05 alpha level is not significant. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected and it implies that UTME is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades (CGPA).

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DISCUSSION

The result of hypothesis one revealed that WASSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades. This finding is supported by the finding of Brown and Conley (2006) who found a weak alignment between high school certificate scores and final grades of university students because there existed lack of formal linkages between secondary and postsecondary systems. The finding of Brown and Niemi (2008) supports this finding as they reported a strong statistical correlation between certificate examination scores and the final level grades of college students in Chicago because the high school students were instructed and assessed on subject matter contents that aligned well with the expectation of universities.

The result of hypothesis two showed that SSCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades. Alignment entails a process of refinement, iteration, clarification and communication of contents, instruction and assessment for improved performance. This finding is supported by the finding of Kirst and Venezia (2004) who found that high school certificate scores and final grades of students did not produce a strong correlation because a disconnection between high school and college reflected in academic subject matter content. But the finding of Le, Hamilton and Robyn (2000) disagrees with this finding because they reported that the secondary school certificate examination scores predicted good postsecondary school final grades as there was proper alignment of secondary and postsecondary assessments. The result of hypothesis three showed that NBTCE is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades. This finding is supported by the finding of Kirst and Venezia (2004) who found that high school certificate scores and final grades of students did not produce a strong correlation because a disconnection between high school and college reflected in academic subject matter content.

The result of hypotheses four indicated that UTME is not significantly aligned with courses of students in tertiary institutions to validly predict their final grades. Alignment entails a wide variety of reforms, from reallocating budgetary expenditures to restructuring school schedules to redesigning courses and lessons in ways that are intended to achieve the objectives set while also ensuring that its part are working together coherently and effectively to improve students' performance. This finding is not in line with the fining of Smith and Wertlieb (2005) who reported from their study that the student scores on GRE, TOEFL and SAS significantly predicted their final grades since there was a close alignment and collaboration between the contents of the entry examinations and the college courses. Also, the finding of Tan (2006) does not agree with this finding as he found out a close alignment between the contents and assessments of the Canadian General Examination and universities' programs. This finding is supported by the finding of Armstrong (2005) who reported a weak correlation between college placement examination scores and final grades of students as the placement examinations were not well aligned with college courses. This finding also agrees with the finding of Resnick *et al.*, (2003) who found out in their study that the strength of the alignment was very weak as entry qualifications did not predict students' final grades because the test were not effectively aligned with contents and assessments in the tertiary institutions.

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Implications to Research and Practice

1. Provision should be made for availability and use of alignment between entry qualifications and programs in tertiary institutions during the planning and implementation of academic programs to ensure that standards, goals and objectives are followed and maintained since this will produce good students' final grades.
2. Tertiary institutions should ensure that the courses thought to students in their various programs of studies are not burgoos but the necessary relevant and beneficial ones. This will help to reduce the work load for student, make them concentrate and learn better leading to the achievement of good final grades.
3. What students learnt in the secondary school level should be built upon in the tertiary institutions rather than learning starting from a totally different point that is abstract to the students. When this is done students interest and enthusiasm are develop and maintained which will enable them to learn better and achieve better final CGPA.
4. Entry qualifications should be planned in a way that they also assess college readiness of student .The validity of these entry qualifications should be totally ensured and guaranteed so that they can be used to select and admit the right set of students who are ready and serious about tertiary education.
5. Tertiary institutions should ensure that what is taught to students and what is prescribed in the curriculum are assessed by tests and examinations in order to ensure the credibility and validity of the assessments. Outside this students will respond to assessment items that are abstract to them which they did not prepare for and will not have good grades.
6. Educational planners, administrators and teachers should develop learning activities that give the learners the opportunity to practice the kind of behavior implied by the objectives and also, the kind of opportunity to deal directly with the kind of learning objectives and aims.

CONCLUSION

From the research, it was seen that test alignment of entry qualification with courses of students in tertiary institutions is very important since it can be used to ensure and validly predict good final grades of students. It was pointed out that the entry qualifications (WASSCE, SSCE, NBTCE and UTME) used in offering students admission into tertiary institutions in Nigeria are not properly aligned with the courses students learnt and this resulted in poor final grades (CGPA) achieved by the students at the end of their academic programmes.

Future Research

This study cannot claim to has done it all in trying to ascertain the predictive efficacy of entry qualifications used in admitting students into tertiary institutions the final grades they graduate with, so further studies can be carried out on the validity, reliability and dimensionality of WASSCE, SSCE, NBTCE and UTME in order to ascertain whether they measure the knowledge and skills they claim to measure.

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