ISSN: 1597-5037

Examination Malpractice: Forms, Causes, Effects and Possible Solutions. A Study of Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashu'a, Yobe State.

POPOOLA OLAYEMI BOSEDE [1]
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS DEPARTMENT
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION UMAR SULEIMAN COLLEGE OF EDUCAION, GASHU'A, YOBE STATE
08032676569 Olayemibosede8@g mail

DUCHI ABBA KYARI[2*]
CURRICULUM AND INSRUCTION DEPARTMENT
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION UMAR SULEIMAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, GASHUA, YOBE STATE

[*]**Corresponding Author Information:**
E-Mail : duchigsh@gmail.com
Phone No.: 08067695317

ABSRACT

Examination malpractice is very alarming in Nigeria and it has constituted strong concern for the researcher. .By implication, counsellors should enlighten candidates on the need to cultivate good reading and study habits and they should shun any form of examination malpractices. *The moral issues in the society and the quest for certificate in the face of poor academic performance has been identified as some of the major causes of examination malpractices in Umar Suleiman College of Education, Gashu'a Yobe State. . This research reviewed the remote causes, the various forms of examination malpractice especially at the College level, its effects and possible ways of curbing the menace. The research revealed an array of factors responsible for examination malpractice in our educational institutions to includes what most respondents called " wrong value system which leads to serious quest for certification instead of knowledge and skills", Laziness, lack of preparation or inadequate preparation for examination, lack of self confidence, poor school facilities, (Lack of or in-adequate examination hall) poor sitting arrangement, socio-economic factors, political undertone, privatization and commercialization of education, poor invigilation, weak parental function and so on. Attitudinal or value change from certificate acquisition to knowledge acquisition, reduction in student population per invigilator, building of examination halls to accommodate sizeable number of students with wire net windows to forestall free flow of material to and fro the examination halls and a general change in*

societal value system and attitude in the educational system were advocated and recommended as measures to curve examination malpractice.

Keywords: Examination Malpractice, Causes, Forms, Effects, Solutions.

INTRODUCTION

The whole mark of teaching/instruction in the classroom is examination, where the expected behavioral change is to be displayed through writing and passing examination. Writing and passing examination in Nigeria is becoming a do or die affair. This is prompting reason for hustling by all to succeed in life.

WHAT IS EXAMINATION?

The oxford advanced learners dictionary (2000) defined exam as spoken or practical test at school or college especially an important one that you need to do in order to get a qualification. The Wikipedia further asserted that a test or examination is an assessment intended to measure a test-takers knowledge or skill, aptitude, physical fitness or classification in many other topics (e.g. beliefs). A test may be administered orally, on a paper, on a computer or in confirmed area that requires a test taker to physically perform a set of skills.

WHAT IS EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE?

Malpractice is defined as any deliberate act of wrong doing, contrary to the rules of examinations designed to give a candidate an unfair advantage or able frequently, to place a candidate at a disadvantage. Malpractice therefore introduces equities into the examination system. In some examinations, the level of malpractice is so high that it seriously undermines the credibility of the examination.

Examination malpractice also known as cheating is the illegal action that students take during their examinations to try to make good grades by cutting corners. Examination malpractice is an act or irregular manner of testing candidates which contravenes the rules and conventions guiding the conduct of examinations. Examination malpractice has done a lot of harm to students since many of them have neglected their books with the hope of performing the magic they are used to in every examination. Examination malpractice in Nigerian educational system has been widely discussed and viewed as a major challenge not only to

examination bodies but to school administrators, the entire education system, the government and the society at large. Examination malpractice as defined by West African Examination Council (WAEC) (2003) is any irregular behaviour or act exhibited by candidates or anybody charged with the responsibility of conducting examination in or outside the examination hall, before, during or after such examination with the aim of taking undue advantage. Many of these irregularities or misconducts surround examination and it came to an alarming rate in the last three decades.

The hues and cries about examination malpractice taking place at all levels of the Nigerian educational system is nothing but a reflection of the decay in the value system of the society. The Nigerian society is that which celebrates mediocrity and views cheating as being smart. The society does not want to know how an individual achieves success. The important thing is the success. In fact in Nigeria the end justifies the means instead of the means justifying the end. In actual fact examination malpractice is a variant of the wrongs and corruption in the society. The politicians employ rigging at elections and enjoy enviable political offices and so do students cheat from primary to tertiary institutions to move from one level of education to another. All sorts of misconducts take place in and around examination venues to take undue advantage of the process and achieve "success". To make matter worse it is not only students that are involved The college system evaluates the achievement of students" learning by administering two major types of examinations. Each course is evaluated by continuous assessment test (C.A. Test) and semester examination. These two types of examination are not spared of malpractices or irregularities of one type or the other. It is the intention of this researcher to find out the remote causes of examination malpractices, the types or forms of malpractices and recommend measures aim at stopping or reducing the ugly trend. (Onyechere, 2004; Olanipekun, 2013 and Adewale 2014).

FORMS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

The following are some identified forms of examinations malpractice:-

Leakage: This means that the content of examination or part of it is disclosed prior to taking the examination. Usually it involves one or more of the following: staff members of the examination authorities, printers, proof readers, and messengers.

Impersonation: An individual who is not registered as a candidate for a particular examination takes the place of one that is registered. Usually this involves collusion between the chief examiner and the examination supervisor. It frequently involves tertiary institutions students taking the test for monetary reward or a favour for a girl friend or boy friend.

Smuggling of Foreign Materials: This is perhaps the most common form of malpractice. It relates to the introduction of unauthorized materials (e.g. parts or whole note books, text books, microchips and answers) into the examination hall. Foreign materials are frequently smuggled in pants, shoes, hems and bras or deposited or fixed in the hall prior to the examination or even smuggled in by the candidates or their aids during the examination.

Copying: Copying from another candidate's work with or without permission.

Collusion: Unauthorized passing of information between candidates usually by exchanging notes or scripts. This is usually facilitated by inadequate spacing between desks and laxed supervision.

Makers Malpractice: Deliberate alteration of marks designed to inflate or deflate a candidate‟s original mark. This can be initiated by examination officials.

- **External Assistance:** Individuals who are not examination candidates taking examination for the real candidates.
- **Smuggling of foreign materials:** This is perhaps the most common form of malpractice. It relates to the introduction of unauthorized materials (e.g. note books, crib notes, charts and answers) into the examination hall. Material is frequently smuggled in pants, shoes, hems and bras or information is written on parts of the body.
- **Intimidation:** Examinations official including supervisors and makers of papers are physically threatened. Usually involves people seeking support for individual candidates. Candidates here also placed weapons in clear view of supervisors to intimidate them. Substitution of scripts, replacing answer sheets handed out during the course of examination. Usually involves examination office officials, invigilators and some teachers working outside the examination room.
- **Makers Malpractice:** Deliberate alteration of marks designed to inflate or deflate a candidate's original mark. This can be initiated by examination officials, by candidates (making contract with the makers) or making contracts with the candidates.

CAUSES OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

The idea that, in Nigerian, certificate is most important than the skills to deliver is what prompted most students into malpractice so as to have the required certificate to be there. The society regards possession of certificate as Alfa and Omega where an individual is only

recognized if he possesses certain certificate. Other factors responsible for examination malpractice in Nigeria includes what most respondents called "wrong value system which leads to serious quest for certification instead of knowledge and skills", Laziness, lack of preparation or in-adequate preparation for examination, lack of self confidence, poor school facilities, (Lack of or in-adequate examination hall) poor sitting arrangement, socio-economic factors, political-undertone, privatization and commercialization of education, poor invigilation, weak parental function. e.t.c. (Onyechere 2004; Awambor, 2004)

Therefore, the following could be advanced as reasons why we have examination malpractice in our educational system:

- **High Stakes of Examinations:** Success in an examination can have profound, immediate and long term impact on a candidates life. In many developing countries like Nigeria, examination success and secondary school graduation represents the whole avenue for poor students in higher institutions.
- **Tutors and Institutional Status:** In many instance, Lecturers and institutions reputations depends on the success of students in examinations.
- **Personality Disposition:** Some students are more prone to cheating than others, because they are either lazy or dubious.
- **Desire of some parents to place their children:** Some parents would blindly want their children to get into lucrative courses like medicine, accountancy, etc. as such would collide with any person who can at all cost get their children the required credits.
- **Inadequate institutional facilities and Tutors:** Inadequate examination halls, inadequate tutors training, absence from work, tutors lacking subject matter competency, strikes and frequent schools closure are common features of education in developing countries like ours. Parents and students may perceive conditions of learning to be so inadequate that they have little option than the resort to unfair means to increase the likelihood that the student will pass the examination.
- **Inadequacies of the Examinations:** Where the standard aimed at is too high or obscure, teachers and students may lose confidence in their abilities to master the material. In such instance, students may resort to smuggling materials such as textbooks and notes in the examinations room.

- **Location of Examination Halls:** Remote halls tend to receive materials in advance, thus increasing the opportunity of gaining access to examination papers. Due to distance or remoteness of the halls, proper supervision cannot be done as such any corrupt practice can be committed.

- **Respect for Certificate:** The society regards possession of certificate as Alfa and Omega where an individual is only recognized if he possesses a certain certificate built professionals skills are not recognized.

EFFECTS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

The consequences of examination malpractice both to education and the society will be catastrophic in the long run candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination will now depend on quack arrangements since they believe so much in such arrangements that it rarely failed. Then the fraud or malpractice may eventually be seen as a way of academic exercise. The candidates produced in this manner will grow into adults and teachers or examinations officials who will not see anything wrong with such sophisticated and high class examination fraud thus defeating the goals of education by turning out certificated illiterates. Examination malpractice increases lack of confidence among students. Students who would have ordinarily passed an examination feel disappointed and lose confidence when less intelligent ones perform better than them through cheating, thus leading to loss of confidence in themselves and in the examination and the system at large. Examinations malpractice may lure some students into other areas of misconducts such as prostitutions and or armed robbery, female students who lack money to sort or pay for scores may take prostitution while male may as well take stealing or armed robbery in a bid to make money to pay for scores (Onyechere, 2004; Adewale, 2014 & Uzochukwu, 2015) Other general effects of examinations malpractice can be summarized as follows:

- The products of examinations malpractice are square pegs in round holes. They lack the required knowledge and experience to carry out their assignment and professional duties effectively.
- Examinations malpractice produces candidates with low morale and academic values. The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.
- Examinations malpractice is a negative orientation for future leaders who may end up being fraudulent and corrupt in their various offices.

- Anyone who engages in examinations malpractice is building on a false foundation which can lead to serious professional errors.

Solutions to Examination Malpractice.

No one can claim to have all the solutions to the eradication of examination malpractice in Nigeria, but the writer believes strongly that the following suggestions will curtail malpractice to the barest minimum.

1. Societal re-engineering and re-orientation to revamp moral values:

Good moral values should be properly inculcated into our youths, and parents counselled to stop aiding their children to cheat in examinations. Again, there is need to engage only honest persons in examination management. Petters & Okon (2014) also suggests effective counselling services in schools to assist students acquire techniques of effective study habits.

2. Retraining and reassessment of teachers: Teachers should be equipped for the technological-driven world, (Uzoigwe, n.d). Teachers cannot provide experience and activities that guide students' progress towards understanding of ideas if they themselves do not know what these ideas are; neither can they provide experiences that challenge students if they themselves share in the same misunderstanding, (Jimoh, 2009). Since some of the teachers in our various level of education are beneficiaries or products of malpractice, a compulsory nationwide retraining of teachers is very important to re-equip them to impart knowledge. And those found non-trainable should be reassigned with administrative duties.
3. Appropriate recognition and remuneration of teachers / examination officials: Enhanced salary should be paid to teachers and special welfare package given to examination officials to dissuade them from financial and material inducements from students, parents, and others who may want to subvert examination process. The examination officials include teachers who invigilate examinations, supervisors who oversee the conduct of examinations in schools, officers of examination bodies who monitor the conduct of examinations and law enforcement agents charged with the security of the examination centres.
4. Promulgation and enforcement of examination malpractice (prohibition) laws: The Examination Malpractice Act 33 of 1999 should be amended to re-introduce the parts of Decree 20 of 1984 which advocated for twentyone (21) years imprisonment for convicted culprits of examination malpractice without option of fine. If this is fully implemented, it will serve as deterrent to students, invigilators, security agents, and other collaborators in the malpractice business.

5. Employment of qualified teachers at all levels of education: The need for qualified manpower cannot be overemphasized. The era of agricultural science tutor teaching chemistry, physics, or integrated science under the guise that "science is science" should be over. Trained teachers should be deployed to handle subjects only in their field of specialization. Remember that a medical doctor practising engineering is a quack.
6. School libraries and laboratories should be adequately equipped: Tools for effective teaching and learning include current and quality textbooks, up to date laboratory equipment, and workshop tools. These vital equipment should be provided and the libraries and laboratories made conducive for learning activities. In fact the whole school environment should be learning-friendly and conducive for human habitation.
7. Proper funding of education sector: Federal and states annual budgets should be implemented in accordance with UNESCO recommendation of 26% of states annual budgetary allocation for education. The Nigerian government should realize that education is the bedrock of every society and a springboard for development in a complex and competitive world of today. What we have in our schools today especially in the primary and secondary schools are dilapidated classrooms and classrooms without chairs and tables.
8. Less emphasis on paper qualifications /certificates: Nigeria's education system is largely certificate oriented.

Excessive value placed on paper qualification or certificates is the major contributing factor for examination malpractices, that is why candidate would not spare any effort to ensure that they obtained whatever they needed to make a living, whether by a just or unjust way, (Onuka & Durowoju, 2013).

The use of effective continuous assessment techniques: Akanni & Odofin (2015) defines continuous assessment (C. A.) as a continuous updating of teachers' judgement about the learners' performance in relation to specific criteria which will allow at anytime a cumulative judgement to be made about his /her performance. Continuous assessment compels students to make adequate use of their time for studies by completing notes, doing homework, and assignment. On the side of the teachers, it affords an early opportunity to review one's teaching methodology and students' assimilation of the subjects taught. Again, C. A. reduces the anxiety associated with one-shot examinations.

Any person who fraudulently or with intent to cheat or secure any unfair advantage to himself or any other person or in abuse of his office, produces, sells or buys or otherwise deals with any question paper intended for the examination of persons at any examination or commits any offences specified in section 3 (27) (c) of this Decree shall be guilty of an

offence and on conviction be sentenced to 21 years imprisonment…. (Fagbemi, 1998 cited in Oredein, 2006).

Incidentally, Examination Malpractice Act 33 of 1999 revised the Decree 20 of 1984 and stipulates punishment ranging from a fine of ₦50,000.00 to ₦100,000.00 and imprisonment for a term of 3 – 4 years with or without option of fine. Despite all these laws, examination malpractice has been on the increase and this is as result of government inability to enforce the laws.

Umar Suleiman College of Education Gashu'a, Yobe State and other tertiary institutions in the country have their own sets of examination rules and regulations published in examination guidelines /students handbooks. The handbooks are given to students during admission process to put them on the right pedestal for academic hard work. The sanction for malpractice in Nigerian tertiary institutions ranges from expulsion, withdrawal, repeat to award of "F" depending on the degree of the malpractice.

Nongovernmental organizations, churches and mosques groups are not left out of the war against examination malpractice in the country. Worthy of note is Examination Ethics Marshal International, an NGO championed by Mr. Ike Onyechere which has criss-crossed the country campaigning against examination misconduct.

Despite all these efforts by both government and non-governmental organizations, examination malpractice is increasing geometrically in the country because the remote cause that necessitated the malpractice is yet to be addressed.

CONCLUSION

Examination malpractice take place in all forms of examinations and it is almost a routine to cheat in these examinations. Everyone continues to decry this cankerworm in the Nigerian education system and all penalties put in place to stop it remains almost ineffective if not totally ineffective. The causes could be attributed to societal value system, the behaviour of candidates, parents and the education system. The consequences could be catastrophic to both education system and the society as it would turn out the society certificated illiterates. The respondents identified different forms of examination malpractices including but not limited to; impersonation, disorderliness, cheating, giraffing, conspiracy and aiding, forging of results, machinery, microchips, smuggling of question papers out of examination venues, smuggling answer scripts into examination venues, sorting and rewriting.

They traced the factors responsible for examination malpractice to, and blamed students as not being adequately prepared for examination, other stakeholders in the educational system as tolerating and supporting it and the society at large for being responsible for the continuous rise in examination malpractice. Students preferred light penalties such as cancellation of examination and rustication for academic session as against stiffer punishment like imprisonment and expulsion from the university as contained in the laws of the land.

Examination malpractice is an act or irregular manner of testing examiners contravenes the rules and conventions guiding the conduct of examinations. The causes could be attributed to the behaviour of examiners, parents and system. The consequences could be catastrophic to both education system would turn out the society certificated illiterate

The implications of examination malpractice among students are frightening and devastating. It makes formal assessments unreliable, educational objectives unattainable, and portends a bleak future for any society. To checkmate or curb examination malpractice in Nigerian schools, students, lecturers, parents, and the school management have roles to play because the study has revealed that they are advocates of examination malpractice. Orientations, guidance, and counseling programmes should be organized often to change the perception of students towards examination malpractice.

Recommendations

1. There should be increased efforts at the effective supervision of students during examinations to be able to curb giraffing in the examination hall.
2. It was also, recommended that concerted efforts should be made at improving the level of discipline among students through counseling services in the schools.
3. There should be the full implementation of the examination malpractice decree by the Federal Government of Nigeria.
4. The Examination departments in Higher Education institutions should conduct training workshops for all undergraduates, invigilators, tutors, lecturers, and administrators on best practices in examination management and awareness of the various forms of malpractice.

5 Sound educational policy should be put in place with de-emphasis on the supremacy of certificates over skills and professional competence.

6 Ensure that only formally registered candidates sit for the examination.

Remunerated adequately and learning environment made friendly so that they can do their work satisfactorily and cover the syllabus before examinations.

7 There should frequent unannounced visits by officials of examination body.

ISSN: 1597-5037

The rigidity and timing of examinations should be reviewed in a such a way that when a student complained genuinely that he cannot write an examination another time suitable should be organized for him, this will eliminate the phobia of failure which may result in malpractice. The following recommendations were also made to curb examination malpractice.

- Change in value system, the situation where people place so much value on certificate does not augur well for our academics as it encourages examination malpractice. Sound educational policy should be put in place with de-emphasis on the supremacy of certificates over skills and professional competence.
- Students who engage in examination malpractice have been found to be academically weak. The weakness could be traced to faulty foundation in their educational ladder. It is therefore recommended that they should be improvement in the delivery of instruction especially at the foundation i.e primary and secondary levels.
- The universities should guide against indiscriminate admission of students so as not to overstretch the available facilities. The National Universities Commission (NUC) is waging war against over-crowding in universities. Universities should ensure they admit only qualified students and this should be based on available facilities as stipulated by NUC.
- The Federal and State Government should continue to establish more universities to give opportunities to more candidates seeking admission in order not to over stretch facilities in existing universities. Considering the teeming population and the number of JAMBITES who meet the cut off point every year, we recommend that every senatorial district should have a public university.
- The ban on the use of mobile cell phones, BBs and IPAD in examination halls should be enforced to check the new wave of e-cheating.
- The integrity of the university lecturer is important in curbing examination malpractice. Lecturers and supervisors should be persons of proven integrity. The invigilators should be very vigilant in the supervision of examination and should be fair to all. The question of double standard should not arise.

ISSN: 1597-5037

- Stakeholders should stop paying leap services to Examination malpractice. Religious and community leaders should be used to intervene on parents who insist on their children getting the best result without genuine efforts for it.
- The rigidity and timing of examinations should be reviewed in such a way that when a student complains genuinely that he cannot write an examination another time suitable should be organized for him, may be, in form of summer exams, this will eliminate the phobia of failure which may result in impersonation and other form of malpractices.

COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ACADEMIC STAFF UNION
COEASU
UNITY AND JOB SATISFACTION
UMAR SULEIMAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
GASHUA
KNOWLEDGE FOR SERVICE
2024

REFERENCES

Adewale, G. (2014). Examination Malpractice: A Stigma on School Effectiveness in Nigeria.
Https://www.unilorin.edu.ng

Akanni, O. O., & Odofin, B. (2015). Reducing Examination Malpractices in Nigerian Schools through Effective Continuous Assessment (C. A.) Techniques as an Alternative to One-Shot Examination in Osun State, Nigeria. *American Journal of Educational Research, 2(1): 91 – 101*

Akaranga, S. I., & Ongong, J. J. (2013). The phenomenon of Examination Malpractice: Example of Nairobi and Kenyatta Universities. *Journal of Education and Practice, 4(18): 87 – 96*

Anzene, S. J. (2014). Trends in Examination Malpractice in Nigerian Educational System and its Effects on the Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2(3): 1 – 8*

Asinya, OE, (2012) "Examination Malpractice in Nigerian Schools; An Obstacle to Progress in Socialization in School Environment, Causes, Effects and Remedy" *Journal of Resourcefulness and Distinction 1 (1), 139-145*

Awambor, M (2004). Examination Malpractice and our future as a nation.
www:techinceptions.com

Ayanniyi, B. A.,& Anya, C. O. (2017). Forms and consequences of examination malpractice in Nigerian schools and Universities: What should the stakeholders do*? International journal of education, training and learning, 1*(1), 9-21.

Calabar Ijaiya, M. N (2004) Checking Examination Malpractice in Nigerian Schools.
www://research-education-edu.blogspot.com. July 13, 2009

National Universities Commission Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards 2011 www.academia. edu

Emaikwu, S. O. (2012). Assessing the Impact of Examination Malpractices on the Measurement of Ability in Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Education, 2(4): 748 – 757*

Eze, H. (2012). Examination Malpractice in Nigeria. www: nigeriaworld.com/articles/2012 Cross

River University of Technology Students" Handbook 2014.

Federal Ministry of Education (FME, 2016). *Nigeria Digest of Education Statistics 2014-2016.* Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.

George, I. N., & Ukpong, D. E. (2013). Contemporary Social Problems in Nigeria and its Impact on National Development: Implication for Guidance and Counselling Services. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 3(2): 167 – 173*

Jimoh, B. O. (2009). Examination Malpractice in Secondary Schools in Nigeria: What sustains it? *European Journal of Educational Studies,1(3): 101 – 108*

Nnam, M. U., & Inah, A. F. (2015). Empirical Investigation into the Causes, Forms and

Consequences of Examination Malpractice in Nigerian Institutions of Higher Learning.

International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences, 2(1): 52 – 62

Oduwaiye, R. O.(2014) Students" Perception of Factors and Solution to Examination

Malpractices in Nigerian Universities: A case study of the University of Ilorin.

www.academia.edu

Olanipekun, O. 2013; Trends in Examination Malpractice in Nigerian Educational System.

www:ajhss.org.

Onyechere, J. (2004). Consequences of Examination Malpractice. www.ajol.info/index Oxford

advanced learners dictionary (2000)

Uzoccukwu, Mike. (2015) Examination Malpractice and Causes.

http://uzochukwumike.Hubpages. com June 16, 2015