



# **Guidance and Counselling Strategies for Curbing Examination Malpractices among Secondary School Students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study examine Guidance and Counselling Strategies for Curbing Examination Malpractices among Secondary School Students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State was conducted with a view to establishing that the strategies of guidance and counselling can be employed to reduce the increase in cases of examination malpractices among secondary school students in the area. The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey research design. The population size is 9,018 students while the sample size is 320 students which was used as respondents for this study and the responses were elicited through the use of four self-structured instruments. The data generated for this study was analysed using frequency, weighted mean and standard deviation scores extracted to answer the three research questions, while the t-test statistics was employed by the researchers to test the three hypotheses. The results of the analysis revealed that the students' personal social counselling, students' vocational counselling and students' educational counselling were all non significant in curbing the increasing prevalence of examination malpractices among male and female secondary school students in Rivers State. Hence, it was recommended that efforts should be intensified by government to establish guidance and counselling units in all secondary schools in the State, while the relevant authorities should ensure that students and teachers avail themselves of the services of such units.

**Keywords:** Counseling, strategies, curbing, examination, malpractice, students.

## **INTRODUCTION**

According to Denga (2012), education is generally aimed at training citizens for economic efficiency, worthy home membership and worthy citizenship; it is also a vehicle for self-realization. A national policy on education is therefore, the government's way of achieving those aspects of its national objectives that have to rely on the use of education as a tool (Okoroma, 2000). To this end, the Nigerian Education System is tailored' such that there are essentially, three different stages of format education: The primary, the secondary and the tertiary levels of education in order of succession.

The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2000) stated that Nigeria's philosophy in terms of Education is that the individual should be molded into a sound and effective citizen and that equal educational opportunities should abound for all citizens of the nation at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system. Based on this policy, the primary school pupil needs to pass the common entrance examination to gain admission into the secondary school, while the secondary school student is required to have not less than five credits in relevant subjects and a high score in the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) examinations and the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (J.A.M.B) examinations respectively, before provisional admission can be gained into any Nigerian University or Polytechnic. Hornby (2005) defined secondary education as education

for young people usually between the ages of 11 and 18 years. The secondary level of education occupies a central position among the three levels of education in Nigeria; it is the secondary education that determines an individual's career or profession in the future. This is owing to the fact that it is at this level that subjects relevant for admission into any particular discipline are offered at the certificate examination. Hence, the secondary level of education can be said to be very important in the nation's education system.

Awotua-Efebo (2009) argued that one of the functions of the secondary education is to raise a generation of people who think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour and appreciate those values specified under Nigeria's broad national aims and live as good citizens. These are virtues which, if inculcated into a student, would not permit such a student to nurture the idea of cheating in examinations. Incidentally, these are also attributes which the personal-social counseling services of Guidance and Counseling can imbue the student with (Olayinka, 2013). This raises the question of whether the provision of personal-social services in secondary schools through guidance and counseling can help to curb examination malpractices.

Olayinka (2013) argues that the National Policy on Education provides that one of the major functions of secondary education is to prepare students for higher education and lifetime careers. The proper preparation of students for higher education and lifetime careers forestalls students' cheating in examinations (Adegboye, 2007). Students can best be prepared for lifetime careers and higher education through the vocational counseling services of the Guidance Counselor (Senn, 2014). This raises the question of whether the availability of vocational counseling services in secondary schools can help reduce the prevalence of examination malpractice.

The secondary education ensures the diversification of curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, opportunities and roles possessed by or open to students (Awotua-Efebo, 2009). If this is properly done, students will be academically sound and devoid of tendencies to cheat in examinations; according to Okoroma (2000) most disciplinary problems involving students are academic. Secondary schools can achieve this aim by effectively harnessing the academic counseling services of Guidance Counselors (Mallam, 2000). This raises the question of whether the provision of academic counseling services in secondary schools by Guidance Counselors can help to reduce cheating in examinations.

The foregoing submissions suggest that the achievement of the aims and objectives of the secondary education would naturally, erase from the student, any inclination towards examination malpractices. Incidentally, these aims and objectives are in consonance with the tenets of the personal-social, vocational and academic counseling services which are provided by Guidance Counselors. This raises the question of whether secondary schools with active Guidance and Counseling units have a reduced prevalence rate of examination malpractices as compared to those without such services.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

If the reports on the pages of newspapers and magazines (such as *The Tide* of July 8, 2002; *The Tide* of November 19, 2003 and *Vanguard* of December 8, 2005) are anything to go by, then the extent to which examination malpractices have eaten deep into the country's schools system (including secondary schools in Port Harcourt) is quite frightening; so much so that school administrators and professional educationists may be confronted by a situation where the effectiveness and continued use of examinations as means of evaluation and assessment is seriously in doubt.

Several methods have been adopted in a bid to arrest the menace of examination malpractice. Some of these measures include the use of external invigilators, the detailed checking of passport photographs to avoid infiltration of mercenaries, and even the stipulation of jail terms for offenders but apparently, none of these has yielded the desired result. Over the years, Guidance and Counseling has been recognized as a veritable tool that can be employed to bring out the best from students. Unfortunately, a negligible number of secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis have active Guidance and Counseling units.

It is believed that the establishment of viable and active Guidance and Counseling units may be the much needed panacea to the problem of examination malpractices as those few schools in Port Harcourt metropolis with active Guidance and Counseling units are likely to be experiencing relatively low prevalence rate of examination malpractice. However, this very important speculation lacks empirical evidence. It is this gap that this study is designed to fill.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the guidance and counseling strategies for curbing examination malpractices among secondary school students in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives to be measured are to:

1. investigate if academic counselling services can reduce examination malpractice in secondary schools.
2. ascertain how vocational counselling will help in reducing examination malpractice in the secondary schools.
3. find out the contributions of personal social counselling in reducing examination malpractice in secondary schools.

### **Research Questions**

The researcher posed the following research questions to guide the conduct of this study:

1. How do academic counselling services help in reducing examination malpractice in secondary schools?
2. To what extent does vocational counselling contributed in controlling examination malpractice in secondary schools?
3. What is the contribution of personal social counselling in reducing examination malpractice in secondary schools?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The researcher formulated the following hypotheses to guide the conduct of this study:

1. There is no significant difference between academic counselling services and students' examination malpractice.
2. There is no significant difference between vocational counselling and students' examination malpractice.
3. There is no significant difference between personal-social counselling and students' examination malpractice.

### **Conceptual Review**

According to Hornby (2008) examination is a formal test of somebody's knowledge' or ability in a particular subject especially by means of writing questions or practical exercises. In the point of view of Eze (2008), examination refers to the periodic test (or evaluation) and measurement of students after such periodic acquisition of knowledge and experience. This view was supported by Awotua-Efebo (2012) who affirmed that the results of examinations form the bases from which to conclude how well the students have faired in their academic work.

Examination malpractice is a term which simply refers to unconventional behaviour during examinations (Olushola, 2006:2). However, Oredein (2008:1) disagrees, arguing that examination malpractice is any wrong doing before, during or after any examination. The fact that examination malpractices is further highlighted by Atigbo (2016) describes examination malpractice as unlawful behaviour or activity engaged by students during or after examinations in a bid to have personal advantage over their colleagues or mates who sat for the same examinations. It must also be pointed out that the examination candidate can cheat through the assistance of others, as revealed by Asuru (2004:2) who submits that examiner or his agents before, during or after the examination with the intent to make the examinee have an undue advantage or an unmerited grade. According to Asuru (2014), the act of cheating in examination did not start in recent times and is not peculiar to Nigeria alone, because records show that in imperial China, for instance, examiners had to be part in cubicles to forestall examination malpractice.

Esezobor in Asuru (2004:4) also argued that even in recent times, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have recorded high prevalence rates of examination malpractices. He went on to suggest that examination malpractices in the developed countries have tended to keep pace with their technological advancement. However, Dike (2008:10) quoted the Registrar of West African Examination Council (WAEC) Alhaji Mulikat Bello, to have declared that Nigeria is believed to rank tops among nations whose students engage in examination malpractices.

### **Examination Malpractices in Nigeria**

Ahmed (2006) laments the increasing prevalence of examination malpractices in Nigeria, saying that examination malpractices which existed in simple unsophisticated forms in the past, have in recent times, assumed varying degrees of sophistication. A study carried out by Onuka and Oludipe in Asuru, (2004) on the issue of examination malpractice in Nigeria, revealed that each year the major examination bodies in Nigeria, including the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), the National Examination Council (NECO) and the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) cancel or withhold an average of 740,000 results owing to suspected cases of examination malpractices. Another study conducted by Eweniyi (2012) on the efficacy of religious/moral persuasion in controlling examination malpractices showed that examination malpractice has indeed pervaded the nation's education system and that religious/moral persuasion could be used to positively influence the attitude of students; it was therefore recommended that religious/moral persuasion be employed to help reduce examination malpractices in our schools.

### **Forms of Examination Malpractices**

Asuru (2014) grouped the various forms of examination malpractices into three major categories. These are: pre-examination malpractices, during-examination malpractices and post examination malpractices.

**Pre-examination Malpractices:** According to Oredein (2008), malpractices in examination can also take place prior to the examination itself. These are all referred to as pre-examination malpractices. Asuru (2014) adds that the most common form of pre-examination malpractices is the one in which the examinee fraudulently gets prior knowledge of the questions before the commencement of the examination. This is usually achieved with the assistance of employees of the examination body in the case of public examination and through the course lecturer or teacher, typists, messengers and other non-academic staff in the case of internal examinations.

**Giraffing:** According to Achigbe (2007), this form which is the most traditional and primitive form of cheating in examinations is so called because the manner in which the culprits crane or strain their necks in order to get a view of the answer scripts of the more brilliant students can be likened to that of a giraffe.

**Impersonation:** Olushola (2006) refers to this form of examination malpractice as the brazen act of engaging the services of someone else to sit for an examination for the candidate. Such impersonators who are popularly referred to as "Mercenaries" are believed to be experts in various subjects.

**Special Centers:** According to Asuru (2014) these centers, which are mostly in the guise of tutorial classes are examination centres run by self-styled "examination contractors in collusion with principals of schools in remote areas and the active connivance of staff of relevant examination bodies. Organizers of such centres usually collect huge sums of money from their clients as examination fees. This appears to be a very common form of examination malpractice in recent times.

**Bringing of Foreign or Extraneous Materials into the Examination Hall:** Olushola (2006) described this form of examination malpractice as a situation whereby candidates flout examination rules and regulations by taking unauthorized materials, (including textbooks, already prepared scripts or notes and high points in cards) into the examination hall.

**Insult/Assault:** Achigbe (2006) decried this form of examination malpractice, saying that it involves the use of verbal attack, brute force threat or dangerous weapons on examination officials in order to coerce them into condoning all forms of irregularities in the conduct of examinations.

**Post Examination Malpractices:** Asuru (2004:23) describes these forms of examination malpractices as those perpetrated after the actual conduct of the examinations. According to him, post examination malpractices may include: rewriting of the paper after the actual examination, altering of the actual score of the candidate or student after receiving some gratification and certificate forgery.

### **Causes of Examination Malpractices**

In the point of view of Asuru (2014) examinees and examiners in Nigeria are not congenital cheats in examinations. The high and complex incidences of fraud they perpetrate during examinations may be due largely to some factors within their environment that predispose them to malpractices. Denga (2013) argued that the various factors responsible for examination malpractices can be categorized into three major factors: psychological, intelligence and environmental factors.

- (1) **Psychological Factors:** These factors, according to Denga (2013) encompass those issues that affect the mind, the orientation and the disposition of the student or candidate. They include:
  - i. ***Outright Fear of Failing Examinations:*** Asuru (2014) argued that the fear of failure is one of the causes of examination malpractice, this is because in a bid to avoid the stigma of failure with its resultant ego deflation, some examinees resort to cheating.
  - ii. ***Fear and Lack of Confidence:*** According to Martins (2012), most students have mystified examinations and some subjects in particular such that they lack confidence in themselves and their ability to pass examinations and therefore believe that the only option is to cheat.
  - iii. ***Desire to Score High Grades at all Cost:*** Ama and Aliyu in Olushola (2006) identified the desire to score high grades at all cost as one of the factors that are responsible for examination malpractice. They argue that most students cheat, not because they cannot pass the examinations on their own, but that they want to score high, unmerited grades.
  - iv. ***Value System and Orientation:*** Martins (2012) decried that negative influence of our value system on the psyche of our students saying that ours is a country where materialism is enthroned over intellectualism success is placed before hard work and people are given what they do not deserve as long as they can pay for it mainly in cash. The overriding influence of all these on our students is that they want to reap where they did not sow, by engaging in examination malpractices.
- (2) **Intelligence Factors**  
 These categories of factors are those that affect the intelligence and therefore the academic performance of the student (Denga, 2013). They include:
  - i. ***Truancy and Absenteeism:*** The result of a study conducted by Adegboye (2007) indicates that truancy and absenteeism impacts negatively on the intelligence of the student. This makes the student ill prepared for examinations and the end result is cheating.
  - ii. ***Learning Disabilities and Behaviour Disorders:*** These are either physical emotional or physiological disorders that impede the students' learning ability and intelligence (Denga, 2007). Hence, the affected student may be forced to cheat in examinations. According to Denga (2007) some of the signs of these disabilities include: poor leadership quality, inability to interact, a general mood of unhappiness or depression, sleeping in class, aggressive behaviour.
- (3) **Environmental Factors:** These are factors within or outside the learning environment which although may not necessarily (unlike the psychological factors) shape the psyche of the student, affects the actions of the student with respect to examinations. They include:
  - i. ***Emphasis on Paper Qualification:*** According to Ekezie (2013), one of the major factors responsible for examination malpractice is the emphasis on paper qualification among Nigerians. Taiwo (2015) reported that the Nigeria National Teachers' Institute (NNTI) supports this view when they submitted that emphasis on examination certificates by higher institutions and employers of labour is responsible for malpractices in the nation's institutions of learning.
  - ii. ***Parental Pressure:*** Martins (2012) declared that parental pressure is a major cause of examination malpractices as their children and wards are compelled to make the wrong choice of career by choosing subjects, courses and schools they cannot cope with, solely based on the prestige attached to such choices. Such students may be compelled to cheat to pass examinations.
  - iii. ***Inadequacy of Teachers and Learning Environment:*** According to Taiwo (2015), the Nigeria National Teachers' Institute (NNTI) identified poor teaching and administration and inadequate learning environment as also contributing to examination malpractice. Ofoegbu (2014) supported this view when he lamented that in this era of wealth and display or wealth in the face of widespread poverty teachers need to be adequately motivated (salaries must be paid as at when due and teaching facilities made available) for an effective and viable school system.

### Effects of Examination Malpractices

The damaging effects of examination malpractices in Nigeria can be viewed from two major perspectives: threat to foundations of the education sector and threat to national envelopment.

- (i) **Threat to Foundations of Education Section:** Dike (2008) reported the Registrar of West African Examinations Council (WAEC) as declaring that Nigeria ranks tops among nations whose students engage in examinations malpractices while decrying the threat of examination fraud to the foundations of the education sector. This threat can be viewed in the following areas.
- ii. **Erosion of the Validity, Credibility and Reliability of Nigerian Examinations and Certificates:** According to Asuru (2014) examination malpractices vitiates the credibility of and reliability of tests which are the basic instruments of examinations. Achigbe (2007) held the same view, stressing that examination malpractices affect the validity of examinations conducted by examination bodies and authenticity of certificates issued. It was for this reason that universities introduced post JAMB tests (Daily Trust Newspaper: 2008).
- iii. **Increasing Cost of Conducting Examinations:** Asuru (2014) declared that as a result of the ever increasing incidence of examination malpractice in public examinations, the major examination bodies and the government incur high costs in a bid to conduct malpractice-free examinations.
- iv. **Cancellation of Results of Innocent Candidates:** Omotosho (2010) laments that as a result of massive examination frauds, the major examination bodies sometimes embark on mass-cancellation of examinations; this action sometimes affect innocent candidates.

### Functions of Services Rendered by Guidance and Counselling in the School Setting

According to Olayinka (2013), guidance counsellors render three major categories of guidance and counseling services in schools. These are: academic-counseling, vocational-counselling and personal-social counseling.

- (1) **Academic Counselling:** This service aims at ensuring that the academic content and subjects taught each student are as much as possible based on that students interest, ability and aptitude and not merely on chance factors; while also, assisting the student to make the most of the his educational opportunities by educating him towards becoming a cultivated individual and at the same time preparing him for participation in a life activity which will be socially useful and personally satisfying (Olayinka, 2013). A guidance Counselor may go as far as organizing a remedial course to be carried out by himself or by another specialist teacher in a bid to help the student solve his academic problems.  
Akinboye (2007) emphasizes that academic counseling also entails counseling and consulting with teachers with a view to recommending better teaching strategies such that reinforcement of adequate behaviours may be effected. According to Olayinka (2013) in academic counseling; the guidance counselor also directly counsels the student on an individual basis to discourage him from choosing subjects purely for prestige and to also identity a host of other problems which may cause a student to under achieve academically, such as ineffective methods of studying, poor reading techniques, undetected eye sight problems, loss of hearing etc.
- (2) **Vocational Counseling:** Mallam (2010) asserts that the need for correct and accurate information when selecting a career, university or polytechnic is very important. This is because, in counseling secondary school students, a frequent problem is that of choosing a career or the type of institution to enroll in.  
Vocational counseling involves assisting the client (or student) to choose the right type of occupation, career or tertiary institution based on the client's particular abilities, aptitudes and interests (Olayinka, 2013), although through vocational counseling, the client will be guided to choose a realistic goal that is well within his reach to attain, the ultimate choice is still his. Olayinka (2013) suggests that vocational counseling has a preventive function of helping the student gain information about himself, his particular abilities and aptitudes on the one hand, and some subjective information about the spectrum of careers to which he is best suited on the other.

- (3) **Personal-Social Counselling:** According to Mallam (2010), some students from impoverished homes and environments come to school apathetic and uninterested, angry and hostile, feeling that they are doomed to fail, with low self-esteem and poorly established self-identity. Such students usually direct their behaviour towards self-protection, rather than exploration, teaming and development, with deep concern about basic necessities and daily uncertainties which blocks their ability to concentrate on education material.

The unpleasant and depressed states of the homes and neighbourhood of socially disadvantaged students make them inclined to misbehaviour and delinquency, so much so that the actions of some of them may disrupt school activities and even pose a threat to the safety of teachers and fellow students (Olayinka, 1993:16). Hence, the need for personal-social counseling, which according to Akinboye (1987:108) is a Guidance and Counselling services, which in addition to individual, counseling, also focuses on the development of programmes that can induce self confidence, increase the degree of co-operative behaviour and encourage self control and socially responsible behaviour patterns so as to reduce or completely eradicate anti social attitudes.

## METHODOLOGY

The research design that will be used for this study is the descriptive survey design. This design is used to elicit information on the above topic. Therefore, the use of Obio/Akpor Local Government of Rivers State for this study is appropriate because adequate sample size is assured of the students. The population of the study will consist of all the students in SS1 and 2 in all the Secondary School in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area with a population size of nine thousand and eighteen (9,018) students. A simple random sampling technique will be used to select nine (9) senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The sample size of the study is three hundred and ninety (390) students purposively selected from SS 1 and 2. In this study, the instrument used for data collection will be a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire has section A and B. Section A is the personal data of the respondents such as name of school, sex, age, marital status. While the section B is the respondents ideas on the subject matter. The questionnaire was developed based on the modified four point Likert Scale rating of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Disagreed (D) type of questionnaire was used as follows:

|                         |   |          |
|-------------------------|---|----------|
| Strongly Agreed (SA)    | - | 4 points |
| Agreed (A)              | - | 3 points |
| Disagreed (D)           | - | 2 points |
| Strongly Disagreed (SD) | - | 1 point  |

A weighted average mean of 2.50 was used to accept the items in the research questions. The instrument was submitted to the project supervisor and two other lectures (experts) in the Faculty of Technical and Science Education who scrutinized the content in line with the purpose of the study, the final draft was based on the correction of the lecturers and the content and face validities were ensured. To determine the reliability of the instrument, the researcher will adopt test-retest method. The outcome of the test-retest was analysed with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Method. A Correlation Coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. A total of three hundred and ninety (390) copies of the instrument were administered directly by the researcher to the respondents. Frequency and weighted mean score was used in analyzing the responses of research questions. While t-test statistical tool will be used to test the null hypotheses at the significant level of 0.05.

**RESULTS**

**Table 4.1: Responses on how Vocational Counselling Reduce Examination Malpractice in Secondary Schools**

| S/<br>N | Questionnaire Items  | Responses    |              |            |            | N   | $\Sigma \bar{X}$ | Mean<br>$\bar{X}$ | Remarks  |
|---------|--|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----|------------------|-------------------|----------|
|         |  | SA           | A            | D          | SD         |     |                  |                   |          |
| 1.      | I was not properly counselled when choosing my subjects.                           | 200<br>(800) | 155<br>(165) | 30<br>(60) | 5<br>(5)   | 390 | 1030             | 2.64              | Accepted |
| 2.      | I choose my subjects because my friends choose the same thing.                     | 210<br>(840) | 160<br>(480) | 20<br>(40) | -<br>-     | 390 | 1360             | 3.49              | Accepted |
| 3.      | My school does not conduct vocational text or counselling of any kind.             | 202<br>(808) | 158<br>(474) | 20<br>(40) | 10<br>(10) | 390 | 1332             | 3.42              | Accepted |
| 4.      | My parents and friends influence my choice of career subjects.                     | 210<br>(840) | 160<br>(480) | 20<br>(40) | -<br>-     | 390 | 1360             | 3.49              | Accepted |
| 5.      | I have some difficult subjects that make me to involve in examination malpractice. | 200<br>(800) | 155<br>(165) | 20<br>(60) | 5<br>(5)   | 390 | 1030             | 2.64              | Accepted |

Table 4.1 reveals that the respondents accepted that they were not properly guided in choosing their subjects. They also accepted that they choose their subjects because their friends choose the same. The table also indicates that the respondents accepted the view that their school does not conduct vocational text or examination to guide the students. It was observed in the table that the respondents accepted that their parents and friends influenced their choice of subjects and career. Table shows that the respondents accepted the fact that they have some difficult subjects that makes them to involve in examination malpractice.

**Research Question 2:** *To what extent does vocational counselling contribute to academic performance of secondary school students?*

**Table 4.2: Responses on how Vocational Counselling Contribute to Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

| S/<br>N | Questionnaire Items   | Responses    |              |            |            | N   | $\Sigma \bar{X}$ | Mean<br>$\bar{X}$ | Remarks  |
|---------|---|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----|------------------|-------------------|----------|
|         |   | SA           | A            | D          | SD         |     |                  |                   |          |
| 1.      | Students perform well academically when they are guided in choosing their subjects.             | 200<br>(800) | 150<br>(450) | 20<br>(40) | 20<br>(20) | 390 | 1310             | 3.36              | Accepted |
| 2.      | Lack of vocational guidance makes the students to choose wrong subjects that will be difficult. | 205<br>(820) | 140<br>(420) | 30<br>(60) | 15<br>(15) | 390 | 1315             | 3.37              | Accepted |
| 3.      | There are no guidance and counselling programmes designed to address career choice.             | 180<br>(720) | 130<br>(390) | 50<br>(10) | 30<br>(30) | 390 | 1240             | 3.18              | Accepted |
| 4.      | I failed some of my subjects because I don't know them very well.                               | 202<br>(808) | 158<br>(474) | 20<br>(40) | 10<br>(10) | 390 | 1332             | 3.42              | Accepted |

Table 4.2 above indicates that the respondents accepted that students perform well academically when they are guided in choosing their subjects. They also accepted that lack of vocational guidance makes the students to choose wrong subjects that will be difficult for them. It was observed that the respondents accepted the view that there are no guidance and counselling programmes designed to address the issue of career choice. The table also shows that the respondents accepted that fact that they failed some of their subjects because they don't know the subjects very well.

**Research Question 3:** *What is the contribution of personal social counselling in reducing examination malpractice in secondary schools?*

**Table 4.3:** **Response on the Contributions of Personal Social Counselling in Reducing Examination Malpractice in Secondary Schools**

| S/N | Questionnaire Items  | Responses    |              |            |            | N   | $\Sigma \bar{X}$ | Mean<br>$\bar{X}$ | Remarks  |
|-----|--|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----|------------------|-------------------|----------|
|     |  | SA           | A            | D          | SD         |     |                  |                   |          |
| 1.  | Students can use personal social counselling as a strategy in curbing examination malpractice. | 205<br>(820) | 145<br>(435) | 30<br>(60) | 10<br>(10) | 390 | 1325             | 4.40              | Accepted |
| 2.  | Some students from poor homes may be affected academically without the help of counsellors.    | 195<br>(780) | 150<br>(450) | 25<br>(50) | 20<br>(20) | 390 | 1300             | 3.33              | Accepted |
| 3.  | Angry and hostile students may succeed academically with the help of school counsellors.       | 200<br>(800) | 165<br>(495) | 15<br>(30) | 10<br>(10) | 390 | 1335             | 3.42              | Accepted |
| 4.  | Guidance and Counselling may help students to overcome unpleasant and depressed state of mind, | 140<br>(560) | 205<br>(615) | 30<br>(6)  | 15<br>(15) | 390 | 1250             | 3.21              | Accepted |

Table 4.3 above shows that the respondents accepted that students can use their personal social counselling strategy in controlling examination malpractice. It also reveals that the respondents accepted that students from poor homes may be affected academically without the help of counsellors. Table indicates that the respondents accepted the view that angry and hostile students may succeed academically with the help of school counsellors. It was also observed that guidance and counselling may help students to overcome unpleasant and depressed state of mind.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between academic counselling services and examination malpractice in secondary schools.

**Table 4.4: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference in Academic Counselling Services and Examination Malpractice in Secondary Schools**

| Variable/Status                               | No. of Respondents | Mean Score<br>$\bar{X}$ | SD   | DF  | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|------|-----|-------|--------|----------|
| Vocational academic counselling               | 145                | 2.92                    | 0.27 | 273 | 1.20  | 1.96   | Accepted |
| Examination malpractice in secondary schools. | 130                | 2.96                    | 0.26 |     |       |        |          |

Significant,  $P < 0.05$

Analysis on table 4.4 reveals that the t-cal (1.20) is less than the t-crit (1.96). Therefore, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is smaller than the given critical value of t-ratio. The hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant difference exists in the mean response scores of vocational counselling and examination malpractice in secondary schools.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference between vocational counselling and academic performance of secondary school students.

**Table 4.5: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Vocational Counselling and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

| Variable/Status                                   | No. of Respondents | Mean Score<br>$\bar{X}$ | SD   | DF  | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|------|-----|-------|--------|----------|
| Vocational counselling                            | 155                | 2.96                    | 0.25 | 253 | 0.53  | 1.96   | Accepted |
| Academic performance of secondary school students | 100                | 1.97                    | 0.17 |     |       |        |          |

Significant,  $P < 0.05$

Analysis on table 4.5 indicates that the t-cal (0.52) is less than the t-crit. So, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of t-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 2 ( $H_{02}$ ) is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significant difference exists in the mean response scores of vocational counselling and academic performance of secondary school students.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference between personal-social counselling and students' examination malpractice.

**Table 4.6: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference between Personal-Social Counselling and Students' Examination Malpractice**

| Variable/Status                    | No. of Respondents | Mean Score<br>$\bar{X}$ | SD   | DF  | t-cal | t-crit | Decision |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------|-----|-------|--------|----------|
| Personal-social counselling.       | 130                | 2.96                    | 0.25 | 228 | 0.49  | 1.96   | Accepted |
| Students' examination malpractice. | 100                | 2.97                    | 0.17 |     |       |        |          |

Significant,  $P < 0.05$

Analysis on table 4.6 shows that the t-cal (0.49) is smaller than the t-crit (1.960). At this point, therefore, the calculated t-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is lesser than the given critical value of t-ratio. The hypothesis 3 ( $H_{03}$ ) is thus accepted and the conclusion is that no significance difference exists in the mean response scores of personal social counselling and students' examination malpractice.

#### 4.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In the course of this study, the researcher developed three (3) research questions to guide the conduct of the study and formulated and tested three hypotheses. The findings of the study reveals that vocational or career counselling can help the students to reduce examination malpractice in secondary schools. This is line with Olayinka (2013) that reveals that vocational or academic counseling will guide the students to choose a realistic goal that is well within their reach to attain and that vocational counselling helps the students to gain information about himself, his abilities etc.

The study also reveals that student's personal-social counselling if adequately utilized will help the students in curbing or controlling examination malpractice in secondary schools. The findings of the study were also shown that students from poor homes may be affected academically without the help of counselors and that angry and hostile students may succeed academically with the help of the school counsellors.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, the researcher concludes that:

### 1. **Personal-social counselling as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices:**

- (a) Personal-social counselling is adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (b) Personal-social counselling is adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (c) Personal-social counselling was adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the male and female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (d) No significant difference exists in the mean response scores of male and female students on the extent to which personal-social counselling was used as counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among secondary schools students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

### 2. **Vocational counselling as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices:**

- (a) Vocational counselling is adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (b) Vocational counselling is adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (c) Vocational counselling was adequately utilized as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the male and female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (d) No significant difference exists in the mean response scores of male and female students on the extent to which educational counselling was used as counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among secondary schools students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

### 3. **Educational counselling as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices:**

- (a) Educational counseling is adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (b) Educational counselling is adequately used as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (c) Educational counselling was adequately utilized as a counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among the male and female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.
- (d) There is no significant difference existing in the mean response scores of male and female students on the extent to which educational counselling was used as counselling strategy to curb examination malpractices among secondary schools students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

## 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Efforts should be intensified by the government concerned to established Guidance and Counseling Units in all secondary schools in the State.
2. Students should ensure that they subject themselves to counseling
3. Efforts should be intensified by the State Ministry of Education and State Schools' Management Board to expose the secondary school students and teachers to the need for them to engage in guidance and counseling services in their schools.

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