

Relevance of post graduate diploma in education program to students in furthering their education: A case study of University of Port-Harcourt

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Abstract. The study assessed the Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in University of Port-Harcourt between 2005 and 2011 to determine the relevance of the program to students in furthering their education. The study assessed the number of students registered on the program in the study period, their entry qualifications their performances in the program and how many of them went further to do Masters Degree programs after graduating from the PGDE program. The study was based on the action and outcome aspects of the Performance Theory analyzed by Clom (2013). Evaluation and descriptive survey designs were adopted and sample sizes of 700 and 100 students, respectively, who completed their PGDE program between 2005 and 2011, were randomly selected from the population of PGDE students in the College of Graduate Studies, University of Port-Harcourt. Document analysis and questionnaire, titled Questionnaire on Challenges Facing PGDE Students (QCFPS) were the main instruments used to generate data for the study. Five research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Simple proportion, percentage and mean were used to answer the research questions while ANOVA and Chi Square were adopted for testing the hypotheses at significant level of 0.05. The results showed that performance of the PGDE students both at entry level and in the study period were relatively high as majority had second class lower division and second class upper division respectively. The level of enrollment in Masters Degree was low and in a declining trend; level of registration with Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), though was low, but in increasing trend. The main challenges facing PGDE program were fund and administrative factors. Recommendations based on these findings include: need for improved administrative processes, improved teaching and learning environment, increased students' interest in Masters Degree program and adequate awareness on the need for PGDE graduates' registration with the TRCN.

Keywords: Level of performance, furthering education, enrollment in Masters program, PGDE program, entry qualification.

INTRODUCTION

Many students over the years have studied courses other than education, thereby acquiring degree certificates in other disciplines. Most of these students however may decide to choose a career at postgraduate level in teaching profession in order to acquire necessary teaching skills to be qualified to take up teaching duties at different levels of the education system (Nursery, Basic, Senior Secondary and Tertiary levels), or to assume

leadership position in any education organization or agency. Post-Graduate Diploma in Education becomes the indispensable graduate study program that can make the unqualified personnel qualified in teaching profession by offering specialized training in the areas of child development, child psychology, theories of learning, teaching methodology, pupils' evaluative procedures and general principles and practice of education, thereby

ensuring professional development in education.

Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is a post graduate program for holders of the Higher National Diploma (HND) and Degrees (B.A, BSc, MSc, PhD) who wish to be teachers but do not possess teaching qualification required to be registered with Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Education, 2010). Ojo and Olakulehin (2008) noted that the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is a conversion course which is designed to equip those who do not have prior teacher training with the skills, knowledge and ability to become effective teachers or educational practitioners. Globally, PGDE is a recognized teacher training program that is run in universities or other higher education institutions for the non-professional teachers. The program takes between six months and two years to complete, typically consisting of 2 to 3 semesters of working some cases. PGDE program is embedded with basic education courses that have theoretical and practical applications which will provide participants with the pedagogical knowledge, skills and competencies needed for a qualified teacher, and to occupy leadership positions in schools and government education program or to acquire Master's Degree in Education. According to National Institute of Education (2004) cited in Wong et al. (2008):

The PGDE program is designed to prepare student teachers to have the knowledge and skills to teach in primary or secondary schools; be aware of and sensitive to the needs, abilities, interests and aptitudes of students in schools; be able to teach students of different abilities, interests and backgrounds effectively and creatively; be committed to the nurturing and development of the students in their charge; and be committed to self-initiated and sustained professional development.

The University of Port Harcourt is one of the higher institutions in Nigeria that offer PGDE at Post Graduate level in the College of Graduate Studies. The Institute of Education in the Faculty of Education of the University takes it upon itself to expose candidates without teaching qualifications, but graduates in other disciplines, to the principles and practice of the teaching profession to supplement their various disciplines. The Program runs on a Full-Time basis for a minimum of 12 calendar months and maximum of 24 calendar months and also on a Part-Time basis for two (2) consecutive Long Vacations of eight weeks each (Sandwich Program), (Nnodim, 2013). Students are expected to undertake coursework which is based on the core fields of educational practice; supervised teaching practices and research project. The courses offered include introduction to educational psychology; general teaching methods and instructional

materials; history and philosophy of education; orientation to project writing; subject methods; educational research methods, statistics, measurement and evaluation; curriculum development; sociology of education; and educational administration. Upon successful completion of the PGDE program, candidates are awarded degree certificate in PGDE which qualify them as trained teachers and recognized by the TRCN. Some students with satisfactory grades (upper credit and distinctions) may then proceed to Masters of Education program.

The Masters of Education (M.Ed) degree program provides candidates with advanced learning experiences that will equip them with professorial competencies, technical knowledge and skill with which to function as teachers and leaders. The award of M.Ed degree is also based on taught courses and research work to be presented as thesis. Candidates are admitted into Masters of Education based on their areas of specialization in the various departments of the Faculty of Education which include; Educational Management (EDM), Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology (EDC), Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counseling (EDP), Educational Foundation (EDF), Adult and Non formal Education (DAE) and Educational Human Kinetics (KHE). It is therefore expected that candidates with PGDE certification should be able to enroll in the Masters program and also cope with its' academic challenges.

Academic performance is always the key factor that determines student's ability to proceed in any academic pursuit. Academic performance of students according to Yusuf (n.d) consists of scores obtained from teacher-made test, first term examination, mid-semester test and so on. Academic performance thus refers to students' achievement in the school work as measured by the observed behaviour, tests and examination results usually at the end of every semester or course program. Therefore, student's performance in PGDE program goes a long way to determine how successful they become in their academic pursuit. In order to proceed to Master's level, the PGDE graduate must have at least an Upper Credit classification.

Research in Post Graduate studies program has shown that more students enroll for Masters Programs than for Postgraduate Diplomas and PhD Programs (Oredein, n.d). Similarly, Alabi (2005) observed a gradual but continuous decline in the number of PGDE graduates. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, little or no research work has been done on the relevance of PGDE program to furthering education in Nigeria; thus the need for this present study which will provide empirical evidence on the relevance of PGDE program to students in furthering their education in University of Port-Harcourt.

Statement of problem

Since the introduction of the PGDE program into university system and higher education institutions in

Nigeria as directed by Federal Government, many students have gone through the program and many are yet to be enrolled. Students in their hundreds continue to troop in and out of the program in every academic session. However, adequate attention has not been paid to consider the numbers of these students who continued their new academic career up to Masters Level after successfully completing the PGDE program. Also, the performance of Masters Students with PGDE certification have not been adequately analyzed to determine whether the experience they acquired during PGDE program is of any relevance to cater for the Masters' academic huddles. The main focus of the study was to investigate the relevance of PGDE program in University of Port-Harcourt based on the following variables; students' first degree performance before enrolling in PGDE program, students' performance in PGDE program generally and by gender, the level of enrollment of PGDE graduates in Masters program generally and by gender, the level of registration of PGDE graduates with Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and the challenges facing PGDE program.

Purpose of the study

In general term, the purpose of this study will be to determine the relevance of PGDE program to students in furthering their education in University of Port-Harcourt.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess students' first degree performance before enrolling in PGDE program.
2. Assess students' performance in PGDE program.
3. Determine the level of enrollment of PGDE graduates in Masters program.
4. Evaluate the level of registration of PGDE graduates with Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN).
5. Ascertain the challenges facing the PGDE program.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the students' first degree performances before enrolling in PGDE program?
2. What are the students' performances in PGDE program?
3. What is the level of enrollment of PGDE graduates in Masters program?
4. What is the level of registration of PGDE graduates with Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)?
5. What are the challenges facing the PGDE program?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their PGDE performance in University of Port-Harcourt.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students in their masters' enrollment in University of Port-Harcourt.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of academic performance

Academic performance comprised of two different concepts, "academic and performance". According to Macmillan online Dictionary (2013), academic usually relates to education, especially education in colleges and universities. Academic is based on formal learning rather than learning by experience or practical skills. Performance can be referred as the results of activities of an individual or organization over a given period of time or the assessment of how well a task is being done. Simpson and Weiner (1989) cited in Yusuf (n.d) defined performance as the observable or measurable behaviour of a person or an animal in a particular situation usually experimental situation. This implies that the observed behavior of an individual must be measured or tested at a given period of time to determine his/her performance. Performance is determined by carrying out a performance test. Performance test is defined as the type of mental test in which the subject is asked to do something rather than to say something (Singer, 1981 cited in Yusuf, n.d). In academic, performance refers to achievement in carrying out of a task, assignment or course.

Academic performance can be generally referred to students' achievement in the school work as measured by the observed behaviour, tests and examination results usually at the end of every semester or course program. Academic performance of students according to Yusuf (n.d) consists of scores obtained from teacher-made test, first term examination, mid-semester test and so on. In every education system, especially in higher education, students' are expected to complete some form of activity or submit a work product to demonstrate that learning has occurred. Academic performance is assessed by how well a student accomplishes his or her learning objectives and goals under specified criteria. Galilher (2006) and Darling (2005) cited in Mushtaq and Shabana (2012) used Grade Points Average (GPA) to measure student performance because they focused on the student performance for the particular semester.

The level and quality of students' academic performance are determined by quite a number of factors. These factors generally include students' effort, previous schooling, parents' education, family income, self motivation, age of student, learning preferences, class attendance, entry qualifications, emotional problems,

curriculum contents, learning situation, and inadequate teacher instruction. Ebuka (2011) grouped some of these factors into six to include socio-demographic characteristics, socio-economic status, past academic performance, environment, psychological factors and Study skills. These factors will be analyzed under the following subheadings:

Socio-demographic characteristics

Socio-demography is a characteristic description of an element of a group within a society. Socio-demographic characteristics according to Ebuka (2011) consist of the student's age, gender, marital status and ethnicity. Based on marital status for instance, it is expected that the academic performance of a single student should be better than that of a married student. This is because a married student has more commitment in the family such as caring for the children and other domestic chores, and thus may have little time for study and other academic activities which may go a long way to affect his/her performance. Also, it has been noted that student's age affects academic performance. In a comparison done between younger and mature students, Richardson (1994) cited in Mlambo (2011) observed that the academic performance of mature students is as good, if not better; giving the reason that mature students were rather more likely than younger students to adopt a deep approach or a meaning orientation towards their academic work, and were conversely less likely than younger students to adopt a surface approach or a reproducing orientation.

Socioeconomic status

Socioeconomic status (SES) is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2008). The students' academic performance may depend on a number of these socio-economic factors. Raychaudhury et al. (2010) noted that socio-economic factors like attendance in the class, family income, and mother's and father's education, teacher-student ratio, presence of trained teacher in school, sex of student and distance of school affect the performance of the students. Socio-economic status may have separate effects (positive or negative effect) on students' academic success. For instance, students whose parents have low educational attainment are more likely to have difficulties with their studies and lower levels of literacy and may display negative attitudes to school; while the reverse may be the case for students whose parents are of high educational attainment.

Past academic performance

A student's past academic performance may be a predictor of his/her future performance. The level of a student's qualifications upon admission into higher education reveals the extent of his/her academic capabilities and competencies; indicating how well or badly such student will perform in the new chosen career. Based on the criteria (such as Distinction, upper and lower credits) upon which students are admitted into higher education, it is assumed that student with high qualification will outperformed student with low qualification. Mlambo (2011) opines that learning is a cumulative process, thus a student recruited with higher entry requirements will be well prepared for the course material compared to a student admitted based on the bare minimum qualifications. Self concept of one's performance in the past (positive rating) are well correlated with better academic achievement (Ebuka, 2011). Therefore the performance of students wishing to further their education may be affected by their previous performance.

Environment

Environment literally refers to all the external factors that influence someone's life. The environment a student finds him/herself has a very significant effect on his/her performance. Ebuka (2011) listed the environmental factor that may affect students' academic performance to include the physical components, that is the school structures (Lecture halls, teaching facilities, etc), school types (private, public and home school) and the individual's past environment (where he/she was brought up).

Psychological factors

Psychological factors are thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or other cognitive or affective characteristics that can affect the human mind and its processes. These factors may influence the behaviour and well being of a student thereby affecting his/her academic performance. Psychological variables that have effect on academic performance include stress, phobia, depression, inferiority complex, anxiety, motivation and sleep. Ebuka (2011) noted that lack of appropriate role model; orientation and aspiration of peer affect individual effort and achievement in school.

Study skills

Study skill refers to strategies a student applied to learning or process of studying. It is very important to

student's success in school, and thus, a strong determinant of student's academic performance. Ebuka (2011) noted that study skills involve three learning processes which are making links across material; searching for a deeper understanding of the material and looking for general principles. A student with a well-developed study skill can learn and retain information easier. Ebuka further listed some factors under study skills that affect students' performance to include attendance to lectures, time management and awareness and practice of learning approaches. Other factors are student's study preferences, the nature of student's discipline and commitment to study. Performance may decline if students have too many demands on their time or when they are not effectively managing their time and balancing coursework and assignments with these responsibilities.

The concept of interest in furthering higher education

Interest according to Encarta Dictionary (n.d) cited in Memidex free online Dictionary (n.d) is defined as a feeling of curiosity or concern about something that makes the attention turn toward it. Interest is a quality that attracts someone's attention or concentration. Furthering is an act of proceeding to more advanced stage or moving to a greater extent or degree. Furthering higher education therefore involves proceeding from Bachelor degree or Higher National Diploma (HND) to Master and finally to Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. The act of furthering higher education avails one with some form of learning that advances from a previously established level of accomplishment to extend and amplify knowledge, competences and skills in a particular field of endeavor. Having an interest in furthering higher education implies being concerned about moving from one level to another in higher educational studies in order to acquire a higher degree (Master's or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree). It also involves having the curiosity to climb an educational ladder from foundation degree (Bachelor degree or Higher National Diploma (HND)) to higher degrees. Thus, having interest in furthering higher education enables learners to progress in their education and develop their careers.

In a situation where one has acquired a Bachelor degree or Higher National Diploma (HND) in a particular discipline and needs higher degrees in another discipline, such a one needs to enroll in a Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) degree program to be able to proceed further. A postgraduate diploma is a postgraduate qualification awarded typically after a bachelor's degree that qualifies one into a higher degree (Master's) program. It can offer specialization or concentration in a subject previously studied at the bachelor's level; or a subject unrelated to one's first degree studies. Therefore, PGD program serves as a bridge either onto a new career path or into

Master's level studies.

Universities serve as the home of advanced higher education programs. Often these programs are within the control of the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and different faculties. The programs are designed to introduce advanced knowledge and skill emanating from research and theory in the discipline base of one's profession.

Theory of performance

Performance theory, according to Clom (2013) questions why we perform the way we do in certain situations, and which factors affect those performances. Performance theory can be broken down into two categories; the action aspect, and the outcome aspect. The action aspect is what a group or individual does in the performance situation. The outcome aspect is the result of the group's or individual's behavior. Some believe that the outcome aspect isn't a part of performance, so for time's sake, this study will focus more on the action aspect of performance (Clom, 2013). According to Elger (n.d) the Theory of Performance develops and relates six foundational concepts which are:

To perform: This means to take a complex series of actions that integrate skills and knowledge to produce a valuable result.

A performer: This represents an individual (example, a student) or a group of people engaging in a collaborative effort such as an academic department, research team, committee, student team, or a university.

Level of performance: This describes the location in the journey of developing performance. The level of performance depends holistically on six (6) components: context, level of knowledge, levels of skills, level of identity, personal factors, and fixed factors. Each level characterizes the effectiveness or quality of a performance. For instance, as an academic department improves its level of performance, the members of the department are able to produce more effective student learning, more effective research, and a more effective culture. Also, as a teacher advances his levels of performance, he is able to produce deeper levels of learning, improved levels of skill development, and more connection with the discipline for larger classes while spending less time doing this.

A performer's mindset: Performer's mindset includes actions that engage positive emotions. Examples include setting challenging goals, allowing failure as a natural part of attaining high performance, and providing conditions in which the performer feels an appropriate degree of safety.

Immersion: Immersion in a physical, social, and intellectual environment can elevate performance and stimulate personal as well as professional development. Elements include social interactions, disciplinary knowledge, active learning, emotions (both positive and negative), and spiritual alignment.

Reflective practice: Reflective practice involves actions that help people pay attention to and learn from experiences. Examples include observing the present level of performance, noting accomplishments, analyzing strengths and areas for improvements, analyzing and developing identity, and improving levels of knowledge (Elger, n.d).

This literary review creates the impression that the relevance of higher education program is dependent upon the academic performances of students. This review pointed out many factors that might affect students' performance. The purpose of this study is to determine the relevance of PGDE program to students in furthering their education in University of Port-Harcourt, using evaluation and descriptive survey research designs, PGDE graduates from 2005 to 2011, existing official admission and result records, questionnaire for data collection and statistical technique such as simple proportion, percentage and mean for data analysis; and Two Way ANOVA and Chi square for hypotheses testing.

METHODOLOGY

The study was an evaluation and descriptive survey that examine the relevance of PGDE program to students in furthering their education in University of Port-Harcourt. The population for the study comprised of all registered students for the PGDE program in University of Port-Harcourt between the years 2005 to 2011 academic sessions. Simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 700 students for the evaluation survey while accidental sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 100 students for the descriptive survey. The instruments for data collection were the existing official records of registered PGDE and Masters Students which were used to obtain data on students' admission details, results and contacts; and a 16 items questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Challenges Facing PGDE Students (QCFPS) which was developed by the researchers. The researchers requested for the official records of registered PGDE students and Masters Students from the School of Graduate Studies, University of Port-Harcourt. The questionnaire was weighted using modified Likert scale and the weightings were Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The average of these points is 2.50 ($4 + 3 + 2 + 1$) = $10/4 = 2.50$; and was validated and split half method was used for reliability and reliability

coefficient of 0.86 was obtained by subjecting it to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Data that was obtained were analyzed using simple proportion, percentage and mean while Two Way ANOVA and Chi Square were used to test the hypotheses at $P < 0.05$. A mean of 2.50 or above indicates agreement with the item statement while a mean of 2.49 or below indicates disagreement.

RESULTS

The results to the study are presented according to the research questions and hypotheses based on the variables of the study (degree performance of the respondents, students' performances in PGDE program, level of enrollment of PGDE graduates in Masters program, level of registration of PGDE graduates with Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and the challenges facing PGDE program). The results are presented in tables and discussed accordingly.

Research question 1: What is the level of students' first degree performances before enrolling in PGDE program?

The data in Table 1 revealed that within the study period 2005 to 2011, 17% of students got admission into PGDE with B.A, and 48.85% came in with B.Sc, 3% with B.Tech, 2.43 % with B.Eng, 0.71% with B.Agric, 2.43% with B.Th, 2% with B.PH, 10.86% with HND, 0.14% with B.Law, 0.29% with B.Divinity, 0.29% with B.Ed, 0.43% with PGD, while the degree qualifications of 11.57% of students were not identified. The table also revealed that 0.86% of students got admission into PGDE with First Class and Distinction, and 13.57% came in with Second Class Upper and Upper Credit (HND), 51% with Second Class Lower and Lower Credit, 20.71% with Third Class or Merit, 2.29% with Pass, while the degree performance of 11.57% of students were not identified.

Research question 2: What are the students' performances in PGDE program?

The table 2 revealed that 7.71% of students had Distinction, 28.43% of students had Upper Credit, 22.57% of students had Lower Credit, and 1.71% of students had Merit as their performances in PGDE program for study period of 2005 to 2011 academic sessions, while the degree performance of 39.57% of students were not identified.

Research question 3: What is the level of enrollment of PGDE graduates in Masters program?

The data in Table 3 revealed that 20% of 2005 session, 24% of 2006 session, 12% of 2007 session, 22% of 2008 session, 12% of 2009 session PGDE students enrolled in

Table 1. Percentage analysis of PGDE students' first degree qualification and grade before enrolling in PGDE program.

Parameter	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total	Percentage	
Qualifications	B.A	17	16	13	20	11	20	22	119	17
	B.Sc	39	35	65	47	48	51	57	342	48.85
	B.Tech	10	0	0	1	3	2	5	21	3.0
	B.Eng	3	1	1	3	1	4	4	17	2.43
	B.Agric	2	0	0	1	-	2	0	5	0.71
	B.Th	-	4	3	2	6	2	0	17	2.43
	B.PH	-	5	2	0	1	3	3	14	2.0
	HND	10	24	10	6	10	10	6	76	10.86
	B.Law	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.14
	B.Divinity	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	0.29
	B.Ed	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	0.29
	PGD	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	0.43
	Unidentified	19	13	6	18	20	5	0	81	11.57
Grades	First Class & Distinction	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	6	0.86
	Second Class Upper and Upper Credit	8	16	15	8	13	20	15	95	13.57
	Second Class Lower and Lower Credit	47	54	49	46	48	58	55	357	51
	Third Class or Merit	22	15	25	26	13	16	28	145	20.71
	Pass	4	2	5	2	2	1	0	16	2.29
	Unidentified	19	13	6	18	20	5	0	81	11.57

Note: 1st Class (Distinction) - excellent; 2¹ (Upper Credit) – Very good performance; 2² (Lower Credit) – Average performance; Third Class (Merit) – Low performance; Pass – Poor performance.

Table 2. Percentage analysis of students' performances in PGDE program.

Grades	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total	Percentage
Distinction	8	5	6	12	5	10	8	54	7.71
Upper Credit	21	22	22	41	38	34	21	199	28.43
Lower Credit	26	19	10	28	30	30	15	158	22.57
Merit	2	1	1	5	2	1	0	12	1.71
Unidentified	43	53	61	14	25	25	56	277	39.57
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	700	

Masters program both in the expected year of their enrollment and in other years, while no student in 2010 session enrolled in Masters program and the number of enrollment for 2011 session PGDE students were not identified.

Research question 4: What is the level of registration of PGDE graduates with Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)?

The data in Table 4 revealed that the proportion of PGDE graduates that registered with the TRCN in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 are 2.2, 2.6, 3.0, 7.3 and 21.6 respectively.

Research question 5: what are the challenges facing PGDE program?

Table 5 reveals that students agreed that challenge number 4, 9, 10 and 12 which scored up to the acceptable mean of 2.50 and above are the family/financial and administrative challenges facing PGDE program in University of Port-Harcourt and disagreed with challenge number 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 16 which score below the acceptable mean of 2.50. The table also revealed other challenges specified by students to include constant strike actions by the University system and tuition fees increment.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their PGDE performance in University of Port-Harcourt.

Table 6 reveals that there is significant difference between male and female PGDE students in their in their

Table 3. Percentage analysis of PGDE students' enrollment in Masters Program.

Year of PGDE admission	Expected year of Masters enrollment	Number enrolled	Enrollment in other years other than the expected year	Total number enrolled	Number graduated	Sample size	Percentage
2005	2007	11	9	20	57	100	20%
2006	2008	12	12	24	47	100	24%
2007	2009	6	6	12	39	100	12%
2008	2010	6	16	22	86	100	22%
2009	2011	0	12	12	75	100	12%
2010	2012	0	0	0	75	100	0
2011	2013	Unidentified	Unidentified	Unidentified	34	100	Unidentified

Table 4. Proportional analysis of PGDE graduates' registration with Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN).

Year of PGDE graduates' TRCN registration	Number of students admitted into PGDE program	Number registered	Proportion
2007	115	10	2.2
2008	225	12	2.6
2009	140	14	3.0
2010	185	34	7.3
2011	123	100	21.6
Σ	788	170	36.7

PGDE performance in University of Port-Harcourt since the F-Ratio calculated (26.93) is greater than F-Ratio critical (4.001) at df. of 1 (numerator) and 60 (denominator) at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female students in their masters' enrollment in University of Port-Harcourt at .05 level of significant.

Table 7 reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female PGDE students in their level of masters enrollment since the X^2 calculated (1.62) is less than X^2 critical (3.84) at df. of 1 and .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained.

DISCUSSION

The findings in Table 1 revealed that majority of candidates got admitted into PGDE with Second Class lower/Lower Credit (51% - Average performance), followed by Third Class or Merit (20.57% - Low performance) while few others came in with First Class/Distinction, Second Class Upper/Upper Credit and Pass. This is a clear indication that the performance of students seeking admission into PGDE program are on the average side, as most of them had Second class lower division which is also a good prerequisite for gaining admission into the program in University of port-

Harcourt. This finding is in agreement with Nnodim (2013) assertion who posits that the minimum requirement for the Postgraduate Diploma Programs in University of Port Harcourt is a Bachelor's Degree in other disciplines and that candidates must possess at least a Second Class Honors Degree or Third Class in the related Discipline to run Postgraduate Diploma Programs in University of Port Harcourt.

The finding in Table 2 revealed that majority of students had second class upper credit (28.43%) in the course of PGDE program, followed by Lower Credit, Distinction and merit. This result showed that there is a high performance of students in PGDE program as the percentage of those with upper credits exceeds those with lower credit and merit and this performance increased as compared with their entry level of performance. This may be due to their interest in the program or the quality of course work they were exposed to during program.

The result in Table 3 revealed that the proportions of PGDE students that proceed to Masters Level are relatively low and declining. This in part may be due to poor performance of some students that makes them unqualified to take up Master's program or as a result of other factors such as increment of tuition fees, family commitment, late completion of the program, late computation of results etc. No PGDE students from 2010 session was able to enroll in Master's program in 2012 academic session due to inability of the students to round off their PGDE program within the stipulated period of one year. Also 2011 session of PGDE students' Master's

Table 5. Mean analysis of challenges facing PGDE program.

Challenges	SA(4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD(1)	Mean	decision	
Family/financial challenges	1. My age was a hindering factor during my PGDE program.	8		24	68	1.48	Disagreed
	2. I have little time for my studies due to my family commitment as a married student.	8	52	20	20	2.48	Disagreed
	3. My ethnic background greatly affected my PGDE program.		4	52	44	1.6	Disagreed
	4. My poor financial status greatly affected my PGDE program.	24	24	32	20	2.52	Agreed
Administrative challenges	5. Large teacher to student ratio during the program affected my concentration in class.	4	12	48	36	1.84	Disagreed
	6. My inability to attend regular classes affected my performance during my PGDE program.	4	44	36	16	2.36	Disagreed
	7. The time scheduled for lectures during my PGDE program was a great challenge to me.	20	24	32	24	2.4	Disagreed
	8. My poor academic performance in my degree result affected my PGDE program.	4	8	28	60	1.56	Disagreed
	9. Poor teaching facilities during my PGDE program greatly affected my performance.	16	36	32	16	2.52	Agreed
	10. Lack of conducive lecture environment was a hindering factor to my PGDE program.	44	32	16	8	3.12	Agreed
	11. Teaching methods (such as discussion, lecture and group seminar presentations) used by lecturers affected my PGDE program.	12	20	40	28	2.16	Disagreed
	12. My inability to combine work with lectures affected my PGDE program.	24	48	12	16	2.80	Agreed
	13. My inability to submit my assignments on time affected my PGDE program.	4	28	36	32	2.04	Disagreed
	14. The quality of course work I was exposed to greatly affected my performance	12	40	24	24	2.4	Disagreed
	15. The numbers of course work I was exposed to greatly affected my performance.	12	24	36	28	2.2	Disagreed
	16. The inability of institute of education to offer online PGDE courses greatly affected my PGDE program.	12	24	40	24	2.24	Disagreed

Table 6. Two Way Analysis of Variance (Two Way ANOVA) of male and female students' PGDE performance in University of Port-Harcourt.

Source of variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F-ratio _{Cal}	F-ratio _{Critical}	Decision
Row (male and female)	642.06	1	642.06	26.93	4.001	Significant
Within	572.42	60				

enrollment in 2013 academic session was not identified due to ongoing 2013/2014 admission process during the period of this study.

The result in Table 4 showed that the level of PGDE graduates' registration with TRCN is relatively low compared with the number of students that registered in the program in years other than 2011. However, the level of this registration is on the increase with 2011 having the highest level of registration (21.6). This may be due to the lack of interest in the registration, lost of students' contacts, or the level of awareness created at the time of

the registration with PGDE graduates in 2011 session been mostly informed. This finding is in agreement with Timi-Johnson (2013) who reported that a total of 145 Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) graduates of the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) in the Institute of Education, Faculty of Education have been inducted into the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN).

The result in Table 5 revealed that students agreed that poor financial status, lack of conducive lecture environment, inability to combine work with lectures and

Table 7. Chi square (X^2) of male and female PGDE students in Masters Enrollment.

Parameter	Male	Female	Total	Df	X^2_{cal}	$X^2_{critical}$	Decision
Numbers of PGDE students in 2005-2009 sessions	179 (173.8)	321 (326.2)	500				
Masters enrollment	25 (30.24)	62 (56.8)	87	1	1.62	3.84	No significant difference
Total	204	383	587				

poor teaching facilities, are the family/financial and administrative challenges facing PGDE program in University of Port-Harcourt. Other challenges specified by students are constant strike actions by the University system and tuition fees increment. This result thus indicated that the major challenges facing PGDE program are administrative in nature, which may be as a result of poor funding that prevents adequate infrastructural/facilities provision and constant strike actions. This may in turn lead to abrupt increment of tuition fees that will cause students' drop out or late completion of school program. This result is in agreement with some of the findings of Lam et al. (2006) who revealed that financial issues, time constraint and workload in practice were the most significant demotivating factors of primary care doctors who undertake postgraduate diploma studies in a mixed private/public Asian setting.

Conclusion

Performance at entry level was relatively high as majority of the students had Second Class Lower/Lower Credit (2^2) which is a good pre requisite for admission into PGDE program. Also, their performances increased in the course of the program as majority of the students had upper credit (2^1). However, their enrollment in Masters level was low and declining which is mostly due poor financial status of students to meet up with high school demands. The registration of these students with TRCN was low, though the number of registered students increased as the year of academic session increased, which may be attributed lost of students' contacts and level of awareness. The major challenges facing PGDE program was found to be administrative factor which resulted to inadequate infrastructural and facilities provision and abrupt increment of tuition fees.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the following strategies for improvement of the PGDE program were recommended:

1. Institutional leadership development.
2. Improved administrative processes.
3. Improved teaching and learning environment with

adequate teaching facilities.

4. Favorable funding policy.
5. Regular seminar/workshop to increase academic activities and interest.
6. Adequate awareness on the need for PGDE graduates' registration with the TRCN.
7. Reduction in tuition fees.

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