

EFFECT OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN JIGAWA STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, GUMEL**BY****Mudathir Haruna: Department of Social Studies, School of Secondary Education,
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E-mail: mudathirharunaringim@gmail.com****Abstract**

The study was set to elicit the opinions of respondents on the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel. Two research questions and two hypotheses were also formulated. The respondents were twelve (12) lecturers and eighty one (81) Social Studies Students. Ninety three (93) questionnaires were distributed. The data were analysed using frequencies and percentages. The findings of the study revealed that examination malpractice has negative effects on the academic performance of Social Studies Students since it affect the future career of the students both socially and academically which result to expulsion from school as well as in competency in any position given to them. However, in the light of these findings it was recommended that the stake-holders in the education sector should be organizing orientation programmes periodically to all students of College of Educations in Nigeria on the causes, consequences and solutions to examination malpractices.

Keywords: *Effects, Examination malpractice, Academic performance, Social studies students*

Introduction

Education has remained a social process in capacity building and maintenance of the society for decades. It is a weapon for acquiring skills, relevant knowledge and habits for surviving in the changing world. The importance and functions of education could be measured by the calibre and quality of people produced by our institutions, from primary to tertiary level, who transform the knowledge and experiences gained at school into action. In Nigeria for example, much importance has been attached to higher education to attain technological development and for individuals to be placed in highly paid jobs he must have gone through series of examinations from primary to university levels.

Examination malpractices in our schools are becoming a worrisome and disturbing phenomenon day by day. The problem is not peculiar to a particular level of education rather it has pervaded all educational institutions of Nigeria. According to Adamu (2001) malpractice in examination is an unlawful behaviour or activity engaged by students to have personal advantage in an examination over their colleagues or mates who are competing in the same examination. However, Sambo (2009) conceptualized examination malpractices as a fraudulent, illegal or crooked way of obtaining success or high grades in examinations, assessments or evaluation of students.

In the light of the above definitions one can realized that examination malpractices has serious consequences on our educational system because it reduces the quality or value of certificates issued by various examination bodies. The effects of this can be observed in the future careers of candidates who obtained certificates through cheating or other fraudulent means, the quality and efficiency of their input in such tasks would be questionable. Examination malpractice has become one of the long standing problems of our nation's educational system. The phenomenon has reached an alarming magnitude across the country. Malpractice in examinations has become so rampant that hardly could any examination exercise take place in most of our schools and tertiary institutions including the private schools without a sizeable number been caught in the act.

In addition, Oke and Jekayinfa (2003) identified the following as the types of examination malpractices: (a) Abracadabra which is a method commonly used in rural schools. It is a magic term connoting that the

more you look, the less you see. The students will use spiritual power so that when they go to examination hall.

- i. **Giraffing:** Giraffing is an act of sticking out one's neck to see another students' answer sheet.
- ii. **Abracadabra:** Abracadabra is a method commonly used in rural schools. It is a magic term connoting that the more you look, the less you see. The students will use spiritual power so that when they go to examination hall with foreign materials; it will be seen by the members of the class excluding only the invigilator. In the other way round, they may use the same power to make the invigilator to become a living robot till after the end of the examination.
- iii. **Nothing – Nothing:** Nothing – Nothing involves the use of empty biro to trace information on a white piece of paper. Seeing this on the table, one would think there is nothing on the paper, but on closer observation, one would realize that the paper is well loaded with facts.
- iv. **Livewire:** Livewire is a situation when students have access to live questions before the examination.
- v. **Dubbing:** Dubbing is a situation when students copy in the examination hall either their partners' papers or the materials they brought from home.
- vi. **Rank Xeroxing:** Rank Xeroxing is a situation when students collects and writes a colleagues answers word by word.

In the light of the above types or patterns of examination malpractices prevailing in Nigerian educational institutions the menace of this deadly disease that has eaten deeply into our educational system has resulted to the cancellation of many examinations as well as examination results of some schools. The Federal Government on its part had enacted a decree in 1984 which prescribed a 21 year imprisonment for any students caught on any act of examination malpractices, because the menace give room for incompetent students to earn certificates and grades which they do not deserve. Moreover, academic performance connotes measurement of students' achievement across various academic subjects or the knowledge and skills that students have mastered in a subject or a course. In addition, academic performance according to Nzeribe (2004) refers to observable and measurable behaviour of a student in a particular situation. Yusuf (2002) conceptualized academic performance as the level of individual's educational attainment as determined by comparing his score with the average scores of others at the same level.

A careful look at these definitions indicated that academic performance of students consists of scores obtained from teachers made test during first and second semesters through a series of assessments. It also implies the ability of students to study and remember facts and being able to communicate their knowledge verbally or in written form. Moreover, Prewitt (2008) conducted a study in Kenya on the effect of socio-economic status of parents on students' academic performance. The findings revealed that families with a high socio-economic status prepare their children for school more adequately than those with a low socio-economic status. He therefore concluded that students who were performing successfully in school tend to have families who were emotionally closer. In connection to the above, the writer opined that the higher the socio-economic status of family, the more likely it motivates its children to learn at school and consequently to succeed in learning as well as their examinations.

Statement of the Problem

In the sixtieth and seventieth, cases of examination malpractices was not so pronounced in our educational institutional institutions but today in Nigerian educational institutions examination malpractices has become one of the most serious form of corruption. It has become a menace that does not only challenge the nation's educational system but even threaten our national integrity and collective credibility. Examination malpractices occur in both internal and external examinations, in primary and secondary schools as well as in tertiary institutions. Examination malpractices is highly detrimental to our educational system because it leads to expulsion from school, family disgrace, guilty conscious, incompetence in future career, future disgrace, imprisonment, inability to impart the knowledge acquired, obtaining grade which students do not deserve, cancelation of many examinations and examination

results, rustication for one or two semesters and several others which virtually resulting into mass failure in examination as well as poor academic performance.

Objectives of the Study

The study set out to achieve the following:-

1. To ascertain the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of social studies students in Jigawa State College of Education Gumel.
2. To find out ways of overcoming the problems of examination malpractices among social studies students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated in order to guide the research work.

1. What are the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of social studies students in Jigawa College of Education Gumel?
2. In what ways the problems of examination malpractices on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education Gumel could be tackled?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the opinions of lecturers and students with regards to the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of social studies students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the opinions of lecturers and students on the possible ways of combating the problems of examination malpractices as it affect the academic performance of social studies students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel.

Methodology

The study adopted survey method of descriptive research design due to the large number of Social Studies Students as indicated by Ekeh (2003) that in survey method of research, the data are collected from relatively large number of subjects or samples at a particular time. The population of the study comprised of all the lecturers and level 1 – 3 students of the Department of Social Studies. The total number of lecturers is twelve (12) and that of the students is eight hundred and eighty five (885) based on the 2019/2020 Departmental registration record. The sample size of the study was randomly selected from the parent population using simple random sampling and the breakdown of the sample size include twelve (12) lecturers, thirty (30) students from level 100, twenty six (26) students from level 200 and twenty five (25) from level 300 making a total of one hundred (100) students as indicated by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining appropriate sample size. The instrument was validated through vetting by experts in languages and education. A total of one hundred (100) copies of questionnaires were distributed to lecturers and sampled respondents but only ninety three were successfully retrieved, because some of the respondents misplaced the questionnaires given to them.

Pilot study was carried out by the researcher through the administration of questionnaire to thirty (30) Pre-NCE, Arts Students since they were not included in the main study, the instrument was pilot tested and produced the reliability co-efficient of 0.70. A questionnaire as the instrument for data collection has fifteen (15) items statement seeking the opinions of respondents on the topic of study. The four – point likert rating scale which consist of strongly Agreed (SA); Agreed (AG); Disagreed (DA) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) was also used. The data was analyzed using t-test since the respondents have two categories. The results were presented in tables through frequencies and percentages with explanation of the respondent's views.

Results**Research Question I****What are the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel?**

Details of the responses of teachers and students are contained in table 1.

Table 1: Opinions of Respondents on the Effects of Examination Malpractices

S/No	Items Statement	Category	F	Responses		
				%	F	%
1.	Expulsion from school, cancellation of one semester or academic session, family disagree, guilty, conscious as well as incompetence in future career.	Lecturers	10	83.3	02	16.7
		Students	66	81.4	15	18.6
2.	Reliability of scores obtained by students are in doubt, the entire educational system and evaluation is placed on a precarious foundation and create a picture by a nation growing of falsehood.	Lecturers	12	100	00	0.00
		Students	65	80.3	16	19.7
3.	Give room for incompetent students to earn certificates and grades which they do not deserve as well as cancellation of many examination and examination results.	Lecturers	09	75.0	03	25.0
		Students	59	72.8	22	27.2

Table 1 portrayed the respondents' views on items 1 – 3. There was also a consensus of opinions between respondents in respect of the items as clearly indicated by table 1 that lecturers with 83.3% and students with 81.4% are in full support with the item statement, the same thing applied to item 2 with 100% of lecturers and 80.3% of students. items 3 also captured 75% of lecturers and 72.8% of students, this virtually implies expulsion from school, cancellation of one semester or complete academic session, family disgrace, guilty conscious, incompetence in future career, 21 years imprisonment, reliability of scores obtained by students remain in doubt, the entire educational system and evaluation is placed on a precarious foundation and create a picture of a nation growing on falsehood, obtaining high grades and certificates from incompetent students and several others were considered by the respondents as the major effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel. However, from the above analysis we can realized that the problem of examination malpractices is not new to academic institutions that is why the former Military Head of State and Current Nigerian President, His Excellency Alhaji Muhammadu Buhari enacted a decree in 1984 which prescribed a twenty one year imprisonment for any person caught on any act of examination malpractices without the option of fine. Various institutions have also been inflicting stiff penalties to students involved in examination malpractices. These penalties range from serious warning through rustication for one or two semesters, cancellation of the papers involved to permanent expulsion from the institution but still the increasing number of students, lecturers and non-academic staff involved in examination malpractices is sadly alarming.

Research question II

In what ways the problems of examination malpractices and its negative effects on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel could be tackled?

Table 2: Respondent's Opinions on the Ways of Combating the Problems of Examination Malpractices

S/No	Items Statement	Category	Responses			
			F	%	F	%
4.	Ensuring effective invigilation, supervision and strict enforcement of examination rules and regulations through engagement of security agents and civil defense at each and every examination center.	Lecturers	08	66.7	04	33.3
		Students	55	67.9	26	32.1
5.	Enlightenment campaign against examination malpractices to all levels of education by both State and Federal Ministries of Education.	Lecturers	06	50	06	50
		Students	47	58	34	42
6.	Discouraging the attitude of writing out some topics considered to be areas of concentration, sell of handout and textbooks for continuous assessment marks as well as engaging in sexual relations with female student for pass marks	Lecturers	08	66.7	04	33.4
		Students	42	51.9	39	48.1

Table 2 indicated the respondents' views on items 4-7. In items 4, 5, 6 and 7 there was general agreement with regards to the respondents' opinions as indicated by the table. This clearly shows the percentage of lecturers and students with 66.7%, 75%, 70.4%, 66.7% and 51.9% respectively. But with regards to item 5 in the same table, there was balance in the opinion of lecturers with 50% each. In fact this indicated that enlightenment campaign against examination malpractices to all levels of education by both state and Federal Ministries of Education was supported by 50% of the lecturers while other 50% disagreed with the statement as indicated by the responses of lecturers, but the opinions of the students indicated active involvement with 58%. Moreover, the item statements clearly revealed that ensuring effective invigilation, supervision and strict enforcement of examination rules and regulations through engagement of security agents at each examination center, enlightenment campaign against examination malpractices, reorganizing sitting arrangement in the examination halls by creating adequate garbs between benches and several others were some of the ways of combating the problems of examination malpractices. Therefore, to eradicate examination malpractices from our schools and institutions of higher learning, the items statements should be fully implemented as well as the collective responsibilities of the lecturers, college managements, examination bodies, parents and students respectively.

Hypothesis I

Hypothesis 1 states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of lecturers and students with regards to the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of social studies students in Jigawa state college of education Gumel.

Table 3: showing t-test analysis on the opinions of respondents with regards to the effects of examination malpractices

Variables	N	X	Std	t-cal	Df	Prob	t-critical
Lecturers	12	10.00	1.21				
Students	81	9.36	2.01	1.07	91	.29	1.98

Table 3 above, indicated that the t-calculated value (1.073) is less than the t-critical value (1.98) at the degree of freedom (91). The observed level of significance P (.286) is greater than (0.05). Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the view of lecturers and students with regards to the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel is hereby retained.

Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of lecturers and students on the possible ways of combating the problems of examination malpractices as it affect the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel.

Table 4: Showing t-test Analysis on the Opinions of Respondents with Regards to the Possible Ways of Combating the Problems of Examination Malpractices

Variables	N	X	Std	t-cal	Df	Prob	t-critical
Lecturers	12	11.5000	2.67989				
Students	81	11.1728	2.80	.380	91	.705	1.98

Table 4 above shows that the t-calculated (.380) is less than the t-critical value (1.98) at degree of freedom (91). The observed level of significance P (.705) is greater than (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents regarding the possible ways of combating the problems of examination malpractices as it affects the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education, Gumel is hereby retained.

Discussion

The result of this study revealed that examination malpractices has negative effects on the academic performance of Social Studies Students since it affect the future career of the students both socially and academically. Socially it denounces social status of a family and the society which the students belong to. Examination malpractices destroy integrity of affected students. However, academically it leads to expulsion from school, cancellation of one semester or academic session as well as guilty conscious and incompetence in the future career of the affected students, it also give room for incompetent students to earn certificates and grades which they do not deserve and this ugly situation place the entire educational system on a precarious foundation and create a picture of a nation growing on falsehood.

Also revealed from the research work a twenty one (21) years imprisonment without the option of fine for student caught on any act of examination malpractices as categorically stated in the decree enacted in 1984 by Buhari's Military regime. ii. Ensuring effective invigilation, supervision and strict enforcement of examination rules and regulations through engagement of security agents at each and every examination centre as well as enlightenment campaign against examination malpractices at all levels of education.

To support the above findings of the study research question one which find out the effects of examination malpractices on the academic performance of Social Studies Students in Jigawa State College of Education Gumel, is supported by hypothesis one which indicated the t-calculated value of (1.073) is less than the t-critical value (1.98) at the degree of freedom (91), and the observed level of significance P (.286) is greater than (0.05). Therefore the null hypothesis is retained.

Research question two on the other hand supported the hypothesis two which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of lecturers and students on the possible ways of combating the problems of examination malpractices. The hypothesis is also accepted because the t-calculated (.380) is less than the t-critical value (1.98) at degree of freedom (91). This indicated that ensuring effective invigilation, supervision and strict enforcement of examination rules and regulations through engagement of security agents at each and very examination centre were the major ways of combating the problems examination malpractices in our schools (Zakari 2008).

Conclusion

Sequel to the major findings of this study, the following conclusion were drawn based on the fact that in Social Studies Department of the School of Secondary Education, Arts and Social Sciences, Jigawa State College of Education Gumel cases of examination malpractices arises in almost all semesters and the major causes include fear of failure, drug abuse and addiction, desire to obtain higher grades and several others. The effects of examination malpractices has both social and academic consequences since it destroys integrity and social status of the families of the affected students, expulsion from school and incompetency in future career. However, the fight against all forms of examination malpractices is a collective responsibility of all citizens of this country. The stakeholders in the education sector have an added responsibility to spearhead the fight. In fact recognizing the magnitude of the menace and the threat it pose to the nation all hand must be on the deck to eradicate examination malpractices from our educational system.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were offered.

1. The stakeholders in the education sector in collaboration with COEASU should be organizing orientation programmes periodically to all students of colleges of education in Nigeria on the causes, consequences and solutions to examination malpractices.
2. Teacher educators should take the task of invigilation during examination very seriously. In fact examinations should be invigilated in the proper way. Teacher educators should also be sincere to their conscience in the way they teach.
3. The students should avoid laziness, gross indiscipline and other anti-social behaviour they should on their part attend classes regularly, study individually and in group, prepare well and pass examinations by themselves. All these can be done by developing good and well-planned study habits.

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