



Examination Malpractice and Nigerian University Students: A Study of Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

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ABSTRACT

This work is on examination malpractice and Nigerian universities, a case study of Rivers State University. It is a survey study. Two (2) research questions were used. The type of design adopted was survey method. It was discovered that the students lack the appetite for studying but rather want to pass their exams by all means. Some lecturers, who cherish sorting, sometimes examine students with what they were not taught. It was also discovered that appropriate authorities were not doing enough to keep the trend in check. To resolve this problem of cheating in examination, the following recommendations were made: Ban the sale of handouts to minimize incessant cases of examination malpractice, counseling services should be provided for students and adequate facilities should be provided to make teaching and learning effective.

Keywords:

INTRODUCTION

The western knowledge acquisition system or formal education is measured by certificate. Yet, certificate is not a full proof of knowledge retention. Before certificate is awarded, the student have to be assessed with the field they have been trained. Nnam and Inah (2015) notes that examination is a yardstick against which student's competence and progress are formally measured and appraises in education sector. Examination malpractice has been a social problem for decades, but the rate and manner it is perpetrated nowadays calls for serious concern. The rate of this crime has become so widespread that there is virtually no examination anywhere at all levels and outside the formal school system, that there is no one form of illegal practice. Examination malpractices are common everywhere and every examination season witnesses the emergence of new and indigenous ways of cheating. (Nnam and Inah, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Design: The research design adopted for this study is the survey method

Research question 1: *What are the effects of examination malpractice in Rivers State University?*

Table 1: Effects of Examination Malpractice in Rivers State University

S/N.	Relevant question	Responses				N	ΣFX	\bar{X}	Remark
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1				
1	Examination malpractice kills the spirit of hard work.	83	93	100	24	300	835	2.78	Rejected
2	Examination malpractice kills the academic reputation of the country.	97	126	35	42	300	878	2.92	Accepted
	Total mean							5.7	
	Grand mean							2.85	

Interpretation: Analysis of the data in table 1, question 1 indicates that large number of respondents rejected the view that examination malpractice kills the spirit of hard work.

From the same table, question 2 indicates that large number of respondents accepted the view that examination malpractice kills the academic reputation of the country.

Research question 2: *How can examination malpractice be reduced to its bearest minimum?*

Table 2: Ways Examination Malpractice can be reduced to its Bearest Minimum.

S/N	Relevant question	Responses				N	ΣFX	\bar{X}	Remark
		SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1				
1	Examination malpractice would be reduced if the use of electronic devices are prohibited.	72	101	83	44	300	801	2.67	Rejected
2	Provision of conducive learning environment will minimize examination malpractice.	62	91	90	57	300	758	2.52	Rejected
3	Enforcement of examination malpractice laws can bring examination malpractice to its bearest minimum.	62	102	50	86	300	740	2.46	Rejected
	Total mean							7.65	
	Grand mean							2.55	

Interpretation: Analysis of the data in table 2, question 1 indicates that the respondents rejected the view that examination malpractice would be reduced if the use of electronic devices is prohibited.

From the same table, question 2 indicates that the respondents rejected the view that provision of conducive learning environment will minimize examination malpractice.

From the same table, question 3 indicates that the respondents rejected the view that enforcement of examination malpractice laws can bring examination malpractice to its barest minimum.

DISCUSSION

During the course of this work, it was discovered that the students lack the appetite for studying but rather want to pass their exam by all means. Some lecturers, who cherish sorting, sometimes examine students with what they were not taught. This is an instrument error that has remained unchecked, such lecturers also do not know the fact that when many students fail in an exam; it indicates that the teacher had not taught. To check this irregularity requires more of commitment and society on the part of the teacher than bringing in an external body into the situation.

It was also discovered that appropriate authorities were not doing enough to keep the trend in check. This was why most students disregarded the sin and often take it with a pinch of salt. The curriculum contents of what is being studied now, if compared with the past cannot be said to be of low quality but because of inordinate examination malpractice, most people tend to believe that the standard of education is falling.

Finally, the problem of withholding result or keeping result secret only for the students to check individually was the major source whereby all iniquities were carried out.

Summary

The standard of education is falling due to examination malpractice which makes it easy for dullard, who is not fit academically, to sail through university without being sorted out. Examination malpractice offenders have not been receiving a deserved punishment to serve as deterrent to others. Moreover, the issue is gradually becoming norm of the society and the relevant authorities are not taking it serious.

CONCLUSION

The study had so far identified the effects of examination malpractice into five major headlines, which are: unvaluable academic certificate, low productivity, suspension or expulsion, immediate action is required to stem the trend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Examination bodies, government, stakeholders must confront this challenge by reducing or eliminating the administrative, institutional, attitudinal and logistic problem encouraging examination malpractices. There must be a major and comprehensive overhaul of the educational system in the country since education is the best legacy that any parent or nation could bequeath to its younger generation. This is more so that no individual or country in this contemporary world would develop with a flawed educational system. Adequate facilities such as classrooms or lecture halls and laboratories to make the environment conducive not only for teaching and learning but also to ensure effective check and control of candidates during examinations. Candidates found guilty of the crime of examination malpractice should be punished severely to serve as deterrent to others. Emphasis should be placed on moral instructions and value re-orientation in our universities to combat examinations malpractice. Students should be taught the virtues of hard work, honesty and the dignity of labour. The undue emphasis placed on paper qualifications should be reduced so as to minimize the rate at which students indulge in examination malpractice to acquire paper qualifications. There is need to identify other alternative ways of assessing students ability other than conventional examination. Graduates should be subjected to vigorous tests in the course of seeking for employment so as to assess their abilities and as a means of reducing examination malpractices. The administration and conduct of examination should be entrusted to the care of men and women of proven integrity in universities. There is need to provide adequate teaching and learning materials, libraries and laboratories should be stocked with the needed textbooks, chemicals and apparatus to promote effective teaching and learning.

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