



Pattern and Consequences of Examination Malpractice Among in School Adolescents in Kwara State: Study of Teachers Perception

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Abstract

This study examined the teachers' perceptions on the pattern and consequences of examination malpractice among in-school adolescents in Kwara State. The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. In each of the Senatorial districts in Kwara State, one hundred respondents took part in this study. Thus, a total of three hundred teachers participated in the study. Simple random technique was used in selecting the respondents. The researchers developed questionnaire titled Pattern and Consequences of Examination malpractice (PCEMQ) was administered to teachers. Six null hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test statistical tool at 0.05 alpha level. The outcome of the study revealed that all the hypotheses were accepted. However, a significant difference was found in the pattern of examination malpractices based on gender. It is therefore recommended that school administrators should clearly spell out the rules and regulations guiding the conduct of examinations in schools. A constant reminder of these rules is expected to further strengthen compliance.

Keywords: malpractice; teachers; examination; pattern; in-school adolescents; consequence

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1. Introduction

Education is an important tool that contributes to the achievement of a better life. This is also the best legacy a nation can give to its citizens. Ijaya (2004) stated that education is the basis of any true development of human resources. Formal education which is acquired in an organized environment called school according to Olubodun (2005), remains a means whereby an individual is guided in order to develop intellectually and also acquire certain skills necessary for living a better life. Education is also stated by Chukwu (2008) as the pivot on which the wheel of national development evolves.

Examination is used as a potent instrument for judgment of knowledge and competence (Alarape & Onakoya, 2003). An examination is a test of capacity and knowledge. It also determines the learner's academic strengths and weaknesses (Gesinde, 2006). According to Olanipekun (2003) examination is the process of evaluating student's academic achievement. Olowu (2005), Chukwu (2008), Olanipekun (2003) & Nwadiani (2005) stated that the major purpose of examination is to help control the curriculum and as well as serve as a source of motivation for schools teachers and students. However for the examination to be good with fitness and purpose, Olowu (2005) stated that the following must be put into place: (1) Examination process must increase pressure on both teachers and students to work hard, (2)

There must be a reliable and valid scores in the marking system of such examination. (3) There must be equity and integrity.

Onyechere (1996) noted that the leakage in the Cambridge examination in 1914 birth examination malpractice in Nigeria. Consequently, the government had to set up a tribunal investigate the causes of the mass leakage. Examination malpractice could be referred to as actions and behavior exhibited by students that infringes on the regulations governing the conduct of such examination. According to Jekayinfa (2006) many school leavers and graduates can no longer defend their certificates because of the damaging epidemic of examination malpractice which if not cured soon may destroy the nations educational sector. Gesinde (2006) also asserted that examination malpractice can distort national development and progress because it disrupts the foundation for national manpower training, utilization, and development.

According to Okwori (2017) the prevailing emphasis on good grades and the overwhelming importance attached to certificates are the major causative factor to the fraudulent and corrupt manners of Nigerian students during examinations. Most times when students get addicted, they go further to perfect the acts. Examination malpractice in Nigeria according to Chukwu (2008) has become highly sophisticated and industrialized, more advanced and organized with syndicates involved. Tyokyaa (2016) noted that examination malpractice takes different patterns from one school to the other. This includes impersonation, bringing in materials like books and calculators that are not permitted in the examination halls. Students also bribe invigilators and examiners in order to pass. Oluwatelure (2004) observed that learners get involved in examination malpractice using different patterns.

Abdullahi (2005) highlighted several patterns of cheating during examination and this include; copying answers from another person, getting unearned marks from examiners, impersonation, seeking for question papers before the examination commences, employing the services of other students to write examination. Fatia (2005) discovered that student insert micro chips in their ears to receive coaching while sitting for examinations. Principals also inflate continuous assessment scores in order to boost the final grades of students Chukwu (2008) observed that the rate of students involvement in examination malpractice is alarming and this could pose a serious danger to the nation's educational system. Omemu (2015) noted that there is hardly any examination taken in the country without any form of examination malpractice.

Olanipekun (2003) stated that some of the consequences of examination malpractices is the creation of backward educational system and production of half-baked graduates. The development of false impression of candidates' competencies and values are normal occurrence were examination malpractice thrives. Gbagolo (2011) stated that examination malpractice is a social evil that damages the educational sector of any country. According to Alarape and Onakoya (2003) because some students rely heavily on cheating during examinations they tend to neglect class attendance. It is imperative to note that behavioral theory of skinner and Lindsley which involves the use of classical and operant conditioning with initiative learning can be used in correcting unethical behavior such as examination malpractice among adolescents.

2. Statement of Problem

The emphasis on paper qualification in Nigeria has increased the level of malpractice in Nigeria. Mohammed (2015) explained that Nigeria has the highest cases of WAEC malpractice in West Africa. Uchechukwu and Odimba (2010) noted that students go into examination hall

with guns and daggers in order to deal with anyone who will forestall them from cheating. Educational institution like WAEC has introduced a lot of special gadgets in order to eliminate examination malpractice. Examination malpractice has actually become a cankerworm in our educational system. WAEC annual reports recorded that about 188525 candidates May/June results were canceled between year 2000 and 2020. Furthermore, in the year 2022 so many schools were sanctioned for examination malpractice (Sani, 2023). A careful analysis of literature showed that a lot of studies have been done on examination malpractice. This include, Okanezi and Eguzozie (2018) who worked on menace of examination malpractice in Nigeria educational institutions, Meiseberg, Ehrmann and Prinz (2017), carried out research on determinants of cheating behavior among business and theology students while Oluwature, (2004) looked at psychological strategies for combating examination malpractices. To the best knowledge of the researcher, none of these studies did actually combined these variables. Thus the need for this study.

3. Method

This study adopted the descriptive survey method. The teachers in Kwara State are the target population for this study. All teachers teaching senior secondary school were the respondents in this study. All the senatorial districts were purposively selected for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting one hundred respondents from each of three Senatorial districts in Kwara State. Thus making a total of three hundred respondents. The instrument, Pattern and Consequences of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire (PPCEMQ) was used in gathering the teachers' view. This questionnaire has sections A, B and C. The questionnaire contained the teachers; demographic data, pattern and consequences of examination malpractice. This requires the respondents to choose items which applies to them on each of the 15 questions on the Four Point Likert -Type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). In other to ascertain the validity of the instrument of this study, copies of the questionnaire were given to experts for vetting. Sequel to their corrections and suggestions the final draft was adjudged valid. A reliability index of 0.70 was obtained using test retest method. In doing this, we obtained the consent of the school principal and teachers. These questionnaires were served to teachers during the regular school hours.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

Table 1 indicates that 46.0% (138) of the respondents were males while 54.0% (141) were females. Also, 55.3% (166) of the respondents were from public school while 44.7% (134) of the respondents were from private school. The respondents were equally selected from all the senatorial districts.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender, School Type and Senatorial District

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	138	46.0
Female	162	54.0
Total	300	100
School Type		
Public	166	55.3
Private	134	44.7

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Total	300	100

4.1.1. What Are the Perception of Teachers on the Pattern of Examination Malpractice among In-School Adolescents?

Table 2 presents the mean and rank order of the teachers’ perception on the pattern of examination malpractice in Kwara State. This study discovered that (loitering around examination hall 15th item) ranked 1st, while (dubbing 10th) ranked 2nd and (paying markers 13th) item ranked 3rd respectively. The table equally shows that the pattern of examination malpractice associated with teachers ranked below mid-cut off points of 2.50.

Table 2. The Teachers’ Perception on the Pattern of Examination Malpractice

	Pattern of examination malpractice include:	Mean	Rank	Remark
Teacher				
1	Adjusting examination scores	2.42	13 th	Disagreed
2	Sales of questions	2.46	11 th	Disagreed
3	Supporting students in examination hall	2.17	15 th	Disagreed
4	Leaking information to students concerning question papers	2.33	14 th	Disagreed
5	Smuggling in answer script for students	2.42	12 th	Disagreed
Students				
6	Impersonation	2.58	8 th	Agreed
7	Writing of answers on the body	2.67	7 th	Agreed
8	Arranging with mates to cheat	2.73	6 th	Agreed
9	Use of handset in the examination hall	2.53	10 th	Agreed
10	Dubbing	3.06	2 nd	Agreed
Parents				
11	Paying machineries to write exams for students	2.55	9 th	Agreed
12	Arranging with invigilators to help the student during examinations	2.75	5 th	Agreed
13	Paying of markers in order to score the student high	2.83	3 rd	Agreed
14	Buying of question papers for their wards	2.82	4 th	Agreed
15	Loitering around the examination hall in order to give answers to their wards	3.08	1 st	Agreed

4.1.2. What Are the Consequences of Examination Malpractice Among In-School Adolescents?

Table 3 explains respondents’ opinion on the consequences of examination malpractice. All items recorded the mean score ranging from 3.50 to 2.63 which are above the mean cut-off point of 2.50. Items 10 (half-baked graduates), 3 (decline in the quality of education), 4th (poor academic performance) equally ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Table 3. Perception of the Teachers on the Consequences of Examination Malpractice

No	The teacher perceived consequences of examination malpractice include:	Mean	Rank	Remark
Education				
1	The constant search for short cut to attain academic merit	2.72	14 th	Agreed
2	Cancellation of result	2.86	13 th	Agreed
3	Decline in the quality of education	3.42	2 nd	Agreed

No	The teacher perceived consequences of examination malpractice include:	Mean	Rank	Remark
4	Poor academic performance of students	3.40	3 rd	Agreed
5	Students developing negative attitude towards positive studying habits	3.17	7 th	Agreed
Society				
6	Constant professional errors as a result of lack of adequate training	3.25	5 th	Agreed
7	Danger of imprisonment	3.25	6 th	Agreed
8	Loss of international credibility for certificate and degrees	3.33	4 th	Agreed
9	Eroding of students enthusiasm to hard work in the future	3.08	9 th	Agreed
10	Production of half-baked professionals	3.50	1 st	Agreed
Behavioural problems				
11	Students learning fraudulent and corrupt practices	3.12	8 th	Agreed
12	Constant self condemnation and guilt	3.03	10 th	Agreed
13	Turning out of students without morals and academic values	3.00	11 th	Agreed
14	Lack of confidence to defend ones certificate	2.63	15 th	Agreed
15	Problem of moral decadence	2.92	12 th	Agreed

Table 4 shows the calculated t- value of 4.18 which is greater than a critical t-value of 1.96 with an equivalent p-value of .000 which is less than 0.05 alpha level is accepted because the p-value is less than alpha level. This indicates that there is significant difference based on gender.

Table 4. t-test of the Respondents' Expression on the Pattern of Examination Malpractice Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calc t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	138	42.04	9.63	298	4.18*	1.96	.000
Female	162	37.49	9.209				

* Significant, p<0.05 alpha level

Table 5 explains that the calculated t- value of 1.19 is less than a critical t-value of 1.96 with an equivalent p-value of .122 which is greater than 0.05 alpha level shows that thee null hypothesis is accepted because p-value is less than alpha level hence, no significant difference based on gender was found.

Table 5. t-test of the Respondents' Perception on the Consequences of Examination Malpractice Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calc t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	138	49.55	10.87	298	1.19	1.96	.122
Female	162	45.60	4.66				

Table 6 shows a calculated t- value of 1.11 and a critical t-value of 1.96 with a corresponding p-value of .085 which is greater than 0.05 alpha level. Since p-value is greater than alpha level therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference based on school type.

Table 6. t-test of the Respondents' Expression on the Pattern of Examination Malpractice Based on School Type

School	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calc t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Public	166	38.53	9.66	298	1.11	1.96	.085
Private	134	40.89	9.53				

Table 7 shows that the calculated t-value is 0.48. The critical t-value is 1.96 with a p-value of .626. This is greater than 0.05 alpha level therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted on the basis of school type.

Table 7. t-test of the Respondents' Perception on the Consequences of Examination Malpractice Based on School Type

School	N	Mean	S.D.	df	Calc t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Public	166	47.20	9.21	298	0.48	1.96	.626
Private	134	47.68	7.17				

In the table 8, the calculated F-ratio of 0.84 is less than the critical F-ratio of 3.00 and it has a p-value of .920. This is greater than 0.05 alpha level, as such the null hypothesis is accepted since the p-value is greater than the alpha level.

Table 8. (ANOVA) of the Respondents' Perception on the Pattern of Examination Malpractice Based on Senatorial District

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Calc. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio	P-value
Between group	15.727	2	7.863	.084	3.00	.920
Within group	27907.190	297	93.964			
Total	27922.917	299				

4.2. Discussion

The most common pattern of examination malpractice as revealed in the study, is the loitering around of mercenaries during examination. Okanezi and Eguzozie (2018) explained how parents and mercenaries loitering around examinations hall have been arrested. They do all these, with the aim of helping students who has paid for assistance during examination. In the same vein, respondents believe that examination malpractice can lead to production of half-baked professionals. Okwori (2017) confirmed that production of incompetent manpower is very hazardous to the society and this can led to poor job performance and low productivity. Attachegebe (2013) noted that teachers explained that examination malpractice has led to cancellation of school results and constant habitual laziness among in school adolescents.

The respondents differ in their opinion on the pattern of examination malpractice on the basis of gender. In other words, respondents asserted that the effects of examination malpractice are the same. In the administration of public and private school system, most administrators often apply different regulations and rules. As such, the pattern of examination malpractice are likely to be different from school where students and teachers abet malpractice. Oloworejuaro (2008) noted that there are some schools, where the principals and teachers

assist students to cheat during examinations. Ijaya (2004) revealed that certificates no longer seem to reflect skills and competence.

No significant difference was found on the basis of school type in the pattern and consequences of examination malpractice. Uchekukwu and Odimba (2010) acknowledged that the pattern of examination malpractice are often similar in school. This has become a major concern for all stakeholders in education sector. Teachers believe that the result of these, is that the system will continue to produce students with excellent results who are deficient in knowledge in areas of training (Jega,2006).

Respondents from the Senatorial districts agreed on the different pattern of examination malpractice. This study corroborated the finding of Olasehinde (2000) who noted that cheating in examinations has become a contemporary issue in Nigeria. The study of Olowonirejuaro (2008) also emphasized on how examination malpractice has led the closure of schools both in rural and Urban areas.

5. Conclusions , Counselling Implication and Recommendation

The findings of the study revealed that teachers did not differ in their perception on the pattern and consequences of examination malpractice, however, a significant difference was found on the basis of gender. In the process of counselling, the counsellor should encourage in school adolescents to acquire skills that will promote employability rather than obtaining certificate which they might not be able to use in the labour market. It is therefore recommended that the school administrators should clearly spell out the rules and regulations guiding the conduct examination in schools. Constant reminder of these rules is expected to further strengthen compliance. The government should enforce examination malpractice Act N33 of 1999, which sanctions those found engaging examination malpractice. Teachers and school administrators should constantly enlighten in school adolescents on the future danger of examination malpractice.

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