

INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

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ABSTRACT

The main thrust of this study is to investigate the causes and effects of examination malpractice among secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. The study has a total population of 1103 teachers across 23 secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. Similarly, study used a sample of 10 secondary schools with total population of 485 out of which a sample of 217 was used to serve as the sample size for the study. A proportionate sample size was employed in order to determine the proportion of each school; and finally simple random sampling was used in selecting the participants at the field. Descriptive statistics was used in analyzing the data. The result indicated that most of the indicators of causes of examination malpractice and their effects among senior secondary school students are prevalent. However, the study recommended that an intensive and regular orientation service should be introduced and maintained among teachers and students. This will in no small measure help in enlightening the teachers and students on their expectations during examinations.

Keywords: Examination, Malpractice, Education, Counselling

INTRODUCTION

Education is viewed all over the world as an important instrument for the achievement of individual and national goals and objectives. This perception is applicable in Nigeria where certificates and grades are considered as important criteria for the placement of individuals in any sector of the economy. The ability of an individual to find a place where he or she can be gainfully employed and contribute to the growth and development of the nation is subject to the type and grade of qualification obtained in any of the educational institutions in the country (Boyi, 2012).

Since certificates play important roles in national placement, most students at all levels of education are adopting any available strategies to ensure that they pass through the school system successfully. Students consider every available means whether legal or illegal to ensure that they gain advantage over other students in the school system so as to become useful to themselves and the society. Among the levels of education, the secondary level of education is a section where students adopt various strategies to ensure that they pass their examination. Most of the students at the secondary level of education will do everything possible to see that they pass their exams so

as to gain entry into a higher institution of their choice and also they can easily gain employment as soon as they finish (Ndifon & Ndifon, 2012).

Examinations are commonly featured on any educational system. Unfortunately, the educational system in Nigeria has been played by various forms of indiscipline among which examination malpractice ranks as one of the highest indiscipline (Ndifon and Ndifon 2012).

Conceptual Definitions

Examination can simply be referred to as the test of one's intelligence and ability in a particular subject especially by means of written questions or practical exercises. Malpractice on the other hand is the illegal means employed by an individual or students in order to make him get a pass or best result. The oxford Advanced learners' dictionary defined malpractice as a careless, illegal or unacceptable behaviour by someone in a profession or official position.

Concept of Examination Malpractice

According to Sooze (2004) examination malpractice as all illegal means which students use to pass examinations. In a related manner, examination malpractice is defined as cheating at examination or any act intended to benefit or give undue advantage to oneself or another by deceit or fraud, before, during and after examination. Nwaokugha, Aminigo and Nwaorgu (2010:90) stated that, examination malpractice is any act of compromise or unacceptable behaviour by a student, teacher or lecturer, invigilator or supervisor, stakeholders in the educational system or staff of examination bodies to show undue favor or unmerited advantage to candidate(s) participating in an examination before, during or after an examination.

Counselling on the other hand, refers to consultations, discussions, deliberations and advices, exchange of ideas or processes of decision making (Kolo, 1996). In fact, counselling is a person to person process in which one person is helped by another to develop, increase in understanding and ability to solve his or her problems.

Statement of the Problem

Examination malpractice among students is very common phenomenon in almost every level of education in Sokoto and Nigeria at large. This phenomenon has a great effect not only to the individual involve but the society in which he leaves and country in general. Therefore, in a nut shell, examination malpractice among students may result to the following problems which includes falling standard of education, Half-baked school products, incompetent workers, corruption in institutions of learning among others. Thus if research of this kind is conducted will definitely help in identifying the causes as well as the prevalent effects of examination malpractice among students in Sokoto metropolis which will in turn inform the writer as well as the counsellor to proffer suggestion with a view to reducing the menace among students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are various reasons why examination malpractice exists in our schools and our institutions of high learning. These reasons range from individuals, society, school authorities and government. However, the causes of examination malpractice in any school environment include but not limited to the following:

Disparity between syllabus and examination questions: When the questions administered are different from what students were taught in the class, this may result to students cheating in an examination. There are cases in which teachers administer questions outside what was taught in a classroom or what is in the syllabus in a bid to provide strict questions. These acts encourage students to seek for any possible means to answer such questions even when the means is illegal.

Lack of Qualified and Good Teachers to handle the courses: Some teachers/lecturers lack method of teaching while teaching. Some are not good in their subject areas therefore, students will not benefit from what they are teaching; this sometimes make the students to become bored and easily lose interest in the lesson and that could lead majority of the students to engage themselves in committing examination malpractice just to pass the course so that they will not meet with him again.

Lack of Preparedness: This is an act of negligence on the part of the students. Some students feel that they are both too knowledgeable about a particular subject or course or are too scared of a course and as such, they fail to devote time to it. Such students when caught in the examination malpractice, their common excuses are I was not able to read the course. They are therefore forced to engage in examination malpractice as a means of rescuing themselves from failure.

Over Reliance on Certificates: According to Emeni (2015) it is believed in Africa including Nigeria that education is the key that unlocks economic opportunities. The major factor considered by employers of labour during employment is certificate more than the abilities and skills of the job seeker. Based on this therefore, students involve in all forms of examination malpractice as a means of acquiring a certificate which will help them become gainfully employed.

Lack of adequate and appropriate facilities to aid effective teaching: This is another reason why students do involve themselves in examination malpractice because what teachers are expected to use while teaching the students are not in place or are inadequate. Sometimes students had to provide these facilities or they will not get what they are expected to get especially sciences where practical takes greater percentage of the marks than essay.

Lack of Orientation of students by the school authority: Students need to be oriented especially newly admitted ones so that they will be conversant with the rules and regulation of the school. This should be made compulsory for all the students to attend. This can only be achieved if the admission exercise is done in time, but where students were admitted close to the examination there is no way they would abstain from examination malpractice.

Lack of adequate and proper invigilation: This is one of the primary assignments of teachers. To properly invigilate examination, they should know the dos and dons of examination, therefore, they know the offences that deserve to be booked and those that need to be corrected here and then. Where nonacademic staff or coppers were assigned to invigilate that is the beginning of the trouble. Some may use that opportunity to either collect something from the students so as to allow them do whatever they want to do. Similarly, they will use it as a means of intimidating ladies. Therefore, part-timers, coppers and nonacademic staff should not be alone to invigilate if or where it becomes necessary for them to invigilate.

Lack of Motivation of Teachers by the School Authority: Teachers at all levels of education need to be motivated while discharging their official assignment. Those who behave themselves and work according to the rules and regulations should be motivated so that it will serve as a lesson to others, while those who deviate be punish accordingly. This will also serve as a lesson to others and it should be done without fear or favor. These will definitely help the system, students and the society as a whole.

TYPES OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

There are multiples types of examination malpractice which students do to pass examinations as identified by Nuraini (2008) and Onuka and Amusan (2008). These menaces include the following: Impersonation, Leakage, Scripts smuggling, Exchange of Examination Script, Bringing of foreign materials into the exam hall

Consequences of Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractices have many implications for the individual, school and the society. These are summarized as follows:

Job Inefficiency: The increasing case of examination malpractice is a threat to human capital development (Wada, Paul, Audu & Omisore, 2013). One of the major consequences of results acquired through examination malpractice is that, such person involved in the examination malpractice may not be as productive and efficient in discharging his/her duties as expected. Students who acquire certificates through examination malpractice find it difficult to function properly in their place of work.

Discourage Hard Work: Chaminuka and Ndudzo (2014:82) pointed out that “Good students are discouraged from working hard in their studies as they might be tempted to adopt the “if you can’t beat them, then join them” syndrome”. Students who study well for their examination usually feel upset when they see those who cheated during examination graduating with better results. This singular act can make other dedicated students to become frustrated and discouraged. The implication of this is that such students will choose to join others in practicing the menace.

Encourage Corruption and Promote Bad Leadership: Examination malpractice is one of the forms of corruption that exist in our society. It is an act that gives people underserved opportunities than others. Also educational managers and administrators that involve in examination malpractice will only be setting a wrong example to the younger generation. The quest for self-gratification from the proceeds of examination malpractice increases the cases of corruption and bad leadership in the country.

Reduces the level of Productivity: Productivity is an end result from hard work on the country, students and teachers who involve in examination malpractice are usually not prepared for such sacrifice. The effect of this is that students and other educational managers would become less effective in any sector of the economy where they find themselves.

Objective of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

- 1.To find out the prevalent causes of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.
2. To find out the prevalent effects of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

Research Questions

1. What are the prevalent causes of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis?
2. What are the prevalent effects of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design for this study is descriptive survey. This is because it involves collection of data with questionnaire in eliciting information from teachers only regarding causes and effects of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students. The population of this study is the entire senior secondary school teachers from Sokoto North and Sokoto South Local Education Authority. This amounted to 1103 teachers across the schools in the two local government areas.



The schools comprised those from Arabic and Islamic Education Board, (AIEB), Ministry of Science and Technology and Teachers Service Board (TSB). Table 1 illustrates more.

The sample for the study is 217 which were drawn from the entire population of teachers in the metropolis through different sampling techniques. In the first place, purposive sampling technique was applied to select only 10 schools out of 28 that are in the metropolis with total number teachers. The selection was based on 2 Boys/Boarding schools, 2 Girls/Boarding schools, 2 Boys/Day schools, 2 Girls/ Day schools and 2 Mixed/Day schools. A sample size of Two Hundred and Seventeen (217) was used. In the first place, proportionate sampling technique was employed in order to determine the proportion of each school due to their disparity in the population. However, simple random sampling was applied in selecting the target participants to respond to the items of the questionnaire. Table 2 illustrates more on the procedure.

Table 2: List of Sampled Schools and their Teachers in Sokoto Metropolis

S/n	School Name	Teachers Population	Proportion
1.	Abdulasheed Adisa Raji Special School, Sokoto	60	27
2	Giginya Memorial Secondary School, Sokoto	40	18
3	Government Girls College, Sokoto	66	30
4	Hafsatu Ahmadu Bello Model Arabic Secondary School, Sokoto	34	15
5	Sultan Atiku Secondary School, Sokoto	34	15
6	Sultan Attahiru Secondary School, Sokoto	36	16
7	Government Girls Secondary School Yar’akija	18	08
8	Government Girls Day Secondary School R/Sambo	90	40
9	Government Day Secondary School Gidan I gwai	65	29
10	Government Day Secondary School Kofar Marke	42	19
	Total	485	217

However, a self-designed questionnaire was developed and tagged as ‘Causes and Effects of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire’. Similarly, in analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive statistics such as percentages to analyse demographic data and mean score to determine the prevalence or otherwise of the causes and effects of examination malpractice among students.

RESULTS

The following is the result analysed using different statistics as earlier mentioned. But only 212 questionnaires were successfully retrieved out of 217 distributed by the researcher and the analysis will be based on the retrieved number.

Table 1: Sex of the Respondents



Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	130	61.0%
Female	82	39%
Total	212	100%

The above table shows the sex of the respondents. i.e the male and female who participated in the study. This indicates that 61% of the respondents are male while 39% were female.

Table 2: Marital Status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	136	64%
Single	76	36%
Total	212	100%

The table above shows the marital status of the respondents. The result revealed that 136 respondents are married which is 64% while 76 respondents are single which is 36%.

Table 3: Working Experience of the Respondents

No of Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	84	40%
6-10 years	45	21%
11-15 years	33	16%
16-20 years	49	23%
Total	212	100%

The above table also shows the result of the respondents on working experience. Majority of them (84) fall within 1-5 years with 40%, 6-10 years are 45 with 21%, 11-15 years are 33 with 16% and 16-20 are 49 with 23%.

Table 4: Educational Qualification

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
NCE/DIP	70	33%
DEGREE/HND	113	54%
MA/Med	22	10%
Ph. D	07	3%
Total	212	100%

The above table shows the result of the participants and their qualifications. This indicates that most of the participants are Degree/HND holders with 54%. While those with NCE/DIP carried 33% and MA/MEd and Ph. D holders are 10% and 3% respectively.



Table 5: Mean Score of the prevalent causes of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis

S/N	Statements on Causes	S A	A	D	SD	N	4	3	2	1	£X	×	DEC
1	Students involve in examination malpractice as a result of peer group influence	73	84	39	26	212	292	252	78	16	638	3.0	Prevalent
2	Students involve in examination malpractice due to lack of coverage of syllabus by the teachers	66	59	61	26	212	264	177	122	26	589	2.8	Prevalent
3	Students involve in examination malpractice because of improper invigilation by the teachers	71	99	29	13	212	284	297	58	13	652	3.0	Prevalent
4	Students involve in examination malpractice because of lack of good orientation about the rules and regulation of writing exams	74	94	35	18	212	296	282	70	8	656	3.0	Prevalent
5	Students involve in examination malpractice because of lack of good monitoring and supervision of the conduct of examination	70	91	31	10	212	280	294	62	10	646	3.0	Prevalent
6	Students involve in examination malpractice because they want to get certificate in time	86	67	34	25	212	344	201	68	21	634	2.9	Prevalent
	Students involve in examination malpractice because of poor teaching by the teachers	58	63	51	40	212	232	189	102	36	559	2.6	Prevalent
8	Students involve in examination malpractice because of lack of good method by teachers	50	78	54	30	212	200	234	108	32	574	2.7	Prevalent
9	Inadequate teaching facilities lead to the students involvement in malpractice	73	79	45	05	212	292	237	90	16	635	2.9	Prevalent
10	Students involve in examination because of lack of motivation from the teachers	54	71	54	33	212	216	213	108	31	568	2.6	Prevalent

The table above indicates the mean score of prevalent causes of examination malpractice among students in Sokoto metropolis. Therefore, all the mentioned causes of examination malpractice are



prevalent among students in secondary schools of Sokoto metropolis. However, the study indicated that, peer group influence in examination malpractice, improper invigilation by the teachers, lack of good orientation about rules and regulation of the examinations, lack of monitoring and supervision, eager to get certificate in time and inadequate teachings by teachers are the most prevalent causes of examination malpractice among the students.

Table 6: Mean Score of the prevalent Effects of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis

S/N	Statements on Effects	SA	A	D	SD	N	4	3	2	1	£X	×	DEC
1	Examination malpractice among students brings about laziness in their readings	118	73	13	17	212	472	219	26	07	724	3.4	Prevalent
2	Examination malpractice among students bring about less hard work	91	87	23	21	212	364	261	46	08	679	3.2	Prevalent
3	Examination malpractice among students hinders students intellectual and moral growth	71	83	41	17	212	284	249	82	17	632	2.9	Prevalent
4	Examination malpractice among students makes them perform in effective in their subjects	37	11 7	37	21	212	148	351	74	19	592	2.7	Prevalent
5	Examination malpractice among students is one of the reason that makes them corrupt	65	10 0	27	27	212	260	300	34	07	601	2.8	Prevalent
6	Examination malpractice among students makes them less productive in their examination	52	10 7	39	14	212	208	321	78	08	615	2.9	Prevalent
7	Examination malpractice among students is one of the reason that makes them become bad leaders in the future	88	64	32	28	212	352	192	64	23	631	2.9	Prevalent
8	Examination malpractice among students make them not to come to classes for their lessons	80	86	29	17	212	320	258	58	15	651	3.0	Prevalent



9	Examination malpractice among students affects their faculty of reasoning towards bringing ideas that would develop the society	78	81	41	12	212	312	243	82	11	648	3.0	Prevalent
10	Examination malpractice among students make them not to pay attention to what their teachers are teaching them	95	72	21	24	212	380	216	42	22	660	3.1	Prevalent

The table above indicates the mean score of the effects of examination malpractice among students. Thus, laziness, less hard work, intellectual and moral declination, bad leadership, absenteeism in class are all significant effects of engaging into examination malpractice by the students.

CONCLUSION

The issue of examination malpractice is a social problem that is ravaging the educational sector at all levels. Students, teachers, parents and examination bodies have contributed in one way or the other to the fueling of this problem. The implication of this is that students no longer find it interesting to burn the midnight candle. Similarly, examination malpractice has contributed to a bias evaluation of students since offenders are perceived to be more intelligent than other students.

Counselling Implications

The following are what counselling can do to address the problems of examination malpractice among secondary school students in Sokoto

1. Students should be offered counselling services and encouraged to set their priority right and work hard.
2. Students should be counselled to shun laziness but create time to read their study materials.
3. Proper orientation should be given to students especially the newly admitted ones so that they will be aware of the rules and regulations of the examination
4. Counsellors should educate parents not to impose subjects or course on their children
5. Examination security programme should be organized and funded by the management with the help of the counsellors
6. Examination stake holders should be people of high integrity and should take examination security matter serious
7. Counsellors should organize a training workshop for the staff, invigilators, supervisors and all those concern for the conduct of the examination so that they would become conversant with



the dos and dons of the examination. This will help them in conducting themselves during examination.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation was made:

1. Intensive and regular orientation service should be provided and maintained for teachers and students as well as the parents so that each category of people will know their expected role to play particularly during examinations.

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