

Perceptions Of Polytechnic Students Towards Examination Malpractice

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempted to find out the perceptions of polytechnic students towards examination malpractice. The sample for the study consisted of 920 National Diploma [ND] and Higher National Diploma [HND] students of Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti randomly drawn from different subject disciplines. A questionnaire titled Examination Malpractice Perception Questionnaire (EM PQ) was used for the collection of necessary data. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Chi Square. The study revealed that many students have wrong concepts of examination malpractices. Some students see examination as an instrument of restriction on the ladder of success, hence the need to disobey any rules or regulations that may stand between them and success. The study therefore suggested that there is need to organize orientation lectures and seminars/talks on examination malpractice and corresponding sanctions to all students, at all levels of our educational system every semester and stakeholders in the educational sectors.

INTRODUCTION

The search for a measure of students' achievement has led to the adoption of examination among other measures. Examination, therefore, is the series of questions asked in order to determine whether or not the students have mastered what they are supposed to know or acquire. Although, students' performance in examinations may not be the true reflection of their ability, however, it is the closest indicator of the extent of the students' achievement in a given skill. Hence, examination becomes a tool we can adopt in determining the level of students' ability. We can therefore use examinations to categorize students into high and low ability. Those with high ability are given preference above those with low ability. Of course, those with low ability would want the same preferential treatment and in the bid to demonstrate high ability, they go into all kinds of vices. One of such vices is examination malpractice. One educational problem that has been of more concern and which has generated very serious discussion among contemporary Nigerians is the issue of examination malpractices or misbehaviors. It constitutes one of the greatest problems confronting the school system and it is assuming dangerous proportions in our society.

There is a public outcry and deep concern by educators, parents, government functionaries and employers of labor over the consistent reports of examination malpractices in our secondary schools particularly in West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) /National Examination Council (NECO) /National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) conducted examinations, in the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) for admission into our Colleges of Education/ Technology and Universities conducted by Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) as well as internally and externally

conducted examinations. Ezekwesili laments that the pervasive culture of examination malpractice impedes the realization of character and learning in education which is the foundation for creating and sustaining good society; nurturing the mind and ability to compete globally. Examination malpractice is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of academic development in Nigeria and it cuts across all levels of education in the country. Adaramola argued that the problem has eaten deeply into the fabrics of our educational system and the assessment of curriculum objectives is loaded with bias. He further opined that things have degenerated to the level that the validity and authenticity of certificates awarded in Nigerian institutions may be questionable to the outside world ^[1].

Examination malpractice is not a recent phenomenon or something peculiar to Nigeria or Africa alone but it is a global issue ^[2]. Examination malpractices have been in existence for very long time. Although, there seems not to be a consensus agreement on the first incidence of examination malpractice in public examination because while Okoye observed that it occurred in early 1948, Famiwole claimed it occurred in 1945 ^[3,4]. Examination misbehaviours or malpractice has been defined variously by experts with more or less the same meaning. Eperokun posited that examination malpractices involve various methods employed by candidates to cheat before or during examination ^[5]. Olumero viewed examination malpractice as any examination not conducted in accordance with specified norms set up by the examining institution or body ^[6]. Oluyeba and Daramola also asserted that examination malpractices is an irregular behaviour exhibited by a candidate or anybody charged with the conduct of examination before, during or after the examination which contravenes the rules and regulations governing the conduct of such examination ^[7]. Olayinka defines examination malpractice as a misconduct or improper practice in any examination with a view to obtaining good results through such a fraudulent action ^[8]. Ongom also described examination malpractice as a wrong doing in an examination which involves misconduct, irregularity as a situation which is contrary to the established rules and directives to be followed in order to affect fair conduct of examination ^[9]. He further opined that misconduct is an improper behaviour by candidates within or around the examination hall and dishonesty as an unfair practice devised with intention to cheat in examinations.

Similarly, World Bank Education Website define examination malpractice as a deliberate act of wrongdoing contrary to the official examination rules and is aimed at placing a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage ^[10,11]. Fatai also described examination malpractices as wrong doings in an examination, which involve misconduct and irregularity contrary to the established rules and directives or regulations guiding the fair conduct of both internal and external examinations ^[12]. It is a deliberate act of wrong doing, contrary to official rules, and is designed to place a candidate at unfair advantage or disadvantage. It is a careless, illegal or unacceptable behavior by a candidate in a formal test of his knowledge or ability and integrity of an examination ^[13]. Examination malpractice as used by Nwahunanya is the act of omission or commission intended to make a student pass examination without relying absolutely on his/her independent ability or resources. Nwana, while discussing aberrations on the Nigerian educational system stated that examination malpractice as the massive and unprecedented abuse of rules and regulations pertaining to internal and public examinations, beginning from the setting of such examinations through the taking of the examinations, their marking and grading, to the release of the results and the issuance of certificates. Odongbo says that examination malpractice refers to an act of wrong doing carried out by a candidate or groups of candidates or any other person with the intention to cheat & gain unfair advantage in an examination ^[14]. Awanbor, opines that examination malpractice is the application of unusual means to obtain a score or set of scores that is normally beyond the mental capability or the state of preparedness of a candidate for that examination. Viewing examination malpractice from both legal and moral perspectives, Salami defined examination malpractice as an improper and dishonest act associated with examination with a view to obtaining an unmerited advantage while Adaramola sees the issue in an operational term as “any situation that offers an examinee undue advantage over others in an examination” ^[15,16].

In summary, Makoju, Adewale, Nwangwu and Shuaibu say that whenever rules and regulations governing the conduct of any examination are not adhered to by parties involved (i.e. candidates and any other person involved in the conduct of examinations from setting the question to the release of result), then we can conclude that examination malpractice has occurred. A cursory look at the various definitions given above, show that some of the definitions refer to examination malpractice as “fraudulent” while some definitions referred to it as “wrong doings”. One can infer from these various definitions that examination malpractice:

- Is any act carried out before, during and after an examination, which is against the rules set out for the proper and orderly conduct of the examination.
- Is an action done to gain undue advantage over other candidates which is against the rules and regulations governing the conduct of such examination?
- refers to the various irregularities, fraud, misconduct and mismanagement that occur before, during and after examinations, including contravening examination rules and regulations; using unfair means in examinations; manipulating marks and supplying fake certificates/degrees; copying into examination halls; changing and exchanging answer booklets; impersonation; misconduct in examination centres; approaching invigilators or examiners for illegal assistance; aiding and abetting; influencing or bribing or terrorizing examiners/invigilators; smuggling answer booklets into or outside the examination halls and other vices.

Oladunni opined that the results of our examinations (either internal or external) are no longer true representations of the intellectual capabilities of the examinees ^[17]. While Alutu and Aluede as well as Ayeni reported that evidences abound of increasing

incident of examination malpractices by students in schools and colleges, which negate the purpose of education (i.e. the training of students with sound mind and character for the acquisition of practical and theoretical skills, knowledge and functional ideas for development and the search for truth) ^[18,19]. The general emphasis in our society today is on materialism, bribery, corruption, cultism, fraud, violence, certificate racketeering and a host of others social vices ^[19]. The value of examination and reliability of what it certifies had been eroded. Examination malpractices, dishonesty and fraud undermine objectivity, validity and reliability of examinations. It also divulges the certificates of integrity and credibility. Hence, stakeholders in the conduct of examination must live up their responsibilities in order to eliminate fraud and dishonesty in the system.

Various forms, modes, methods as well as causes of examination malpractices had been identified by different scholars ^[20-22,17]. Examination malpractices are multifarious and manifest in various forms including such practices as bringing extraneous materials into the examination hall, collusion, impersonation, unethical use of academic resources, fabrication of results, having foreknowledge of questions, mass cheating, assault on supervisors and “giraffing” ^[14,21,23]. The leakage of examination questions is one of the major types of examination malpractices in our educational system which occurs outside the examination halls. Leakages usually occur as a result of inadequate handling or pre-meditated sabotage during the printing and production process or while question papers are on transit from the custodian centers. It may occur through the carelessness of the examiners (subject teachers or course lecturers), inadequate precautions from the moderators, and insufficient precautions during the typing, printing and packaging processes or from the custodians of the examination question papers.

There are reported cases where teachers or lecturers shamefully collude with students to leak examination questions before examination commences in exchange for financial, material, sexual and other immoral gratifications. Leakages of examination question papers give a candidate an undue advantage of having a priori knowledge of the examination questions usually obtained through memorization, copying out or stealing of printed copies. Leakages are speedily facilitated or disseminated through cellphones, e-mails and other electronic devices. Aiding and abetting is another form of examination malpractice in which subject teachers, examiners and invigilators aid students in copying and dictating answers or solving questions on the chalkboard or sheet of papers for their candidates in the examination halls. It is very common in Mathematics and English Language papers which form basic admission requirements into higher institutions of learning. Some principals are known to have organized illegal collection of money from candidates, to buy over the conscience of any supervisor posted to their schools. Some private schools and “study centres” encourage examination malpractice through the lavish entertainment of supervisors and invigilators. Examination malpractices have assumed more serious dimension as students now prefer to register for Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) conducted by West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) outside their own schools or “Miracle Study Centres”. In these “Miracle Study Centres” answers are freely written on the chalkboard for students to copy, impersonation and other forms of examination malpractices are aggressively encouraged. Some groups of students register also in the remote village outside their domicile. Some even go to other states of the federation to register for the same examination conducted within their domicile.

Impersonation otherwise known as “mercenary” has become very rampant in both internal and external examinations like the Common Entrance Examinations into secondary schools, West African School Certificate Examination for both junior and senior school students, Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination conducted by Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board for Colleges of Education/Technology, Polytechnics and Universities. This is a situation where students hire people to write examinations for them. Students impersonate one another and sisters or brothers in the same school have been caught either writing or engaging teachers in write for their children. The “Man in Hijab nabbed at JAMB centre” is an account of impersonation reported by Olu-Aderounmu, Rotimi and Irinoye ^[24]. It was a case of a male impersonator who disguised as a female to take the University Matriculation Examination. Parents have also been known to have hired and paid touts to impersonate their children. They usually pay them some money depending on the number of subjects or the type of subjects to be impersonated. Sometimes they even lift these children and impersonators to the examination centres. Impersonation has reached a complexity state where the impersonator and the ‘bonafide’ candidate will sit together in the examination hall or the while the impersonator is in the examination hall while the ‘bonafide’ candidate is outside the hall to ensure that the contractor is doing the job well. With the ‘settlement’ of the supervisors, invigilators and security agents, the officials neglect their duties by avoiding thorough checks on candidates.

Copying during examination is exhibited in different forms ranging from copying from papers or notes taken into the examination hall to making use to information taken into the examination hall illegally, such as hidden formulae, important dates and definitions. Jottings are based on the key point of what they were thought in the classes, students’ pre-knowledge of the examination questions or perceived and anticipated likely examination questions. Students usually prepare and copy the answers to the anticipated questions using small pieces of papers, notebooks, toilet papers, currency notes, questions papers of previous examinations, blank pieces of papers, the desk, walls, handkerchiefs, rulers, four figure tables, socks, shirts waste-slips, mathematical set box, pockets, hidden on their hairs, brassier and other parts of their bodies into the examination halls. Regrettably, students sometimes swallow the jottings to avoid being caught or even when caught in the examination hall. Candidates have been caught with notes on their palms and thighs, on the helm of their trouser or on their shoes where invigilators or supervisors cannot easily detect it. A story was told of a female candidate who wrote brief notes on her baby’s body and when

the supervisor took the baby from her mother to stop her from crying and disturbing other candidates, the supervisor discovered on removing the baby's dress to reduce the sweat, the write up on her baby's body. Students have advanced in cheating; they have moved from the simple lodgment or hiding documents in their private parts to the utilization of technology in the form of mobile phones (SMS, voicemail etc.) to record, store and transmit information.

The most common method of copying fellow candidates in any examination is *giraffing* which involves a student stretching his/her neck to copy from another student with or without his/her knowledge or consent. Another method very close to *giraffing* is pairing system which entails students arranging among themselves how to assist or copy from one another or exchange information written on pieces of paper. They usually sit very close to each other and copy from each other, attempt the same questions and use the same language or write "word for word". Another method is academic alliance in which dull or weak students usually "settle" the bright ones and arrange to seat with them, so as to guarantee the flow of information. Candidates do exchange their answer booklets and write for each other in different handwriting and types of ink. Some students jot down answers on their question papers and pass round among members. Students also whispers in coded language to one another, especially in objective questions. Some teachers even join the students in the use of coded language in answering the objectives. The five fingers are coded A to E beginning from the thumb.

Some students in their desperate effort to acquire results or certificates that qualify them to gain admissions into higher institutions or secure a job have resorted to forgery of Senior School Certificate results. Some have gone ahead to delete the deficient scores in their statements of results and replace them with the exact scores that will serve their purposes. Some of these perpetrators have gained admissions with these forged results and have graduated while some were "fished out" when verifications of results were carried by their institution. There are instances when marks and grades are altered for candidates for financial benefits or some other undignified reasons by teachers and lecturers. Supplying of pre-written answer-sheets or re-writing of examination is another form of examination malpractices which is done during and after examination at a specified cost. This method entails the smuggling of answer sheets along with question papers out of the examination hall soon after the commencement of the examination and later smuggled in before the end of the stipulated examination duration or during submission time. Some teachers or lecturers also arranged with students especially female students to re-write an already completed examination at a convenient time with the completion of the spaces provided in the used examination script or by providing another new examination script and possible solutions to the examination questions. This is unethical and unprofessional on the parts of teachers, examiners and collaborators.

The increasing rate of examination malpractices might have resulted from the large number of candidates fielded for examinations coupled with the present day speedy dissemination of information through phone, e-mails and other electronic medias in addition to the speedy human mobility brought about by land and air transport system. Over the past few years, attention has been given to the issue of examination malpractice in Nigerian institutions of learning. Since the middle of the 1990's examination malpractices' seminars, workshops, conferences, rallies and campaigns were organized across the nation to address the decadence. In spite of these studies and strategies, examination malpractices have been on the increase. The alarming rate of its increase in Nigeria calls for novel ways to redress the situation. Different forms of solutions have also been suggested. All the same, Ayeni pointed out that the final solution to examination malpractice appeared not to be in sight, because every move to curb cheating inevitably suggests and generates other methods of cheating ^[19].

One is tempted to ask if decrees stipulating various degree of punishments for examination malpractices cannot stem cheating, how much worth or emphasis could be laid on the certificates being awarded by our institutions knowing fully well that examination scores are being inflated by all sorts of means apart from the normal human errors. What are the features of examination behaviours, which can be reduced or improved upon among polytechnics or Nigerian students at large? Hence, this study is an attempt at finding means of curbing the incidences of examination malpractices in our schools. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the perception of polytechnic students towards examination malpractice and to determine the degree of association between class and students' perception of examination malpractice, gender and students' perception of examination malpractice.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to address the above stated problem the following research questions are raised

1. What is the general perception of students towards examination malpractice?
2. What is the relationship between the level of academic exposure and students' perception of Examination Malpractices?
3. What is the degree of association between gender and students' perception of Examination Malpractices?

METHOD

The research design is descriptive survey which examines systematically the characteristics of examination malpractices by analyzing data collected from Polytechnic Students. The sample for this study consisted of nine hundred and twenty ^[19-20] National

Diploma [ND] and Higher National Diploma [HND] students randomly drawn from Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti. The students were in year II [final year class] of their programmes. These sets of students were chosen for the study in order to have a reflection of their past experiences in examination matters since they had taken three semester examinations [two in year I, one in year II] in the Polytechnic. A questionnaire, Examination Malpractice Perception Questionnaire [EMPQ] was constructed and used by the researchers to collect data for the study. The items in the questionnaire requested for responses of the respondents on a four-point scale: Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The validity of the instrument was reviewed for face and content validity by two experienced lecturers in counseling and psychology and two lecturers in measurement and evaluation. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach alpha = 7. 58 for EMPQ) was considered high enough for the research. The instrument was administered to the respondents at a predetermined lecture hall by the researchers with the assistance of two other colleagues. A weighted mean value of 2.5 ($4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 10 \div 4$) was used as the criterion cut off point. The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using chi – square (χ^2) test.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Research Question 1: What is the general perception of students towards examination malpractice?

Table 1 shows the results mean (μ) and standard deviation (σ) obtained from the analysis of students responses to their perception towards examination malpractices. **Table 1** reveals that the perceptions of the respondents differ on a number of issues.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of responses of students' perception towards examination malpractices.

S/N	STATEMENTS	μ	σ
1.	I cheat whenever the questions are difficult	3.52	1.77
2.	I cheat in examination due to lack of confidence in myself	3.47	1.52
3.	I don't have enough time to read for examination hence, the interest is cheating	3.20	1.51
4.	Cheating in examination makes me feel guilty	2.77	0.84
5.	I do not feel guilty cheating in an examination whenever the teacher fails to teach well	3.01	0.94
6.	I cheat because my friends cheat in examination	2.53	1.67
7.	Cheating is encouraging, since many people who cheat often escape punishment	3.01	1.23
8.	Cheating is not necessary if one has read well before examination	3.44	1.56
9.	No matter how hard you read, if you don't cheat, you will fail	1.87	0.78
10.	Only people that cheat, have high scores in internal and external examination	1.92	1.14
11.	Some teachers encourage cheating during examinations	2.76	1.05
12.	Parents encourage their children to cheat	3.61	1.15
13.	Cheating is necessary in competitive examinations in order to qualify for job opportunity	3.67	1.75
14.	You cannot pass examinations these days in Nigerians without cheating	2.70	1.27
15.	The Nigerian norms encourage cheating in examination	2.66	0.89
16.	It is difficult to stop cheating in examinations in schools	3.03	1.62
17.	Cheating is alright in difficult examination with large failures e.g. mathematics subject	3.47	1.08
18.	If I do not cheat, those who do will have advantage over me	3.07	1.13
19.	I do not believe I can pass without people assisting me	1.82	0.93
20.	Some teachers help students to pass	2.47	0.85
21.	Some principals arrange for corporate cheating in their schools	2.00	0.97
22.	My parents do not oppose using any opportunity I have to cheat	1.23	1.46
23.	It is good to arrange to sit next to someone in order to copy from his/her paper	1.23	1.46
24.	If I do not cheat in the examination it is difficult for me to pass well	3.01	1.16
25.	I was encouraged to cheat in examination because the invigilator cooperated	2.75	1.88
26.	Cheating in examination was introduced to me by a typist who requested for money in exchange for question paper	1.05	0.77
27.	I intend to further my studies in tertiary institution, hence I need to cheat to pass examinations	3.81	1.25
28.	Since I need a certificate, it does not matter how I get it, cheating inclusive.	3.41	1.70

Table 1 reveals the mean (μ) and standard deviation (σ) of responses of students' perceptions towards examination malpractice. Item 1 depicts that a large number of the respondents agreed that they cheated in examinations whenever the questions were difficult ($\mu = 3.52$). Item 2 equally shows that many of the respondents cheated in examinations because they lacked confidence in themselves (item 2, $\mu = 3.47$). Many of the respondents were interested in cheating because they have no time to prepare or read very well for examination (item 3, $\mu = 3.20$). However, item 9 with (item 9, $\mu = 1.87$) and item 10 with (item 10, $\mu = 1.92$) reveal that some the respondents agreed that no matter how hard you read, if you do not cheat, you cannot pass an examination and that it is only the students that cheat in an examination that obtain high scores. The students also opined that in Nigeria today, you cannot pass any examination without cheating (item 14, $\mu = 2.70$). This implies, therefore, that it is necessary to cheat in competitive examinations (item13, $\mu = 3.67$) in order to qualify for job opportunity. That is, if you do not cheat, those who do, will have advantage over you (item 18, $\mu = 3.07$).

Table 1 also reveals that some respondents get involved in examination malpractices because their friends are involved (item

6, $\mu = 2.53$). The respondents also agreed that cheating is encouraged because students who were caught cheating often escape punishment (item 7, $\mu = 3.01$). Item 11 with (item 11, $\mu = 2.76$), 12 with (item 12, $\mu = 3.61$) and 21 with (item 21, $\mu = 2.00$) indicate that teachers, principals and parents often encourage their students or wards to cheat in both internal and external examinations. Respondents also agreed that Nigerian societal norms support cheating (item 15, $\mu = 2.66$), and that invigilators are readily supportive in examination cheating (item 25, $\mu = 2.73$) while some parents are very supportive of using any available means of cheating by their wards to cheat (item 22, $\mu = 1.23$). Finally, items 27 and 28 suggested that students get involved in examination malpractices purposely to own a certificate (item 28, $\mu = 3.41$) or enable them further their studies (item 27, $\mu = 3.81$).

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the level of academic exposure and students' perception of Examination Malpractices?

Table 2 reveals a significant relationship between the level of academic exposure and

(1) Students' cheating in examination due to lack of confidence in themselves ($\chi^2 = 14.349$,

Table 2. Relationship between the level of academic exposure and students' perception of examination malpractices.

S/N	STATEMENTS	% of each group					X ²	Sig.
		Level	SA	A	D	SD		
1.	I cheat whenever the questions are difficult	ND II	180	125	115	145	0.211	0.976
		HND II	112	83	70	90		
2.	I cheat in examination due to lack of confidence in myself	ND II	191	134	115	125	14.349*	0.002
		HND II	81	85	92	97		
3.	I don't have enough time to read for examination hence, the interest is cheating	ND II	150	131	134	150	0.551	0.908
		HND II	88	82	84	101		
4.	Cheating in examination makes me feel guilty	ND II	131	151	146	137	2.436	0.487
		HND II	78	83	94	100		
5.	I do not feel guilty to cheat in the examination whenever the teacher fails to teach well	ND II	73	139	131	122	28.394*	0.000
		HND II	94	91	185	85		
6.	I cheat because my friends cheat in examination	ND II	270	42	133	120	85.953*	0.000
		HND II	81	89	93	92		
7.	Cheating is encouraging, since many people who cheat often escape punishment	ND II	172	139	121	133	2.102	0.552
		HND II	94	92	86	83		
8.	Cheating is not necessary if one has read well before examination	ND II	169	144	127	125	2.238	0.524
		HND II	91	91	86	87		
9.	No matter how hard you read, if you don't cheat, you will fail	ND II	154	124	139	148	2.481	0.479
		HND II	82	89	91	93		
10.	Only people that cheat, have high scores in internal and external examination	ND II	164	134	121	146	0.855	0.836
		HND II	94	84	82	95		
11.	Some teachers encourage cheating during examinations	ND II	160	128	102	175	8.174*	0.043
		HND II	83	85	89	98		
12.	Parents encourage their children to cheat	ND II	145	126	143	151	3.949	0.267
		HND II	80	99	84	92		
13.	Cheating is necessary in competitive examinations in order to qualify for job opportunity	ND II	151	135	130	149	1.727	0.631
		HND II	97	84	92	82		
14.	You cannot pass examinations these days in Nigeria without cheating	ND II	174	124	125	142	8.562*	0.040
		HND II	83	89	92	91		
15.	The Nigerian norm encourage cheating in examination	ND II	148	133	130	154	1.530	0.675
		HND II	85	90	90	90		
16.	It is difficult to stop cheating in examinations in schools	ND II	157	124	145	139	3.703	0.295
		HND II	81	92	90	92		
17.	Cheating is alright in difficult examination with large failures e.g. mathematics subject	ND II	175	135	122	133	1.525	0.676
		HND II	98	92	83	82		
18.	If I do not cheat, those who do will have advantage over me	ND II	139	133	140	153	1.096	0.778
		HND II	85	91	92	87		
19.	I do not believe I can pass without people assisting me	ND II	166	131	129	139	2.895	0.408
		HND II	87	86	92	90		
20.	Some teachers help students to pass	ND II	197	122	138	108	15.079*	0.002
		HND II	83	89	92	91		
21.	Some principals arrange for corporate cheating in their schools	ND II	176	143	127	119	2.768	0.429
		HND II	93	93	85	84		

22.	My parents do not oppose using any opportunity I have to cheat	ND II	169	136	119	141	5.112	0.164
		HND II	85	88	92	90		
23.	It is good to arrange to sit next to someone in order to copy from his/her paper	ND II	174	131	131	129	3.404	0.333
		HND II	90	85	88	92		
24.	If I do not cheat in the examination it is difficult for me to pass well	ND II	175	135	122	133	80.254*	0.000
		HND II	85	91	89	90		
25.	I was encouraged to cheat in examination because the invigilator cooperated	ND II	155	143	127	140	2.346	0.504
		HND II	85	85	91	94		
26.	Cheating in examination. was introduced to me by a typist who requested for money in exchange for question paper	ND II	159	139	127	140	2.386	0.496
		HND II	87	86	80	102		
27.	I intend to further my studies in tertiary institution, hence I need to cheat to pass examinations	ND II	157	145	137	126	4.402	0.221
		HND II	82	86	90	97		
28.	I need a certificate, it does not matter how I get it, cheating inclusive.	ND II	164	134	127	140	5.206	0.157
		HND II	80	99	84	92		

P < 0.05); (2) students' feeling guilty for cheating in the examination due to the failure of teachers or lecturers to teach well ($\chi^2 = 28.394$, P < 0.05); (3) students' cheating in examination because others are cheating ($\chi^2 = 85.953$, P < 0.05); (4) the encouragement given to students to cheat in examination ($\chi^2 = 8.174$, P < 0.05); (5) students' belief that one cannot pass examination in Nigeria today without cheating ($\chi^2 = 8.562$, P < 0.05); (6) the assistance rendered to students by teachers in order to pass examination ($\chi^2 = 15.079$, P < 0.05) and (7) students' difficulty in passing examination without cheating. All the same, the relationship between the level of academic exposure and all other indices of students' perception of examination malpractices time were not significant at 0.05.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between gender and students' perception of Examination Malpractices?

Table 3 depicts the relationship between gender and students' perception of examination malpractices.

Table 3. Relationship between gender and students' perception of examination malpractices.

S/N	STATEMENTS	% of each group					X ²	Sig.
		Gender	SA	A	D	SD		
1.	I cheat whenever the questions are difficult	Male	150	135	140	160	1.378	0.711
		Female	75	83	80	97		
2.	I cheat in examination due to lack of confidence in myself	Male	196	139	120	130	14.196*	0.003
		Female	75	81	87	92		
3.	I don't have enough time to read for exam hence, the interest is cheating	Male	155	136	139	155	3.900	0.272
		Female	73	77	79	106		
4.	Cheating in examination makes me feel guilty	Male	151	151	146	137	2.278	0.517
		Female	80	78	85	92		
5.	I do not feel guilty to cheat in the exam whenever the teacher fails to teach well	Male	178	144	136	127	1.671	0.643
		Female	89	86	80	80		
6.	I cheat because my friends cheat in examination	Male	175	147	138	125	7.660*	0.045
		Female	76	84	88	87		
7.	Cheating is encouraging, since many people who cheat often escape punishment	Male	174	147	126	138	1.480	0.687
		Female	89	87	81	78		
8.	Cheating is not necessary if one has read well before examination	Male	174	149	132	130	2.046	0.563
		Female	86	92	75	82		
9.	No matter how hard you read, if you don't cheat, you will fail	Male	159	129	144	153	0.536	0.911
		Female	84	77	86	88		
10.	Only people that cheat, have high scores in internal and external examination	Male	169	139	126	151	0.705	0.872
		Female	89	79	77	90		
11.	Some teachers encourage cheating during examinations	Male	163	133	107	182	9.348*	0.039
		Female	78	80	84	93		
12.	Parents encourage their children to cheat	Male	150	131	148	156	4.012	0.260
		Female	75	94	79	87		
13.	Cheating is necessary in competitive examinations in order to qualify for job opportunity	Male	156	139	135	155	1.833	0.608
		Female	92	79	87	77		
14.	You cannot pass examinations these days in Nigeria without cheating	Male	179	129	130	147	6.214	0.102
		Female	78	84	87	86		

15.	The Nigerian norm encourage cheating in examination	Male	153	138	135	159	1.446	0.695
		Female	80	85	85	85		
16.	It is difficult to stop cheating in examinations in schools	Male	162	129	150	144	3.618	0.306
		Female	76	87	85	87		
17.	Cheating is alright in difficult exam with large failures e.g. mathematics subject	Male	180	140	127	138	1.279	0.734
		Female	93	87	78	77		
18.	If I do not cheat, those who do will have advantage over me	Male	144	138	145	158	1.068	0.785
		Female	80	86	87	82		
19.	I do not believe I can pass without people assisting me	Male	171	136	135	143	2.641	0.450
		Female	82	81	87	85		
20.	Some teachers help students to pass	Male	202	127	143	113	14.080*	0.003
		Female	78	84	87	86		
21.	Some principals arrange for corporate cheating in their schools	Male	181	148	132	124	2.378	0.498
		Female	88	88	80	79		
22.	My parents do not oppose using any opportunity I have to cheat	Male	174	141	124	146	4.823	0.185
		Female	80	83	87	85		
23.	I prefer arranging to sit with someone in order to copy his / or her paper	Male	179	136	136	134	3.105	0.376
		Female	85	80	83	87		
24.	If I do not cheat in the examination it is difficult for me to pass well	Male	180	140	127	138	5.171	0.160
		Female	80	86	84	85		
25.	I was encouraged to cheat in examination because the invigilator cooperated	Male	160	148	132	145	2.135	0.545
		Female	83	77	86	89		
26.	Cheating in examination was introduced to me by a typist who requested for money in exchange for question paper	Male	157	144	139	145	2.053	0.561
		Female	82	81	75	97		
27.	I intend to further my studies in tertiary institution; hence I need to cheat to pass exams.	Male	162	150	142	131	4.361	0.225
		Female	77	81	85	92		
28.	I need a certificate, it does not matter how I get it, cheating inclusive.	Male	169	139	132	145	5.163	0.160
		Female	75	94	79	87		

Table 3 reveals a significant relationship between student gender and (1) Students' cheating in examination due to lack of confidence in themselves ($\chi^2 = 14.349$, $P < 0.05$); (2) students' feeling guilty for cheating in the examination due to the failure of teachers or lecturers to teach well ($\chi^2 = 28.394$, $P < 0.05$); (3) students' cheating in examination because others are cheating ($\chi^2 = 85.953$, $P < 0.05$); (4) the encouragement given to students to cheat in examination ($\chi^2 = 8.174$, $P < 0.05$); (5) students' belief that one cannot pass examination in Nigeria today without cheating ($\chi^2 = 8.562$, $P < 0.05$); (6) the assistance rendered to students by teachers in order to pass examination ($\chi^2 = 15.079$, $P < 0.05$) and (7) students' difficulty in passing examination without cheating. All the same, the relationship between students' gender and all other indices of students' perception of examination malpractices were not significant at 0.05.

DISCUSSION

The ever-growing malaise of examination malpractice seems to stem from students' wrong perceptions towards examination because most of them have negative constructs as regards what learners derive from examination. The findings of this study shows that many of the respondents cheated in examinations because they lacked confidence in themselves and this might not be unconnected with the respondents' interest in cheating because they have no time to prepare or read very well for examination. This result corroborates the assertion of Kano, Ayeni that students who engaged in examination malpractices do not perceive examination as a challenge to learning or to require skills, rather they see it as an instrument for oppression, humiliation and restriction on the ladder of success. And that a person's ability to obtain a decent job and his socio-economic mobility are by and large, a function of his performance in a certain examination ^[25,19].

Contrary to the view expressed by Kareem that in order to succeed in examination, students need to be emotionally as well as intellectually prepared, this study found out that students did not often attend their lectures or prepare well in advance for their examinations ^[26]. Rather they had lost confidence in themselves and believed that they cannot pass no matter how hard they prepare. What is more, some parents aided and abated their wards in cheating by pursuing live question papers to support them rather than urge the students to prepare thoroughly for examination. This finding is in line with the position of Nanna that parents and school teachers' aid examination malpractice to enable students get undeserved grades ^[27]. These studies like that of Alutu and Aluuede found that majority of students believed that cheating is part of Nigerians' norms ^[18]. Hence their involvement in examination malpractice is a matter of joining the bandwagon. In fact, indulgence in examination malpractice has the support of some parents, invigilators, teachers, and principals. School principals organize corporate cheating in their schools during external examinations, thus turning their schools to "miracle centers" where all examinees, as a matter of compulsion, must pass.

This findings is in agreement with view expressed by Alutu and Aluede, Ayeni that due to breakdown in our value system, success is no longer sees as a function no hard work ^[18,19]. As parents are busy searching for easy ways or short-cuts to riches or wealth, their wards and children are busy too planning to obtain certificates at all cost. Success, today, is measured by how much you can acquire certificates and good grades at school, without bothering about the process. Many teachers who had not taught well or covered the prescribed contents had no choice than to aid their students to cheat in order to pass. The teachers wanted the students to pass, since it is seen as a measure to good teaching. The results of this study pointed to the fact that majority of students have a wrong conception about examination ethics. For instance they conceived examination ethics to include; violating examination rule at will, condoning examination misconducts, assisting friends and cheating in examination provided you are not caught, bribing invigilator and supervisors etc.

CONCLUSION

Examination malpractice is a contagious and cancerous virus that has spread throughout the nooks and crannies of the society and has eaten deeply into the fabrics of the entire nation. All stakeholders- government, school authorities, parents, guardians, students/pupils, and the public have all contributed in one form or the other to the menace and malaise. Nothing short of a holistic approach - cleansing the society and the whole educational system will solve the problem. The task requires urgent attention in order to redeem our totally tarnished or battered image locally, nationally and internationally. If our country will emerge as a first class world power and breakthrough technologically, all examination leakages and other dishonest practices must be done away with because no nation can rise above or beyond her education level.

The respondents affirm that there is prevalence of examination malpractices before, during and after examination in our educational institutions. However, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean perception between male and female students as well as between ND and HND students of the existence of examination malpractice in the polytechnics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is great need for team effort to tame this social malaise that is inimical to our academic development. It is hereby recommended that emphasis should be placed on moral instructions and value re-orientation in all our educational institutions to combat examination malpractice. Students should be taught the virtues of hard work, honesty, dignity of labour as well as examination ethics and sanctions. In fact, examination ethics should be made a subject of study at every level of schooling and its content must include: the grooming students in values of study, study habits and development of study skills. The undue emphasis placed on paper qualifications should be reduced so as to minimize the rate at which students commit examination malpractice to acquire these paper qualifications. School 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 malpractice. Similarly, the administration and conduct of examination should be entrusted to the care of men and women of proven integrity. Class teachers, school principals, invigilators, supervisors and examining bodies' official must be well informed about their expected behaviours, actions, and secrecy of examination question entrusted into their cares and the need for them to abide with examination ethics. Again, government has enacted the relevant laws on examination malpractice. These laws must be implemented to the later and bitter lessons must be set for students to see so as to serve as deterrent to others. Guidance and counseling services should be adopted in our educational institutions so as to reduce cases of examination malpractice. And there is need to provide adequate teaching and learning materials. Libraries and laboratories should be stocked with the needed textbooks, chemicals and apparatus for effective teaching and learning. Finally, there is need to identify other alternative ways (such as Computer Based Test (CBT) currently in use by Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in the conduct of its Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME)) of assessing students' ability other than conventional paper and pencil examinations.

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