

# Issues on Compliance with Admissions Guidelines To Tertiary Institutions In Nigeria

Yusuf Lawal Ph.D

*Department of Public Administration, University of Abuja-Nigeria*

---

## ABSTRACT

The importance of education is germane in today's world, particularly as acquisition of knowledge at the tertiary level now determines the personal progression and self actualisation of individuals in the society. Meanwhile, no nation is able to provide access for all its citizens who desire admissions to Tertiary Institutions (TIs) as there are limited vacancies at this summit of the educational sector all over the world. The objectives of this Study were to examine the guidelines on admissions to TIs in Nigeria, examine the role of JAMB in the implementation of the guidelines on admissions, assess the extent and pattern of compliance and non-compliance with the admissions guidelines, examine the challenges for non-compliance with the admissions guidelines; and identify measures that can be put in place to strengthen compliance and proffer recommendations.

The Study utilised quantitative approach for data generation from primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire was administered on respondents who were the two principal institutional operators of the admissions system, namely; Desk Officers of JAMB and Admissions Officers of selected TIs. This was done through purposive sampling which cut across the different categories and types of TIs namely; Universities, Monotechnics/Polytechnics and Colleges of Education owned by the Federal and State Governments, and Private Individuals and organisations.

The findings were that the guidelines on admissions were adequate and appropriate, the implementation has been effective, there has been a high level of compliance with the guidelines, especially following the transition from manual admissions exercise to technology based automated system. It was also found that there were still some fractions of violations of the guidelines, which cut across all categories and types of TIs due to societal factors such as influence peddling, conduct of admissions outside the Central Admissions Processing Systems (CAPS) by some TIs, and the limited number of vacancies in the TIs. The findings also showed that lots of effort were being put in place to strengthen and enhance compliance with the guidelines.

In conclusion, the issue of compliance or lack of it to guidelines on admission to TIs in Nigeria remains a challenge, especially with their attendant security and developmental tendencies. The Study made some recommendations to mitigate the challenges, principal among which are; enforcement of sanctions against Heads of TIs for non-compliance with guidelines, and that the Federal Government should expand access to tertiary education through the designation of the first and second generations universities as Mega Universities to increase their students' intake through concerted and dedicated funding.

**Keywords: Compliance, Non-compliance, Guidelines, Admissions, Tertiary, Institution,**

---

Date of Submission: 06-08-2022

Date of Acceptance: 21-08-2022

---

## I. Background to the Study

There are requirements that govern admissions to Tertiary Institutions (TIs) across the globe. Compliance or non-compliance with extant laws, rules, regulations, guidelines or any other form of legislation signifies the extent of observance of the rule of law in different societies. Adherence to the rule of law enhances the security and development of a country as well as the rights and welfare of its citizens, while non-compliance with legislation has grievous implications for peaceful co-existence and cohesion. Compliance or non-compliance with guidelines on admissions to TIs reflects the general attitude of the citizens to the rule of law.

The greatest investment, which a nation can embark upon, is the provision of educational opportunities to its citizens (Abdulrahman, 1994). Kellaghan, argues that social demand for education and the scramble for places in institutions of higher education, are on the increase because individual's personal development, life chances, earnings, status and lifestyle are considerably enhanced by having a higher educational qualification (Kellaghan, 1995). According to Kola Babarinde "Higher education in Nigeria is in crisis, and so are the people

who occupy and administer it. The former is a crisis in a political situation, the latter is a crisis of political attitude” (Faborade and Edigheji, 2016).

There are various policies and guidelines adopted by different countries for the admissions of applicants to different TIs all over the world. However, there is hardly any country in the world that is able to provide placement for all applicants at the tertiary education level. This is one of the reasons why the open and distance learning systems have been canvassed as alternatives to the conventional system, even when most candidates still express preference for the conventional higher institutions, particularly universities.

The guidelines for admissions to TIs are more stringent in some countries than others because of the limited number of vacancies, especially in some programmes like Medicine, Engineering, Technology, Law among others. There is no country, even the advanced economies, that has the capacity to meet the overall demand for university education. This is why certain fundamental principles have to be adopted as key determinant variables.

The most common criteria include entrance examination, school related achievement, scholastic aptitude, personality factors, waiting time, chances, ballots, lottery and others. In China, Iran, Georgia, Spain and Turkey, entrance examinations are conducted, average marks, grade points and ranking are then used as criteria for selection of successful candidates.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is widely used for the purpose of admissions in the United States and Europe. There are centrally coordinated and standardised aptitude tests namely; Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Test (ACT), Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), conducted by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) that are requirements for the purpose of admissions to universities and graduate schools in the United States and Canada.

In the United Kingdom, the Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS), has responsibilities for the coordination of undergraduate admissions to universities using the Advanced Level examination results as the criterion. In France, personality factors are part of the criteria for admission to universities. Testimonials and letters of recommendation from personalities who can vouch for applicants are acceptable during interviews for entrance to universities.

In Germany, in addition to the use of personality factors, non-educational guidelines such as lottery is also used for the purpose of admissions to TIs. The lottery criterion is used to select candidates for medical school, especially where there are many candidates who meet the requirements, but there are only limited vacancies to be filled. This guideline is influenced by the average mark of the total population of applicants.

In Kenya, the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS), receives applications from candidates seeking admissions to universities and use their performance based on the results of the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) to select successful candidates into available spaces in the universities.

In The Gambia, candidates apply directly to any of the three (3) universities in the country and support the application with appropriate results for consideration. There is no centrally coordinating body or entrance examination for the purpose of admissions to universities.

In Nigeria, before 1977, the then six (6) existing universities conducted individual entrance examinations for selection of successful candidates. Sequel to the establishment of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in 1977 to centrally coordinate entrance examinations and admissions to universities, and later to all TIs from 1989, JAMB has handled the twin responsibilities of the conduct of matriculation examination and placement of candidates. It conducts entrance examination and uses the results to place candidates in TIs based on their preferences, the vacancies in the institutions and the guidelines on admission. Merit, Locality/Catchment and Educationally Less Developed States are criteria for Federal Government owned institutions, while State and Private TIs also have their selection guidelines. There have been debates and public discourse on the continued desirability and existence of the JAMB. In fact, some TIs have introduced additional means to check and balance the powers of the Board to solely use its assessment instrument to determine who secures admissions to TIs in the country namely the Post-UTME.

JAMB’s enabling law mandates it to collaborate with TIs to admit qualified applicants. The implication of this enactment is that both the JAMB and TIs have shared responsibilities to ensure the full implementation of the guidelines on admission, just as they both have shared obligations for any failure in the system. However, in view of the objectives, aims and purposes for the establishment of the Board, virtually all attention is focussed on the twin issues of the matriculation examination and admissions to TIs.

Nigerian universities are required to adhere strictly to certain laws, policies and guidelines in their admissions. Discouraged by the non-compliance with guidelines on admissions, Michael Angulu (1998), the pioneer Registrar of JAMB, submitted that supplementary admission into Nigerian universities“...is the most dreaded and perhaps the most unsatisfactory aspect of the admissions exercise. It is during this period that candidates and their influence peddling sponsors roam around the universities and the offices of the Board, trying to subvert the system...” (NUC, 1988).

The universality of the university makes it a centre of knowledge without boundaries in terms of the composition of staff and students, and the subjects of enquiry. Primordial interests, biases or prejudices based on race, ethnicity and religion are not expected to have a foothold in the university system. According to Aminu (1988),

“...Universities are centres of competent thought, lofty behaviour and places where genius blooms best. When things go wrong or are handled wrongly, universities assume other attributes. They become centres for the breeding of self-centred socially irresponsible elite. They take the shape of places where natives are upgraded and given the charter...” Some Nigerian Universities have become native centres where the major demographical clusters of teachers and students are almost one hundred percent (100%) from the same geographical locality. Paradoxically, even where there is a deliberate effort by Government to appoint the leadership of some universities from areas or states other than their locations, such appointees make matters worse by deliberately going out to their localities to recruit or admit teachers and students respectively to the chagrin of the authorities, and to the dissatisfaction of the local community of the institution.

It may be concluded that the level and status of compliance or non-compliance with guidelines on admissions by any TI can be predicated on many reasons including the leadership, proprietorship, values, history, subscription and corruption. The matter of non-compliance with the guidelines in private TIs calls for greater concern as their proprietors consider their establishment as business investments that should yield maximum profit, and almost in the immediate after being licensed to operate. The number of candidates they are able to enrol determines their profit or loss. They may then resort to enrolling many candidates through means that may not be in consonance with approved guidelines.

Acquisition of a certificate, particularly that of a TI has become a meal ticket in Nigeria, without which, it may be difficult to secure a job that would put food on the table. This reality has made education the most essential possession amongst the necessities of life of any person in Nigeria, and possibly in virtually all developing economies. The quest for University education is manifested in the annual application figures of candidates for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and Direct Entry (DE). In the 2020 UTME and DE, there were 1,949,983, candidates distributed as follows: Universities/Degree - 1,855,072, Colleges of Education/Nigeria Certificate in Education - 36,219, Polytechnic/National Diploma - 5,266, Innovative Enterprise Institutions /National Innovative Diploma – 426. However, the number of admissions places in the Nation’s TIs, particularly in the universities is very limited compared to the number of candidates desiring placement in the ivory towers. For example, in 2019, there were 560,613 spaces in the universities compared with 1,808,334 applicants.

In view of the limited spaces in the universities compared with the number of applicants, and coupled with the desperation of candidates to secure admissions by all means possible, pressure is inevitably brought to bear on the admissions system, which may threaten compliance with guidelines on the process and question its integrity. This is to be expected because in every human endeavour, where there is scarcity of essential necessities that play major roles in determining what an individual becomes in life, there would be desperation on the part of those concerned, and this may test the very fabric and shake the foundation of the system.

The limited number of spaces in TIs compared to the overwhelming number of candidates desiring admissions has continued to put a lot of pressure on the processes of admissions, thereby threatening the integrity of the system with a high temptation for non-compliance with relevant guidelines. Sometimes, the violation and abuse of the guidelines on admission have been grave to the extent of threatening the entire fabric of the system thereby, engendering very strong dissenting voices against the continued existence of the gatekeeper; JAMB, which centrally superintends the admissions processes. Each time there was a severe abuse of the guidelines, the proponents of the disbandment of the JAMB try to justify their positions on the matter.

JAMB has however been relentless in effecting innovation devoid of human influence and interference, to propel compliance with established guidelines on admissions, which has yielded tremendous positive results. In spite of the successes however, violations have continued in some TIs, although where such abuses are brought to the fore, sanctions are now instituted to serve as deterrent.

The significance of this Study stemmed from the fact that most of the literary studies on admissions to TIs have focused more on such issues as effect of examination malpractice, appropriateness or inappropriateness of guidelines on admissions, desirability or otherwise of quota system, access to tertiary education and carrying capacity among others, while little efforts have been expressed on compliance or non-compliance with guidelines on admissions to TIs in Nigeria. This Study attempted to bridge the gap in existing literature in the area of admissions to TIs in Nigeria. Consequently, this Study examined the level of compliance with the guidelines on admissions to TIs in Nigeria focusing on the extent and pattern of compliance, measures against non-compliance and their outcomes.

The aim of the Study was to examine the level of compliance with the guidelines on admissions to TIs in Nigeria, with a view to proffering recommendations to strengthen enforcement and compliance.

### **Conceptual Discourse**

The key concepts in the title of the Study are identified and clarified. These are Compliance, Guidelines, Admissions and Tertiary Institutions.

#### **i. Compliance**

Compliance is the act of obeying a command or observing rules or standards. Compliance is a much more encompassing behaviour pattern such as respect for the rule of law or constitution. It can also be a reflection of the general attitude of the people of a country. Garcia (2019) stated that compliance means adhering to provisions, such as those of policies, standards, specifications, or the law. To Adalberto (2019), compliance can be defined as the conduct of a company and its adherence to the rules of regulatory bodies such as NUC, NBTE or NCCE in Nigeria.

In relation to the purpose of this Study, compliance is adopted as adherence to government's policies, relevant laws and guidelines on admissions to TIs in Nigeria.

#### **ii. Guidelines**

The Oxford Dictionary (2019) defines guidelines as instructions on a particular statement to determine a course of action. Guidelines are provided to streamline particular processes according to a set routine or sound practice. Guidelines may be issued by, and used by any organisation to make the actions of its employees or divisions more predictable, and presumably of higher quality. Guidelines in this Study go beyond this definition.

In the context of admission to TIs in Nigeria, and as adopted for this Study, guidelines are details of actions and processes for the implementation of a policy, clearly providing, defining and explaining the scope, practitioners, limitations, rewards, sanctions and possible effects of the policy. Guidelines on admission are as formulated by proprietors of institutions namely governments, private entities and individuals. The guidelines are contained in a brochure and are widely circulated to stakeholders. The critical guidelines for this Study, are:

- (a) Admissions Quota;
- (b) Placement Ratio;
- (c) Nigeria Education Policy;
- (d) Admissions Programmes and Schedules;
- (e) Rules and Regulations on Admissions; and
- (f) Central Admissions Processing System (CAPS).

#### **iii. Admissions**

In the context of this Study, admissions are the placement of applicants into the available spaces in programmes in TIs in Nigeria. Admissions processes begin with the applications and registrations of candidates or any other stakeholders that are centrally coordinated by JAMB for the purpose of considering the applicants for different programmes in TIs in Nigeria, namely; Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics, Colleges of Education and Innovation Enterprise Institutes. For clarity and for the avoidance of any doubt, this Study focused on admissions to programmes leading to the award of First Degree, National Diploma, Nigeria Certificate in Education and the National Innovation Diploma in TIs in Nigeria.

#### **iv. Tertiary Institutions**

Section 8 of the National Policy on Education in Nigeria indicates that Tertiary Education is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics including those institutions offering correspondence courses. (2004). TIs also refer to post-secondary education schools where teaching, learning and research are carried out. After the completion of a programme of secondary education, students may enrol in TIs or acquire vocational skills. Applicants are required to sit for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) entrance examination, as well as the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) and meet varying cut-off marks to gain admissions to TIs (Wahab, 2019). This definition is therefore adopted because it describes TIs in Nigeria and the process through which an applicant can be admitted.

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theory enables researchers to simplify complex phenomenon to enhance its comprehension. To further understand the subject of this Study, therefore, Compliance Theory was used This theory is discussed below:

### **Compliance Theory**

According to Etienne (2011), in spite of the wealth of publications on compliance and non-compliance regulations, there is still no consistent and comprehensive compliance theory. Compliance theorists hinge their relevance on many variables including those that are internally consistent and capable of accounting for the simultaneous pursuit of motivations as heterogeneous as material, emotional and normative goals.

Compliance theory argues that there are always motivations serving as influencers for compliance and non-compliance in society. Where there are material gains accruing to compliance, the rate of compliance will be higher and attractive. In the same vein, the theory also argues that societal norms for compliance and non-compliance with rules are also influencers. Societies that frown at, and shame non-compliance with rules, customs, laws, etc, are likely to have more compliant people. Conversely, societies that tolerate deviant behaviours are likely to encourage misdemeanours and non-compliance.

Compliance theorists postulate that compliance and non-compliance are complex behaviours. Their causes are multifarious and bringing them together in a parsimonious whole is not easy (Suchman, 1997, Mitchell, 1996, Coombs, 1980). However, behaviours can be induced “automatically” because of habits, cultures and routines. Conversely, behaviour can be “planned” which epitomizes the intentional pursuit of various goals and objectives to achieve or fulfil moral obligations such as duty or trust, or dispose of one’s fear of sanctions.

Notwithstanding the advantages of compliance theories, they are sometimes inconsistent as they combine the incompatible models of goal-oriented action.

In addition, compliance theorists are not able to account for the fact that various heterogeneous motivations behind compliance and non-compliance are not simply the cumulative influences on one’s assessment of one’s options.

Emotions can also interact with a calculative logic in counterintuitive ways (Makkai and Braithwaite, 1994b).

The compliance theory is relevant to this study based on several reasons. First, the use of reward and sanction approach by JAMB ensures compliance with guidelines on admissions as much as possible.

Second, JAMB has also put in place motivations and incentives for institutional compliance, while it has also introduced sanctions for non-compliance. The introduction of an annual merit award, coupled with monetary rewards for institutions with the highest performance score in compliance with the various guidelines on admissions, is in consonance with the theory’s principle of motivation and material goals as influencers of compliance.

Third, there are institutional sanctions for erring defaulters, which are well articulated in the compliance theory. The theory was therefore adopted in the Study.

### **Guidelines on Admissions to Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria**

In an attempt to improve access and equity in admissions to the Federal and State TIs in the country, the Federal Government set out admissions policies, which comprise; Merit, Catchment/Locality, Educationally Less Developed States (ELDS), Direct Entry and Different categories ratios (Ubani, 2014). These are further discussed hereunder:

#### **i. Merit**

Under this criterion, institutions are required to admit 45% of the qualified applicants based on merit. 45% of applicants with the highest qualifying score(s) in each programme should be considered and placed on the merit criterion. Notably, candidates who have very high scores in the Matriculation Examination are first considered for placement before other candidates. (Abdulkareem and Muraina, 2014; and Owhondah, Kalagbor & Kalagbor, 2016). Merit is also tied to other considerations as the best candidates under other criteria are the ones to be admitted.

#### **ii. Locality/Catchment Area**

The Locality or Catchment Area criterion addresses the sense of belonging issue, as 35% of the admissions quota is reserved for applicants whose states fall within the catchment of a particular institutions. The best candidates under this criterion are to be considered for placement.

#### **iii. Educationally Less Developed States (ELDS)**

There are twenty-three (23) Educationally Less Developed States and the Federal Capital Territory in the country (JAMB, 2019). The Federal Government of Nigeria’s policy captures candidates who are indigenes of the classified states as requiring encouragement and deliberate actions to increase their enrolment and placement

of in TIs. Twenty percent (20%) of the admissions quota is to be spread among the States to increase the number of their students in TIs. The best from among the candidates are to be considered for placement.

**iv. The 70:30 Technology and Non-Technology Ratio**

In the specialised Universities of Technology and Polytechnic/Monotechnics, the 70:30 Technology and Non-Technology Ratio Quota provides for 70% of admissions to be offered to candidates who apply to programmes that are in the discipline of Technology, while 30% are for those who apply to study in other disciplines. This is aimed at boosting the technological development of the country. This also applies to the Universities of Agriculture. However, this effort has not improved the technological development of the country significantly, as many industry players have complained that quite a number of graduates from the Nation's TIs have not proved their capability when employed.

**v. The 60:40 Science and Arts Ratio Quota**

In the conventional universities and other TIs, this quota requires that 60% of admissions must be reserved for candidates who apply to study programmes in the Sciences, while the remaining 40% is for candidates who apply to study programmes in the Arts and Humanities. Specifically, this applies to the Faculties of Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Basic Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Medical/Pharmaceuticals and Engineering. In addition, other selected Science oriented programmes in the Social Sciences and Education, are considered as Sciences for this purpose, while the Faculties of Arts, Education, Business Administration, Management and Law, are regarded as Arts and Humanities. The purpose of the quota is to also fast-track the Nation's trajectory towards science and technological development and to enable TIs to easily achieve their admission targets (Ubani, 2014).

**The Role of JAMB in the Implementation of Guidelines on Admissions**

The Federal Executive Council and the Federal Ministry of Education, are responsible for formulating and approving guidelines on admissions for TIs in Nigeria. JAMB offers professional advice on policy formulation and has responsibility for the full implementation of the policies.

The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), is statutorily responsible for regulating admissions policies in TIs in the country. JAMB was established by Decree No.2 of 1978, as amended by Decree No.33 of 1989, with further amendments by Decree No. 4 of 1993. According to the enabling law, the functions of JAMB are to:

- i. Conduct matriculation examinations into TIs in Nigeria;
- ii. Place suitably qualified candidates into TIs after taking account of
  - (a) the vacancies that are available in the TIs;
  - (b) the guidelines approved for each TI by its proprietor or other competent authority;
  - (c) the preference expressed or otherwise indicated by candidates for certain TIs and courses; and
  - (d) such other matters as the Board may be directed by the Minister of Education to consider, or which the Board itself may consider appropriate in the circumstances;
- iii. Collection and dissemination of information on all matters relating to admissions to TIs or on any other matter relevant to the discharge of the functions of the Board, and
- iv. Carrying out such other activities as are necessary or expedient for the full discharge of all or any of the functions conferred on it (Salim, 2003).

According to Salim (2003), JAMB was established to address pressing issues such as multiple applications, multiple application fees, multiple examinations and multiple admissions into universities that were already in existence, prior to its establishment. These developments led to uncoordinated admissions processes and unreliable statistics for planning and national development purposes.

JAMB is a creation of the Committee of Vice Chancellors (CVC) of Nigerian Universities. The idea was however later taken up by the Federal Military Government for the purpose of nation building (Owhondah, Kalagbor & Kalagbor, 2016).

This was because the universities needed a body that would coordinate entrance examinations for candidates, while the Federal Government saw the need for an agency that would assist in solving some national educational challenges including unifying the youth and spreading tertiary education opportunities across the country equitably. These challenges include guaranteeing admission to university education; guaranteeing the representation of geo-political zones in the universities and also making use of same to realise "national unity," which was much more needed (Salim, 2003). These foreshadowed only a reasonable resistance to the Board by the universities as it went contrary to their original intention in many ways and significantly under their own laws, debased their powers to admit their own students, which was a right they had initially pursued to be able to protect them since the beginning. From the universities' perspective, the Board was meant to be government's

tool to reduce the weight of autonomy in the areas of teaching, learning from universities and initiating the quota system of admissions from the rear (Salim, 2003).

However, since the establishment of the Board, and following the introduction of guidelines to boost the enrolment of candidates from states that are considered educationally less developed, there has been no significant bridging of the gap between these states and those without any special criterion for admissions. In addition, with the constant agitation for the restructuring of the polity in Nigeria, which has amplified separatist agitations, this calls to question Salim's positions on the Board being an instrument for equitable distribution of admissions spaces, a platform for the realisation of national unity and a means of guaranteeing admissions to university education.

Apart from the autonomy granted the universities, particularly in the areas of teaching, learning, assessment, appointment of Vice Chancellors among others, the JAMB Law has been amended to ensure collaboration with the universities in the admissions processes. Universities have also been allowed to conduct post entrance examination screening for candidates from 2005. The then Minister of Education, Mrs. Chinwe Obaji, justified the decision thus;

.....In the face of increasing reports of certificate forgeries, examination malpractice and non-correlation between Universities Matriculation Examination scores and performance of admitted candidates, there is the necessity for further screening of eligible candidates. In line with our resolve of instilling quality through quality admissions, I hereby convey approval for Universities to further screen all candidates recommended by them to the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board based on agreed cut-off-points ... (Obaji C. N. 2005,)

### **Challenges of Non-compliance with Guidelines on Admissions**

There are numerous challenges of non-compliance with guidelines on admissions to TIs in Nigeria, which though are being addressed and redressed as they occur, particularly by the regulator of the system, JAMB, however, the issue of non-compliance has persisted. According to Oloyede, (2017), when wrong persists for too long, it becomes a custom and when people are accustomed to a practice, even beneficial change is resisted. In its resolution at the pre-mobilisation workshop in 2016, the NYSC stated that;

In view of the abuse the regularisation of admissions has been subjected, JAMB should revise the window of post-graduate regularisation by introducing measures that will make it impossible for institutions to abuse the process (NYSC Pre-mobilisation Workshop, 2016).

Ojerinde (2011) observed that some Federal Institutions find it difficult to adhere strictly to the Federal Government guidelines regarding the merit quota. The problem is that such institutions do not have high scoring candidates from their immediate environment or local community and would not want to fill the merit quota in professional programmes like Medicine and Law with non-indigenes for fear of uproar and disenchantment that may threaten the peace of the institutions. Furthermore, some institutions do not observe the agreed schedule for admissions process, while there are cases of forged results and documents which give wrong indication of inflation of scores, indiscriminate submission of lists without due regards to carrying capacity of institutions and abuse of attrition among other issues contributing to the non-compliance with admissions guidelines.

Oloyede (2018b) listed some infractions in the admissions process by TIs thereby contributing to non-compliance with guidelines. These are:

- i. Denial of screening score to disqualify candidates;
- ii. Admitting awaiting results;
- iii. Weeding qualified candidates for preferred applicants;
- iv. Warehousing candidates for pre-degree/remedial programmes;
- v. Stratification of candidates into programmes before summation of scores;
- vi. Lowering of merit aggregate cut-off mark to jump others; and
- vii. Cutting of merit before 45% (not utilising the whole percent on merit)

### **Research Methodology**

The Study adopted the quantitative approach to generate data. The data was analysed empirically and presented in simple percentages for inferential deductions.

The population of the Study consists of Admissions Officers in TIs in Nigeria and the Desk Officers in JAMB. The total number of TIs in Nigeria at the time of the study in 2021 was 618, while the total number of JAMB Desk Officers was 52. The total population size is 670. Sample size for the TIs is 205 represented. A complete enumeration was expected to have been carried out for the Desk Officers because of their limited number. This was not, however possible because of COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the field work.

## **II. Summary of Findings, Deductions and Inferences**

**A. Guidelines on Admissions to TIs:** The findings from the Study revealed the following:

- i. Both the Desk Officers and Admissions Officers are well familiar with the guidelines on admission to TIs;
- ii. Both the Desk Officers and Admissions Officers believe that the guidelines on admissions are appropriate;
- iii. Both the Desk Officers and Admissions Officers agreed that the guidelines on admissions are adequate;

**B. Role of JAMB in the implementation of the guidelines on admissions:** The findings from the Study revealed the following:

iv. That JAMB is excellently rated on the implementation of guidelines on admissions by both Desk Officers and Admissions Officers;

v. Both Desk Officers and Admissions Officers gave a high rating of effectiveness to JAMB;

**C. Compliance and non-compliance with admission guidelines:** The findings from the Study revealed the following:

vi. That admissions with JAMB Registration, Use of CAPS and Admissions of Part-Time and other category of Distance Learning candidates through CAPS, are always complied with by the TIs;

vii. On the order of compliance, the guidelines above (vi) are followed by Merit Criterion, Carrying Capacity of Institutions, Carrying Capacity of Programmes/Courses, Educationally Less Developed States/LGAs and General compliance with the guidelines.

viii. That the following guidelines received less compliance from TIs; Programme ratio and Admissions of Candidates without JAMB Registration;

ix. From the Admissions Officers' perspectives, the uppermost guidelines that received high compliance from the TIs include Admissions of candidates with JAMB Registration, Merit criterion, Carrying Capacity of Institution and General compliance with the guidelines;

x. Others that followed on the order of compliance rating are; Use of CAPS for admissions, Carrying Capacity of Programme, Locality/Catchment Area criterion, Educationally Less Developed States/LGAs, Programme ratio;

xi. The findings listed the following as those with less compliance by the TIs; Admissions of candidates without JAMB Registration and Admissions of Part-Time and Distance Learning candidates through CAPS;

xii. On the category of Institutions that are complying, the Study found that Federal institutions have the highest performance in compliance with admissions guidelines with the highest percentage of 33.9% compared with 3.1% and 1.5% for Private and State institutions respectively;

xiii. State institutions are noted from the Study, to have moderate compliance with admissions guidelines with the highest percentage of 30.8% compared with 4.6% and 3.1% for Federal and Private institutions respectively;

xiv. The findings also established that Private institutions have least performance level of compliance with the admissions guidelines;

xv. Furthermore, Universities have the highest performance in compliance with admissions guidelines compared with Polytechnics and Colleges of Education respectively;

xvi. The Polytechnics have moderate compliance with admissions guidelines;

xvii. Colleges of Education have least performance level of compliance;

**D. Challenges for non-compliance with admissions guidelines:** The findings from the Study revealed the following:

xviii. That the major challenges of JAMB in enforcing compliance with admissions guidelines according to Desk Officers are; Pressure from stakeholders, General or public interest and Non-adherence to admissions guidelines;

xix. Other challenges identified by the Desk Officers include Admissions outside CAPS, Lack of cooperation from the institutions and Inadequate training for new admissions officers;

xx. On the part of Admissions Officers, the following are listed as challenges confronting JAMB in enforcing compliance with admissions guidelines by the institution, Non-availability of internet, pressure from politicians/society, Problem of uploading results by candidates and Time factor;

xxi. Other challenges identified by the Admission Officers include Low patronage of NCE programmes, Non-adherence to time/schedule by candidates and institutions, Security challenge and Strike by the institutions' unions;



**E. Measures to strengthen compliance:** The findings from the Study revealed the following:

xxii. That the most prominent measures that can be adopted by JAMB to enhance compliance with regulations and guidelines by TIs according to the Desk Officers are setting up of Monitoring unit, Adequate training and retraining of Desk Officers and Enforcing the institutions to comply with guidelines;

xxiii. Other measures identified by the Desk Officers are imposition of sanctions and allowing institutions to contribute to the formulation of admissions guidelines;

xxiv. The Admissions Officers suggested measures that can be adopted by JAMB to enhance compliance with admissions guidelines by the institutions to include Training and retraining of Admission Officers, Increase in awareness/workshop and Strict monitoring;

xxv. Other measures suggested by the Admission Officers are Increase carrying capacity of the institutions, Commendation of complying institutions, admission without CAPS should be declined/rejected and Flexibility of the guidelines;

xxvi. Other less prominent measures identified by the Admission Officers are proper and regular dissemination of information, allowing due process, Sanctions of erring institutions and New/separate guidelines for private institutions.

### **III. Conclusion**

The Study was undertaken to examine compliance with admissions guidelines to TIs in Nigeria with a view to assessing the extent and pattern of compliance with admissions guidelines and proffering recommendations to strengthen the processes of admissions.

Accordingly, a number of existing literature was reviewed, while different systems of admissions in other countries were examined. The field study was carried out to elicit primary data from institutional operators of the admissions systems in Nigeria, while secondary data to underpin the project were obtained from diverse relevant sources and analysed.

Quantitative method of data analysis was adopted, as questionnaire was administered to the two major institutional stakeholders namely; JAMB Desk Officers and Admissions Officers of TIs.

The result of the research indicated that there had been gross violations of admissions guidelines to TIs in Nigeria, which was part of what was responsible for the abolishment of the ten percent (10%) discretion quota in 1999 by the Federal Government, while the current efforts of JAMB, particularly the introduction of technology based automated system of admissions exercise have drastically changed the narrative of compliance with admissions guidelines. The findings indicated clearly that the collaboration and partnership of other stakeholders with JAMB have helped in enhancing compliance as it has become more easier to detect the level, extent and pattern of non-compliance at different points of checks and verifications, thereby enforcing compliance.

The Study also revealed that non-compliance with admissions guidelines might have contributed to the lack of accurate statistics for national planning and development. It was affirmed that some guidelines on admissions, such as the Science/Arts (60:40) ratio have been realised thus giving room for some hope, opportunities and prospects for the Nation's technological development drive.

The Study equally revealed institutions and individuals' attitudes toward compliance with law and order.

### **Recommendations**

Sequel to the findings of the Study, a number of recommendations are proffered with a view to ensuring compliance with admissions guidelines to TIs in Nigeria.

1. The Federal Government should enforce the use of CAPS by all institutions for the admissions exercise and impose sanctions against non-compliance with guidelines on admissions.
2. The National Assembly should amend the Examination Malpractice Act to include any and all acts inimical to the admissions exercise.
3. The Federal Government should expand access to TIs by the designation of the first and second generation universities, and the University of Abuja in the Federal Capital Territory as Mega Institutions.

### **REFERENCES**

- [1]. Abdulkareem, A.Y., Muraina, M.B. (2014). Issues and challenges of access and management of admission to universities in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Research*.2(6) P.454-456.
- [2]. Abdulrahman, M. (1990), Admission policy and procedures education today.
- [3]. Adalberto, A.N. (2019). What is compliance in business? Understand what it is and the importance of this concept. *Nigeria Institute of Management Journal*, 132 (issue), <https://www.siteware.co/en/process-management/what-is-compliance-in-business/>

- [4]. Adeotomre, J.E. (2007), Universal access to tertiary education in Nigeria: issues of planning., in J. B. Babalola, G. O Akpa, A.O. Ayeni, S. O. Adedeji, (Eds) Access, Equity and Quality in Higher Education, (NAEAP). pp.131-137
- [5]. Adeyemi, J. K. (2001). Equality of access and catchment area factor in University admission in Nigeria in Higher Education. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- [6]. Aghenta J.A. (1987).Towards a system approach to planning of secondary education in Nigeria. University of Ife-Press.
- [7]. Akangbou, S.D. (1985). The economics of educational planning in Nigeria. Vikas Publishing House PVT Ltd.
- [8]. Alemika, E. (2013). Imperative of collective action against corruption in Nigeria, NISS Lecture Note, Abuja.
- [9]. Aminu J. (1988). Traffic warden at Ribadu Road, In A. U. Kadiri (Ed), 25 Years of centralised University Education in Nigeria. National Universities Commission, Lagos.
- [10]. Angulu, M. (1988), Were the critics right? In A.U. Kadiri, (Ed), 25<sup>th</sup> Years of centralised university education in Nigeria. National Universities Commission, Lagos, Nigeria.
- [11]. Babarinde, K (2016). Evolution, development, challenges and prospects of the Nigerian higher education system. In (Eds), Faborade and Edigheji: The Future and Relevance of Nigerian Universities and other Tertiary Institutions, Abuja.
- [12]. Bamiro, O. (2016), Sustainable Financing of Higher Education in Nigeria: Funding Models. In Faborade and Edigheji(Eds): The Future and Relevance of Nigerian Universities and other Tertiary Institutions, Abuja.
- [13]. Brodie, B. (1959). "8", "The anatomy of deterrence" as found in strategy in the missile age, Princeton University Press. pp. 264–304
- [14]. Chukwudi, O.R. Ifeagwazi, P.A. (2018). Public policy and national development in Nigeria: A focus on admission policies in tertiary education. The 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Society for Research and Academic Excellence. Princess Alexandria Auditorium University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria.
- [15]. Edukugho, E. (2012, July 18). JAMB, Post-UTME in battle of relevance, Vanguard newspaper. <http://www.vanguardngr.com> via [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
- [16]. Enaohwo, J.O. (1990). Economics of education and the challenge. Deyaganyi and Publications.
- [17]. Garcia, T. (2019). What Does Compliance Mean in Business? <https://reciprocitylabs.com/resources/what-does-compliance-mean-in-business/>
- [18]. Hayek, F.A. (1982). Law, legislation and liberty, International Journal on Governance, 2 (issues). p. 78.
- [19]. Huth, P.K. (1999). Deterrence and international conflict: Empirical findings and theoretical debates. Annual Review of Political Science, University Journal, Michigan:<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.25>
- [20]. Ikoghode, A. (2015). Post-UTME screening in Nigerian universities: How relevant today? International Journal of Education and Research, Lagos.3(8), 101-116.
- [21]. Ilusanya, R. (2008) Politics and development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria., International Journal of Educational Management (IJEM), Vols. 5 & 6, University Press, Lagos.5 & 6, pp. 166 – 178
- [22]. Indeed Editorial Team (2021). What Is Goal-Setting Theory? Definition, Principles, Disadvantages and Advantages, International Journal on Business, Vol (issue), <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/goal-setting-theory>
- [23]. Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, (2019), National Tertiary Admissions' Performance-Merit Award (2018 NATAP-M AWARD), Abuja, p10 - 12
- [24]. Kellaghan, T. (ed) (1995). Admission to higher education: Issues and practice, Education Research Centre, Dublin.
- [25]. Kosemani, J.M. (1995). Democratic values and university admissions in Nigeria. Nigerian Journal of Professional Studies in Education 3. 3, 78-83.
- [26]. Lawal, Y. (1995).Staff welfare as a motivating factor: A case study of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of Master of Public Administration, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
- [27]. Lawal, Y. (2006).The Role of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board as an Instrument for the Control of Access to Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Abuja, Nigeria.
- [28]. Livsey T. (2017), Nigeria's University Age, Reframing Decolonisation and Development, Palgrave Macmillan, London
- [29]. Longe, R. (1987). Fundamentals of educational planning, Adejare Press.
- [30]. Maduagwu, M. O. (2019). Federal character and affirmative action, History and peculiarities of diverting policies in the United States and Nigeria.

- [31]. Management Study Guide (2021). Goal Setting Theory of Motivation. International Journal on Business, <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/goal-setting-theory-motivation.htm>
- [32]. Megaforce (1999). Federal Government, Teachers, Students. Nigerian Tribune, 6<sup>th</sup> September, 1999.
- [33]. Mind Tools (2021). Locke's Goal Setting Theory: Setting Meaningful, Challenging Goals. International Journal on Business, New York. [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE\\_87.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_87.htm) 11-12.
- [34]. Novak, (2000). "Defining social justice." First things (2000), London.
- [35]. Obilade, S. O. (1992). JAMB and University Admission in Nigeria, in T. Ajayi, T. and R. A. Alani R. A (Eds), Contemporary issues in Nigeria education, Triumph Books Publishers. Ijebu-Ode, pp. 48 – 59.
- [36]. Odigwe, F.& Swem, T. (2016). Nigerian university quota admission system and quality of education in Universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. International Journal of Scientific Research in Education, 9(4), 325-332
- [37]. Ojerinde, D. (2011). Contemporary educational issues in Nigeria, Books and Publishing.
- [38]. Okebukola, P. A. O. (2012). Education reform imperative for achieving vision 20-2020. National summit on education on repositioning Nigeria's educational system for the achievement of the national 20-2020 vision organised by Senate Committee on Education, 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.
- [39]. Okobiah, S.O. (2002, March 13). The educational imbalance between the Northern and Southern States of Nigeria: A re-direction of educational policies, An Inaugural Lecture, Abraka: Institute of Education, Delta State University, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2002.
- [40]. Okundare, A., Solaja, O.M. & Soyewo, G.T. (2013). Rethinking Nigerian tertiary Education Policies: Toward equity and accessibility. International /Journal of Multi-Disciplinary. University Press, Lagos.
- [41]. Oloyede, I.O. (2017, September 21). A presentation of the Registrar, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board to the Intensive Training and Sensitisation Forum on Central Admissions Processing System, Abuja.
- [42]. Oloyede, I. O. (2018a). A presentation of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board on the 2018 Policy Meeting on Admissions to Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria, Abuja.
- [43]. Oloyede, I. O. (2018b). Admission Process: (Merit Cut-Off as a Case Study), Presentation at the enlightenment session on admission process at the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2018, Abuja.
- [44]. Oloyede, I. O. (2019). A presentation of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board on the 2019 Policy Meeting on Admissions to Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria, Abuja.
- [45]. Onwudiwe, I. D., Odo, J. and Onyeozili, E.C. (2001). Deterrence Theory. <https://marisluste.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/deterrence-theory.pdf>
- [46]. Owhondah, S.N., & Kalagbor L.D. (2016). Admission Policies for Improved Access and Equity in Higher Education in Nigeria: Achievements and Challenges. Elixir International Journal. Vol.97, Lagos.
- [47]. Saint, W., Hartnett, T., & Strassner, E. (2003). Higher education in Nigeria: A Status Report. Higher Education Policy, Lagos. 16, 259–281. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.hep.8300021>
- [48]. Salim, B. A. (2003). Problems of assessment and selection into tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Being a paper presented at the 21st Annual Conference of the AEAA held at Cape Town, South Africa, from 25th-29th August, 2003.
- [49]. Semako, G.E. (2021). Admission policies and quality teaching in universities in Lagos State, Nigeria: Implications for Educational planners and policy maker. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS), Vol V (II).
- [50]. Social Research Centre (2017). QILT: Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, Social Research Centre, Sydney.
- [51]. Tagare, F.C. (2004). Reconciling rationality with deterrence: A re-examination of the logical foundations of deterrence Theory. Journal of Theoretical Politics, Vol.16 (2). 16 (2): p.107–141.
- [52]. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency [TEQSA](2012). National register of higher education providers, Australian Government TEQSA, Sydney.
- [53]. Thakur A. S. & Aminu D. M, (n.d) University Education in Nigeria, Kano (Date not indicated).
- [54]. Thompson, S. 2020. Developing disability-inclusive higher education systems. International Higher Education, New York.
- [55]. Thomson, S.W, O'Grady, N.E. & Rodrigues, S.(2016). TIMSS 2015: A first look at Australia's results, ACER, Sydney.
- [56]. Ubani, K. (2014, February, 4). University admission in Nigeria: Criteria for evaluation, challenges and prospects, Thisday Newspaper, 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2014.comconlearn@yahoo.com
- [57]. United Nations, (2008) Guidance Note of the Secretary-General, UN approach to rule of law assistance.
- [58]. Universities and Colleges Admissions Service [UCAS] (2009). Questions about the UCAS Similarity Detection Service

- [59]. Universities and Colleges Admissions Service [UCAS] (2011). Preferences for UCAS Undergraduate Applications. <https://web.archive.org/web/20081001144447/http://www.ucas.ac.uk/students/startapplication/apply09/faqs/personalstatement/similaritydetection>
- [60]. Universities and Colleges Admissions Service [UCAS] (2011). Preferences for UCAS Undergraduate Applications. <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/how-get-ucas-undergraduate-reference>
- [61]. Verma, D. (2016). 4 Major approaches to educational planning-explained. International Institute for Educational Planning, University News. <https://www.shareyouressays.com/knowledge/4-major-approaches-to-educational-planning-explained/100976>
- [62]. Wahab, B. (2018), 6 Requirements you must meet to aim admission into Higher Institutions. <https://www.pulse.ng/communities/student/pulse-list-6-requirements-you-must-meet-to-gain-admission-into-higher-institutions/zqxqmf>
- [63]. World Bank (2017). Higher Education. Retrieved from [https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/tertiaryeducation#what\\_why](https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/tertiaryeducation#what_why)
- [64]. World Declaration on Education for All (1990). Meeting basic learning needs, A paper presented between 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> March, 1990, Jomtien, Thailand. <https://bangkok.unesco.org/sites/default/files/assets/ECCE/JomtienDeclaration.pdf>.

Yusuf Lawal Ph.D, et. al. "Issues on Compliance with Admissions Guidelines To Tertiary Institutions In Nigeria." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 27(08), 2022, pp. 48-59.