

Evaluation of Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) Programs in University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study was on evaluation of post graduate diploma in education (PGDE) programs in Universities OF Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The study had three specific objectives with. Evaluation research design was applied in carrying out the study. The population of this study consisted of 1,565 postgraduate diploma students. A sample of 450 post graduate student was selected for the study using multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Evaluation of Postgraduate Diploma in Education Questionnaire (EPGDEQ)". The content face validity of the instrument was determined by the Supervisor and two experts in measurement and evaluation while the reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha method with a sectional reliability coefficient of 0.83, 0.77 and 0.74 respectively. The researcher use item by Item analysis to answer the research questions and one sample t-test to test each of the null hypotheses. The findings revealed that the objectives of the PGDE programme has been significantly achieved in the University of Port Harcourt ($p=0.000<0.05$). Based on this, it was recommended among others that educational stakeholders managing the PGDE programme in the University of Port Harcourt should ensure they commit fully to the implementation of senate policies and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research.*

Keywords: Evaluation, Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE).

INTRODUCTION

It is often noted that education is one of the basic requirements for human growth to get rid of poverty; it is essential for nationwide growth and a thriving society (Sivakumar & Sarvalingam,

2010). Education, particularly Higher Education, is recognized today as the main vehicle for social and economic progress (Benneworth & Cunha, 2015); it is a tool for the promotion of a sustainable future (Axelsson, Sonesson, & Wikenberg, 2008). In fact, higher education is progressively viewed as a primary engine of economic prosperity (Altbach, Reisberg, Rumbley, 2009), hence, it has become progressively significant on nationwide agendas and has commenced thoughtful metamorphoses and global reforms over the past decades (Tremblay, Lalancette, Roseveare, 2012, p.16). In this context, a university is one of the most important sources of science and knowledge and developing the needed life skills of generations. Thus, the post graduate programme remains one of the significant changing tool for comprehensive development and transformation of a society: political, economic, cultural and social scopes. This change is through post graduate research, advanced knowledge, expertise and diverse skills that contribute to build its members and qualify them for the requirements of the era.

Binyamin, Shah, Ali, Akbar and Kausar (2013) stated that the importance of higher education is acknowledged universally. It is a means of growth of the society in this modern and ever-changing world. The structure of a nation can be more sustained with higher level of education like the post graduate programme. It influences the individual's life in two ways. First, it produces high standard disciplines and refines intellectual development. Secondly, it brings desirable changes in the behavior of an individual and develops his/her habits and manners according to the priorities of the society. If these two aspects are covered effectively by the education, it means that education is leading the nation towards development. Again, one of the major objectives of the Nigerian National policy on Education is the provision of equal educational opportunities to all citizens at different levels of education. In a bid to develop learning for national development, countless universities have sprung up all over the globe, and Nigeria is not left behind. Since the inception of university education in Nigeria in 1948 with only one university college that later became University of Ibadan, and its formal opening in 1962, the demand for university education has been on the increase. In order to take care of the increasing demand for university education, the Federal Government of Nigeria made provisions for the establishment of at least one federal university in every state and as well involved private individuals and organizations in the provision of university education in Nigeria. Today, there is a total number of 125 (one hundred and twenty five) accredited universities in Nigeria (37 federal, 38 state and 50 private universities (National Universities Commission (NUC, 2014).

The University is a complex learning organization occupying a strategic position and the highest level in the education ladder. The university is made up of people with different backgrounds in terms of needs, skills, talents, status, competencies, knowledge, behavioral styles, interest and perceptions (Nakpodia, 2003). In fact, the skills and high level manpower needed for the growth and development of any nation are produced by the universities. The University runs so many programmes at various levels. Postgraduate diploma is one of them. The Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) is a full-time programme meant for degree holders who would like to become

teachers. The training programme provided by most universities aims to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills to teach school subjects and understand the teaching profession in Nigeria. The programme (PGDE) is a one- to two-year postgraduate program designed for bachelor's degree graduates aspiring to become qualified teachers in primary, secondary, and junior college settings. The program addresses the philosophical problems of the bases of educational practice, the diverse human settings within which teaching and learning occur, the practical process and content of teaching, the definition of the teacher's role and teaching ethics (Chukwu et al 2010; Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, (TRCN) 2010). This program equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills to specialize in one or two school subjects, providing comprehensive teacher preparation which is encapsulated by the Philosophy of Post Graduate Diploma in Education which is to produce educators who will serve as agents of positive change through the social engineering processes of education as teachers, researchers, experts, educational policy/program designers, developers, implementers, evaluators and experts whose services shall be useful in related fields of national and international development (TRCN,2010). Thus this program covers a wide range of pedagogical skills, enabling graduates to pursue roles as school teachers, educational administrators, education research specialists, and elementary education specialists (Opara & Eteng-Uket 2021).

The Post Diploma Program in Education, a venerable linchpin of teacher training, represents a critical juncture in the educational continuum, serving as the crucible where the seeds of pedagogical excellence are sown, cultivated, and, ultimately, germinated into fully-fledged educators. This program is more than just an academic stepping stone; it is the gateway through which individuals seeking to transition into the noble vocation of education gain the essential skills, knowledge, and pedagogical insights necessary to make a lasting impact on the future minds of our society. It is through this program that the transformation of aspirations into capabilities and dreams into tangible educational contributions occurs. The Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) program is a conversion course designed to equip individuals without prior teacher training with essential skills and knowledge to become effective educators in Nigeria (Opara & Eteng-Uket 2021).

Offered by various institutions, including the University of Port Harcourt's Institute of Education, the PGDE was introduced in response to a government directive mandating qualified teacher training for all educators in the country. The PGDE program extends over two semesters and covers core educational practice areas. Admission to this competitive program requires strong academic performance. It aims to provide professional training for teachers and serve as a foundation for their continuous professional development. Since its inception decades ago, the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) has been pursued by many, indicating its long-standing presence. It is imperative to evaluate this program, as with all educational initiatives, to ensure it aligns with its objectives. Just like the maxim "an unexamined life is not worth living", Friend-Pereira, Lutz and Heerens (2018) claimed on the affirmative that organizations that evaluate their performance

excellence in the delivery of their educational facilities are anticipated to stimulate and thrive. Evaluation of educational programs is essential for program refinement, enhancement, or discontinuation if it fails to fulfill its intended purpose or objectives.

Uzoho (2015) noted that the entire education or teaching process seen above will amount to nothing if there are no laid down procedures to systematically evaluate the students' performance. It is also noted that the maxim that "examination is not a true test of knowledge" may be true if the entire evaluating or measurement process is limited to a single test or a single domain (cognitive). In the light of this, the idea of evaluation becomes indispensable if ever teachers and other stakeholders in the education process are to have a realistic view of student true performance or ability. According to Ebo (2011) "secondary schools exist to educate students in order to make them contribute meaningfully to the society". In this process, Abong (2015) also supported that the only way the students could be evaluated meaningfully without bias or misjudgment is through proper continuous assessment practices. According to him, "effective evaluation is the only source through which the true position of the students' academic ability could be ascertain". According to Rogers and Smith (2006) people may have many reasons or issues with regards to evaluation. Some of these might be genuine or not.

Eteng-Uket and Eteng-Uket (2023) carried out an Evaluation of Post Graduate Diploma in Education Program in The University of Port Harcourt Using the CIPP Evaluation Model. On analysis, the result revealed that the number of lecturers available is fairly adequate for teaching Post Graduate diploma program in Education, the lecturers teaching in the program are all senior lectures with 10years and above teaching experience and that both male and female are studying for the award of a diploma in PGDE. Analyzed result also revealed that all areas of the content of the program were taught by the lecturers, PGDE students which were over 90 percent have acquired the relevant methods and techniques in methods of research in the field of education and are Well Acquainted with procedures and methods of research in the field of Education. Result also revealed a significant difference exists between the groups based on their levels of acquaintance with these procedures and methods of research in the field of Education. Ezomike, et 'al (2020) also studied evaluation of postgraduate educational environment in a Nigerian teaching hospital. It was stated that postgraduate educational environment in UNTH has more positives than negatives but with room for improvement. There are significant differences in PHEEM scores among various groups of resident doctors. Akpomi, Ubulom and Markson (2023) also revealed that Business Education postgraduate programme has exposed individuals to information and communication skills and has developed competent researchers to a high extent.

A number of researches on post graduate programs in Nigeria have indicated low quality of such programs in terms of their objectives, policies, management, educational services and institutional support, low rates of graduates, low rate of internal efficiency of the research outcomes, low Quantity of postgraduate programs, and low fulfillment of these programs to the quantitative and

qualitative needs of the postgraduate programs. The results of several researches have also shown that some postgraduate students are incapable of performing their role in promoting the quality of programs and scientific research, which is reflected negatively on the society. This is more so as there is a growing concern about declining education standards, both in terms of learner quality and the competence of educators in Nigeria. While numerous institutions offer educator training programs and others provide professional training for non-educators, there is uncertainty about whether these programs fulfill their objectives and if graduates are adequately prepared to be professional educators. This situation not only undermines educational quality but also results in wasted resources, including time and money. Precisely in the University of Port Harcourt, despite the Post Graduate Diploma in Education Program's duration, enrollment rate and the number of graduates it has churned out, there's a lack of documented evaluation to determine the extent to which the program's objectives are met. This has thus necessitated this study which is targeted at evaluating the Post Graduate Diploma in Education Program in University of Port Harcourt using the CIPP Evaluation model. This is in terms of the extent to which the program objectives are currently being achieved, the suitability of the personnel available for the implementation (qualification, experience, number), availability, adequacy and utilization of facilities, equipment and resources, methods and strategies for teaching the program content, the problems encountered in the course of implementation, as well as, the learning outcomes as measured by proficiency in the PGDE program. Based on the issues raised, the aim of the study is to evaluate Post Graduate Diploma in Education Programme in Universities in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study is to evaluate the objectives of PGDE programmes in the University of Port Harcourt. Specifically, the study intended;

1. To find out if the PGDE programme has implemented Senate policy and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research.
2. To investigate if the PGDE programme has provided quality administrative support for graduate programmes.
3. To determine if research laboratories are equipped for the PGDE programme in the academic departments.

The following research questions were asked in the study;

1. To what extent has the PGDE programme help in implementing Senate policy and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research?
2. To what extent does the PGDE programme provide quality administrative support for graduate programmes?
3. To what extent has the PGDE programme help in equipping research laboratories in the academic departments and ensure availability of data for National Development?

The hypotheses below guided the study;

1. The objectives of the PGDE programme have not been significantly achieved in University of Port Harcourt.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted the evaluation research design in carrying out the study. The population of this study consists of 1,565 postgraduate diploma students across three Universities in Rivers State. A sample of 450 post graduate student were selected for the study using multi-stage sampling procedure. First, the researcher used Taro-Yamen formula given as $\frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$ to determine the minimum sample size. Having done this, the minimum sample size of 318 was realized. However based on the capacity of the researcher, the sample was increased to 450. At stage one of the sampling process the researcher used purposive sampling technique to draw the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University. At stage two, the researcher simple random by balloting to draw three departments from each of the institution. This was achieved by writing down the names of all the departments in the faculty of education from each school and with blind fold and adequate reshuffling, the researcher handpicked three pieces which revealed the names of the three departments that was used. Through this process, the researcher ensured that each of the departments in the institutions have equal chance of been selected and equal chance of not been selected. At stage three of the process, the researcher used stratified non proportionate sampling technique to draw fifty (150) PGDE students from each of the department. This gave a total of 450 PGDE students from the three faculties drawn for the study. The instrument for data collection is a questionnaire titled "Evaluation of Postgraduate Diploma in Education Questionnaire (EPGDEQ)". The questionnaire is designed using the 4-point Likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). The instrument contained two parts; Part A and part B. Part A include the instructions which guided the respondents on their response pattern. It also include the institution of the respondents. In part B, the instrument contains items which sought evaluate PGDE programme in UNIPORT.

Sub-Part 1a contains 5 items that measure the extent PGDE programme help in implementing Senate policy and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research. Sub-Part 1b contained 5 items that measured the extent PGDE programme provide quality administrative support for graduate programmes while Sub-Part 1c contained 5 items that measured the extent PGDE programme help in equipping research laboratories in the academic departments and ensure availability of data for National Development. The content face validity of the instrument was determined by two experts in measurement and evaluation, Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, University of Port Harcourt. They were specifically requested to vet the instrument in terms of item worthiness, grammar and suitability in answering the measuring item which they are set to measure. After their vetting, the researcher

effected necessary corrections before printing final copies of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha method. Twenty (20) copies of the instrument were administered to a pilot study group who were not part of the study but who has similar characteristics with the targeted sample. After their response, the researcher collected the instrument, collated it and subjected it to Cronbach's alpha analysis using SPSS. A sectional reliability coefficient of 0.83, 0.77 and 0.74 respectively were obtained for Sub-Part 1, 2 and 3 respectively. These indices showed that the instrument was reliable. The researcher administered the instrument on face to face basis to the respondents with the help of two research assistants for each institution. These research assistants were trained on the ethics of instrument administration. They were also given specific instructions which they intimated the respondents on how best to respond to the instrument. After the instrument were answered, they were retrieved on the spot in order to ensure a high degree on return rate. The researcher used item by Item analysis to answer the research questions and one sample t-test to test each of the null hypotheses.

RESULT

Research Question One: To what extent has the PGDE programme help in implementing Senate policy and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research?

Table 1a: Item by item analysis of extent the PGDE programme helps in implementing Senate policy and guidelines

S/N	Sub-Part 1 PGDE in UNIPORT	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Σ	SD	Remark
	Sub-Part 1a: Implementation of Senate policy and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research							
1	The PGDE programme applies the decisions of the senate in its activities to a...	102	181	92	50	2.78	0.73	Agree
2	Research base of the programme is in line with senate policies to a...	154	109	38	125	2.68	1.03	Agree
3	All policies and programmes initiated by the PGDE programme is as approved by the senate to a...	57	68	187	114	2.15	0.82	Disagree
4	The research guideline of the PGDE programme is always as determined by the senate committee to a...	93	111	129	93	2.47	0.91	Disagree
5	Implementation of any PGDE policy is as approved by the school senate to a...	83	134	143	66	2.54	1.11	Agree
	Grand total					2.03		Low Extent

Scale Range: 0-1.0 (*Very Low Extent*), 1.01-2.50 (*Low Extent*), 2.51-3.0= (*High Extent*), 3.01 & Above= (*Very High Extent*)[Source: Nwankwo: 2016]

From the analysis in the table, items 1, 2 and 5 with mean values of were agreed 2.78, 2.68 and 2.54 were agreed upon because they were up to the criterion mean of 2.50. On the other hand, items 3 and 4 were disagreed on because their mean values were lower than the criterion mean. On the whole, a grand means of 2.03 was realized. By comparing this mean values to the scale range of Nwankwo, 2016, it is seen that the PGDE programme help in implementing Senate policy and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research only to a low extent in the University of Port Harcourt.

Research Question Two: To what extent does the PGDE programme provide quality administrative support for graduate programmes?

Table 2: Item by item analysis of extent the PGDE programme provides quality administrative support for graduate programmes.

	Sub-Part 1b: Provision of quality administrative support for graduate programmes.	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
6	There are dedicated graduate programme office for PGDE programme to a...	112	76	57	180	2.27	0.81	Disagree
7	The PGDE programme has efficient online application system to a...	71	129	181	45	2.53	0.97	Agree
8	There are comprehensive student support centers to a...	121	185	66	54	2.87	0.82	Agree
9	There are clear communication channels in the PGDE programme to a...	141	160	74	51	2.91	0.95	Agree
10	Graduate staff are exposed to training resources and incentives	86	51	79	210	2.03	0.84	Disagree
	Grand total					2.52		High Extent

Scale Range: 0-1.0 (*Very Low Extent*), 1.01-2.50 (*Low Extent*), 2.51-3.0= (*High Extent*), 3.01 & Above= (*Very High Extent*)[Source: Nwankwo: 2016]

The analysis in table reveals that items 7, 8 and 9 with mean values of 2.53, 2.87 and 2.91 respectively were agreed upon because they were up to the criterion mean of 2.50. On the other hand, items 6 and 10 with mean values of 2.27 and 2.03 were disagreed because of not meeting up with the criterion mean. On the whole, a total grand mean of 2.52 was realized. Hence, by comparing this value with the scale range, it is seen that the PGDE programme provide quality administrative support for graduate programmes in UNIPORT to a high extent.

Research Question Three: To what extent has the PGDE programme help in equipping research laboratories in the academic departments and ensure availability of data for National Development?

Table 3: Item by item analysis of extent PGDE programme helps in equipping research laboratories in the academic departments

	Sub-Part 1c: Equipment of research laboratories in the academic departments.	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
11	The PGDE programmes operates in well-equipped modern labs	71	94	78	183	2.12	0.86	Disagree
12	Specialized equipment are present in the PGDE learning environments	64	58	181	123	2.14	0.86	Disagree
13	There are fully teaching aids in the PGDE laboratories	91	132	129	74	2.56	0.83	Agree
14	There are fully functional whiteboards and presentation tools in the PGDE laboratories	131	81	101	113	2.53	0.91	Agree
15	There are adequate safety equipment in the PGDE laboratories	58	71	107	190	1.99	0.84	Disagree
	Grand total					2.26		Low Extent

Scale Range: 0-1.0 (*Very Low Extent*), 1.01-2.50 (*Low Extent*), 2.51-3.0= (*High Extent*), 3.01 & Above= (*Very High Extent*) [Source: Nwankwo: 2016]

The analysis in the table above shows that only items 13 and 14 with mean values of 2.56 and 2.53 were agreed upon because they were up to the criterion mean of 2.5. On the other hand, items 11, 12 and 15 with mean values of 2.12, 2.14 and 1.99 were disagreed on. On the whole, a grand mean of 2.26 was realized and when compared with the mean scale range, it indicates that the PGDE programme helps in equipping research laboratories in the academic departments and ensure availability of data for National Development in the University of Port Harcourt only to a low extent.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses One: The objectives of the PGDE programme have not been significantly achieved in University of Port Harcourt.

Table 4: one sample t-test analysis of extent to which PGDE programme has been achieved in University of Port Harcourt

Variable	N	Mean	Std. D	t	df	Alpha	Sig	Result
	426	53.7934	10.54	105.26	425	0.05	0.000	significant

From the table above, calculated mean and standard deviation is 53.79 and 10.54. Calculated t-value is 105.26. The calculated sig value is 0.000. Hence, since sig ($p=0.000 < 0.05$) is less than the alpha at 425 degrees of freedom, the null hypothesis is rejected meaning that the objectives of the PGDE programme has been significantly achieved in University of Port Harcourt.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Based on the analysis in table one, since items 1, 2 and 5 were agreed on, it therefore means that The PGDE programme applies the decisions of the senate in its activities, the research base of the programme is in line with senate policies and finally, the implementation of any PGDE policy is as approved by the school senate. However, despite these, it was found that these achievement based on the objectives in the University of Port-Harcourt is only to a low extent. These low extent could be traceable to a lot of factors which could include underfunding, lack of monitoring and evaluation and also deficiencies in the implementation process of the PGDE programme. Again, it was realized based on the hypotheses testing that the objectives of post graduate diploma programme has been significantly achieved in UNIPORT. This means that the PGDE program in UNIPORT has been effective in enhancing students' knowledge and skills in their chosen fields. Students have demonstrated a significant improvement in their understanding of theoretical concepts and practical applications. Again, the program has been successful in equipping students with research skills, enabling them to design, conduct, and present research projects. This has contributed to the growth of research output and innovation in various fields. It has also helped that in instilling critical thinking and problem-solving. The findings suggest that the program is effective in achieving its goals, and its impact is evident in the success of its graduates. The findings of the study however is not very surprising to the researchers because researcher like Eteng-Uket and Eteng-Uket (2023) had reported earlier (though from the perspective of lecturers) that the programme has shown significant improvement in various areas.

From findings two, it is revealed that that the PGDE programme has provided quality administrative support for graduate programmes in UNIPORT to a high extent. This findings means that The PGDE programme has efficient online application system, there are comprehensive student support centers and there are clear communication channels in the PGDE programme to a high extent. The findings of the study is not surprising to the researcher because apart from making the policies in line with senate guides, it is evident that the University of Port Harcourt have been

able to supply logistics and administrative support like buildings and lecture halls for the programme. The findings of the study is not surprising to the researcher because of the observed cost and manpower put in to the programme by the institute in the University of Port Harcourt. The findings of resecaher like Ezomike, Udeh, Ugwu, Nwangwu, Nwosu, Ughasoro, Ezomike and Ekenze (2020) who revealed that postgraduate educational environment has more positives than negatives in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

From table three, it is revealed that the PGDE programme has helped in equipping research laboratories in the academic departments and ensure availability of data for National Development in the University of Port Harcourt only to a low extent. This low extent only indicated that the PGDE programme in UNIPORT has only helped in providing full teaching aids in the PGDE laboratories as well as in provision of things like functional whiteboards and presentation tools in the PGDE laboratories. Again, this low in the extent of attainment of this objectives may have been as a result of low provision by the school management in terms of facilities. It could as well by extension means that the government are not fully equipping the universities which may have extended to the equipping of the PGDE programme. The findings of the study is not surprising to the researcher because the problem of poor facilitation in infrastructure including the science laboratories has been unfolded by many researchers including Ajomobi (2013) as well as Idiong (2017) who all reported poor funding of research laboratories across all level of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The Postgraduate Diploma program in tertiary institutions in Rivers State has significantly achieved its objectives, providing advanced training, research skills, and leadership development. The program has enhanced students' employability and career prospects, contributing to the growth of research output and innovation. The program is effective in achieving its goals, and its impact is evident in the success of its graduates. However, though with some setbacks, a carefully planned improvement will upgrade the status of the programme to an enviable height.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the followings recommendations are made;

1. Educational stakeholders managing the PGDE programme in the University of Port Harcourt should ensure they commit fully to the implementation of senate policies and guidelines for the initiation, consolidation and co-ordination of innovative research.
2. The provision of quality administrative support for graduate programmes should be sustained by all involved in such implementations in University of Port Harcourt.
3. Stakeholders should also sustain the level of equipping research laboratories in the academic departments in the University of Port Harcourt.

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