

Perception of Secondary School Teachers on Examination Malpractice in Ibadan Metropolis, Ibadan, Nigeria



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ABSTRACT: The study examined the perception of teachers towards examination malpractice in Ibadan metropolis, Ibadan, Nigeria. It ascertained the causes of examination malpractice in the study area and identified ways of curbing related examination malpractice. These were with a view to curbing examination malpractice in the study area. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The sample size for the study comprised one hundred (100) teachers selected using simple random sampling technique. An instrument tagged "Perception of Teachers on Examination Malpractice Questionnaire" (PTEMQ) was used for data collection. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, mainly frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings of this study among others revealed that teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools was good (52%) in the study area. The most reported measures that curb examination malpractice in study area were: prevention of students from bringing prepared answers to the examination halls ($\bar{x} = 3.42$); and intensifying efforts in effective supervision of students during examinations ($\bar{x} = 3.41$); and strict punishment meted out to officials caught with the act of examination malpractice ($\bar{x} = 3.39$). The study concluded that teachers had good perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area.

KEYWORDS: Examination malpractice, Perception, Teachers, Students, Secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

An examination is a veritable tool for evaluating the understanding of the knowledge gained in a particular task being exposed to. Examination is extremely important not just in educational system, but also for the society at large. It is an activity undertaken to ascertain the level of mastery of certain skills. Hence, it is an activity embarked upon at both formal and informal settings of education since education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs, habits, and personal development for transmission of cultural heritage from one generation to the next. However, in educational institutions, students are groomed through teaching to build required skills in them and promote knowledge of the organized contents of study. Apart from teacher-made examination conducted to quantify the extent to which the curriculum objectives are being achieved, examination bodies also conduct examinations especially at the completion of particular level in order for the award of certification or placement.

Certain learning outcomes are set for the students to build their knowledge and skills, and to check either the students have achieved those learning outcomes or not, the test is designed (Adegoke, 2011). In the early grades, schools are responsible to conduct an exam in school premises and evaluate students' performance. At the higher grades, students are appeared in standardized test. Examination is a formal test of someone's knowledge or aptitude in a certain topic, notably via answering questions or practical exercises, and that it is used to determine how much of a subject matter in a particular field of study the applicant has learned (Aslam, Niazi and Iqbal, 2021).

Examinations are extremely important not just in our educational system, but also for our society (Amadi & Opuiyo, 2018). In Nigeria for instance, different types of examinations are conducted by different authorities, for example, common entrance examination conducted at the completion of primary education for placement into junior secondary school, basic education certificate examination at the end of the junior secondary education, senior secondary school examination, a diploma or degree exams, entrance test among others etc. Students have to pass a particular examination in which they appeared to guarantee

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their achievement of the learnt concepts. However, students have a variety of options for gaining success in these examinations, one of which is cheating in examinations by copying from others or leaking exams papers (Birks, Mills, Allen and Tee, 2020).

Exam malpractice is defined as a purposeful violation of official examination norms intended to give unfairly advantage or disadvantage to a candidate (Aslam, Niazi and Iqbal, 2021). Examination malpractice is any illegal act committed by a student single handed or in collaboration with others like fellow students, parents, teachers, supervisors, invigilators, printers and anybody or group of people before, during or after examinations in order to obtain undeserved marks or grades (Omebe, 2014). Examination malpractice is any form of misbehavior that leads to the alteration of or a tempering with the prescribed ways of conducting examination in any given system. It is a punishable offence which is committed during the process of normal and recognized examination (Amadi and Opuiyo, 2018).

The wide spread and persistence of examination malpractices have been attributed to various reasons. The causes as identified by Petters and Maureen (2014) include fear of failure, craze for certificate, desire of parents to have their children in choice professions and university, pressure on students to pursue courses which they have no aptitude, pressure on teachers who want to gain favour of student and overcrowded sitting arrangement. George & Ukpong (2013) links the increasing rate of examination malpractice to poor teaching, ineffective preparation by students, ill-equipped library facilities, and dubious admission policy.

Also, Akaranga & Ongong (2013) views the cause of examination malpractice to parental upbringing. They opined that because of social status and economic ability, most parents are easily persuaded to bribe their way through for the sole success of their children and self-gratification. The overdependence on educational certificates as a measure of one's knowledge and competence has led to a mad rush by most people for educational certificates through unethical means. The Nigerian society today is characterized by a heavy emphasis on success and wealth without a corresponding emphasis on legitimate means and avenues to be used in achieving the success. The country has become a commercial venture and no longer a place for selfless service (Aslam, Niazi and Iqbal, 2021). Examination malpractice has been a problem affecting the quality of education worldwide and in turn has negative implications on the overall development of a nation. Despite all efforts by professionals in the education sector and policy makers to curb the wide spread of examination malpractice, examination malpractice still prevails in most secondary schools (Akunne, Chigbo-Obasi and Iwogbe, 2021). This unethical behaviour has led to cancellation and seizing of examination results by examination bodies and so requires urgent attention for more serious reason.

Curbing the unethical practices in examination conduct is achievable through a concerted effort of all the stakeholders in education. Researches were and are been conducted on the possible ways of curbing examination malpractices. Mashanyare and Chinamasa (2014) suggested, as a way of reducing examination malpractices, the need for debates on examinations leakages on mass media to raise public awareness. Adeyemi (2010) called for increased efforts on effective supervision of students during examinations, for instance, checking for electronic devices on students before entering examination halls, termination of examination officials and teachers involved in perpetrating examination malpractices so as to deter others from doing the same. Maheka (2015) recommended schools to conduct intensified sensitization to both teachers and learners; the relevant Ministry, through the standards officers and school managers, should intensify monitoring in order to ensure quality delivery of lessons so as to develop confidence in learners; conduct student awareness campaigns and workshops to highlight the importance of the integrity of the education system and also to stiffen and enforce security policies.

Tawiah, Alberta, Bossman and Ata (2015) recommended withdrawal, rustications and imprisonment of culprits while Pana Press (2016) emphasized the idea of arresting the culprits. In Kenya, Muthaa, Muriungi and Njue (2014) recommended that governments should develop policies that ensure examinations are only manned by security officers trained on examination management and that security officers should be training on examinations management and their role expectations. Muchemwa and Dhliwayo (2017) concluded in their study that it is possible to curb examination malpractices at all examination related levels, that is, student, teacher, examination boards, examination storage and transportation by providing necessary facilities, establishment of standing examination policies and decrees, proper training to all involved, awareness campaigns and workshops, arresting and terminating the culprits and abolishing ranking of schools per examination results.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Examination is essential to student's academic experience at any educational level because the assessment of students' academic achievement hinges on it. Future progress, as well as employment opportunities of students, depends on the results of the examination taken which invariably means that such examination should be conducted properly to ensure that it tests what it is supposed to test and that the results reflect a candidate's genuine position. Despite the great value placed on examinations, examination misconduct is, however, widespread as researches suggest that examination misconduct is increasing day by day.

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To this end, the perception of teachers who are directly involved in the conduct of examinations on the examination malpractices among the students they teach and interact with, becomes necessary, hence this study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the perception of teachers towards examination malpractice in Ibadan metropolis:

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the perception of secondary school teachers on examination malpractice in Ibadan metropolis;
2. ascertain the causes of examination malpractice among secondary school students in the study area; and
3. Identify ways of curbing related examination malpractice in the study area.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study and they are stated below:

1. What are the perceptions of secondary school teachers on examination malpractice in Ibadan metropolis?
2. What are the causes of examination malpractice among secondary school students in the study area?
3. What are the strategies for curbing examination malpractice in the study area?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design since the intention was to determine the perception of public secondary school students towards examination malpractices and examination ethics. The population for the study comprised secondary school teachers in Ibadan metropolis. The sample for this study consisted of one hundred (100) secondary school teachers. Ten schools were selected for this study using simple random sampling technique. In each school, ten (10) teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique giving a total number of 100 teachers that constituted the sample for the study. An instrument tagged "Perception of Teachers on Examination Malpractice Questionnaire" (PTEMQ) was used to collect data for the study. The PTEMQ has four sections. Section A consisted of socio-demographic information of the respondents; Section B contained 10 items on the teachers perception of examination malpractice; Section C consisted 10 items on the causes of examination malpractice and Section D consisted 10 items on strategies for curbing examination malpractice based on Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

A structured questionnaire used as the research instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The research instrument was adequately checked by experts in Test and Measurement and later administered on 40 teachers outside the study area and was validated in which the Cronbach Alpha yielded 0.74. The researchers personally visited the selected secondary schools and sought permission from the school principal to make use of the schools for the study. The researchers then approach the teachers and explain the purpose of the study to them. Thereafter, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondents to elicit information on their perception of examination malpractice. The data collected were analysed using frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation through (SPSS).

RESULTS

Socio-demographic information of secondary school teachers in Ibadan metropolis.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of socio-demographic information of secondary school teachers in Ibadan metropolis

S/N	Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	52	52.0
	Female	48	48.0
2.	Age		
	Less than 30 years	40	40.0
	30-40 years	58	58.0
	41 years and above	2	2.0
3.	Teaching Experience		
	Less than 10 years	48	48.0
	10-20 years	46	46.0
	21 years and above	6	6.0
4.	Qualifications		
	NCE	32	32.0
	BSc.Ed./BEEd./BSc.	56	56.0
	Others	12	12.0

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Results in Table 1 showed the descriptive analysis of socio-demographic information of secondary school teachers in Ibadan metropolis. From the Table 1, it can be gathered that 52.0% of the respondents are males while the remaining 48.0% are females even as 40.0%, 58.0% and 2.0% are in the age range of less than 30 years, 30-40 years and 41 years and above respectively. Additionally, 48.0%, 46.0% and 6.0% of the teachers had less than 10 years, 10-20 years and 21 years and above teaching experience respectively. Considering educational qualifications, 32.0% qualified with NCE, 56.0% qualified with BSc.Ed./BEd./BSc. and the remaining 2.0% pointed at others in the study area

Research Question 1: What is the teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis? In order to answer this research question, items in teachers' perception of examination malpractice considering the 10 items on the perception were scored using the format of "Strongly Agree" (SA) response that was allotted 4 points, "Agree" (A) response, 3 points, "Disagree" (D) response, 2 points and "Strongly Disagree" (SD) response, was allotted 1 point. Responses from individual to each item were computed and minimum and maximum scores obtained in this scale were 10 and 40 respectively. Scores of 10-15 (0.0%-39.9%) = Low Perception; 16-23 (40.0%-59.9%) = Moderate Perception; and 24-40 (60.0%-100.0%) = High Perception.

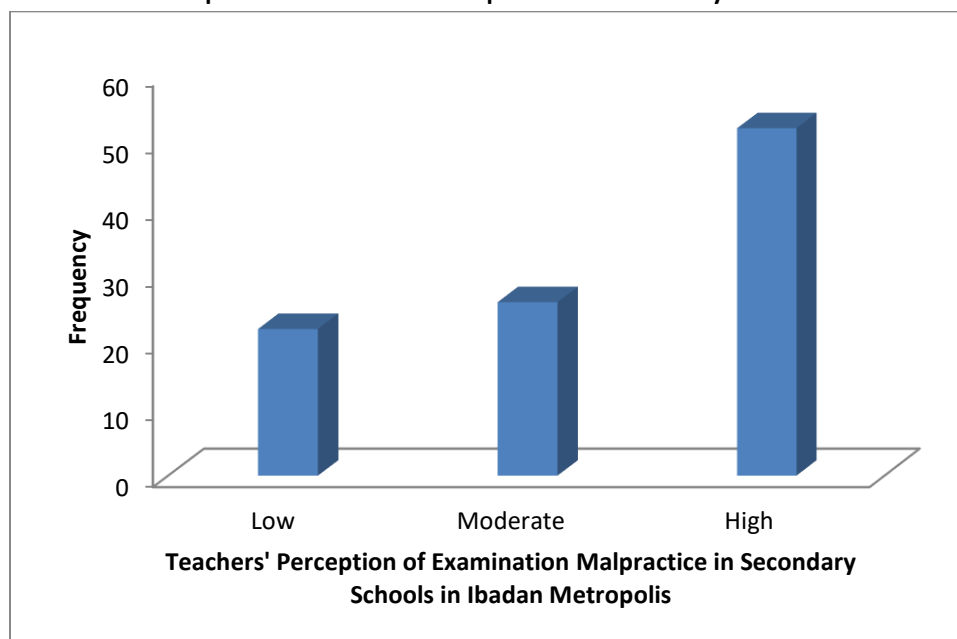
Table 2: Descriptive statistics of the teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Ibadan metropolise

S/N	Perception	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	22	22.0
2.	Moderate	26	26.0
3.	High	52	52.0
Total		100	100.0

N = 100

Results in Table 2 showed the descriptive analysis of the teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Ibadan. From the Table 2, it can be deduced that the teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools is high at 52.0% in the study area. However, 22.0% and 26.0% of the respondents had low perception and moderate perception of examination malpractice respectively in the study area.

Figure 1: Teachers' Perception of Examination Malpractice in Secondary Schools in Ibadan metropolis



Research Question 2: What are the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area?

In order to answer this research question, data collected on various causes of examination malpractice considering the teachers' responses to the 10 items in Section B based on Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were subjected to descriptive analysis of mean and standard deviation and the results are presented in Table 3.

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Mean value below 2.00 = Not Causes of Examination Malpractice

Mean value of 2.00 and above = Causes of Examination Malpractice

Mean = \bar{x} ; Standard Deviation = SD

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area

S/N	Items	\bar{x}	SD
1.	Lack of seriousness of students	3.75	0.48
2.	Inability of parents to provide textbooks	3.03	0.87
3.	Fear of failure	3.38	0.74
4.	Lack of proper supervision during examination	3.21	0.84
5.	Lack of necessary instructional facilities and resources	3.32	0.71
6.	Peer group influence	3.47	0.67
7.	Lack of ability to cope with both social and academic	3.32	0.80
8.	Lack of confidence by the students	3.26	0.72
9.	Scarcity of books in the library	2.98	0.95
10.	Overcrowded sitting arrangement	3.02	0.89

N = 100

Results in Table 3 showed the descriptive analysis of the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area. Considering the mean scores, it can be observed from the Table that lack of seriousness of students, inability of parents to provide textbooks, fear of failure, lack of proper supervision during examination, lack of necessary instructional facilities and resources, peer group influence, lack of ability to cope with both social and academic, lack of confidence by the students, scarcity of books in the library and overcrowded sitting arrangement at the mean scores of 3.75, 3.03, 3.38, 3.21, 3.32, 3.47, 3.32, 3.26, 2.98 and 3.02 respectively are the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis.

Research Question 3: What are the measures that can curb examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area?

In order to answer this research question, data collected on various measures that can curb examination malpractice considering the teachers' responses to the 10 items in Section B based on Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were subjected to descriptive analysis of mean and standard deviation and the results are presented in Table 4.

Mean value below 2.00 = Not Measures that can Curb Examination Malpractice

Mean value of 2.00 and above = Measures that can Curb Examination Malpractice

Mean = \bar{x} ; Standard Deviation = SD

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of the measures that can curb examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area

S/N	Items	\bar{x}	SD
1.	Prevention of students from bringing prepared answers to the examination halls	3.42	0.67
2.	Cancellation of affected students' results	3.21	0.61
3.	Cancellation of the affected schools' results	3.03	0.74
4.	Blacklisting of the affected examination centres	3.19	0.69
5.	Making concerted efforts in enhancing discipline among students through counseling services in the schools	3.35	0.72
6.	Full implementation of the examination malpractice decree which provides for the imprisonment of culprits to 21 years jail term	3.05	0.82
7.	Using electronic devices to check candidate before entering examination halls	3.35	0.72
8.	Intensifying efforts in effective supervision of students during examinations	3.41	0.62
9.	Increased emphasis on the use of continuous assessment assessment by schools and examination boards	3.33	0.67
10.	Strict punishment should be meted out to officials caught with the act of examination malpractice	3.39	0.63

N = 100

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Results in Table 4 showed the descriptive analysis of the measures that can be used to curb examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area. Considering the mean scores, it can be deduced that prevention of students from bringing prepared answers to the examination halls, cancellation of affected students' results, cancellation of the affected schools' results, blacklisting of the affected examination centres, making concerted efforts in enhancing discipline among students through counseling services in the schools, full implementation of the examination malpractice decree which provides for the imprisonment of culprits to 21 years jail term, using electronic devices to check candidate before entering examination halls, intensifying efforts in effective supervision of students during examinations, increased emphasis on the use of continuous assessment by schools and examination boards, strict punishment should be meted out to officials caught with the act of examination malpractice at the mean scores of 3.42, 3.21, 3.03, 3.19, 3.35, 3.05, 3.35, 3.41, 3.33 and 3.39 respectively are the measures that can be used to curb examination malpractice in secondary schools in the study area.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results revealed that teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Ibadan is good. This means that it is an undeniable fact that examination malpractices is still very much been practiced despite the campaign against the act. This might also not be unconnected with the fact some teachers are also involved in perpetrating the unholy acts as pointed out by Situma and Wasike (2020) that teachers have been accused of facilitating test misconduct in numerous ways. Teachers give answers to students in the examination hall and even work sums for students to copy rapidly before they are rubbed. Teachers may believe that if the students do not get good marks in examinations, it may result to questioning their teaching activities as well as that of the school management and society will know that they did not provide instruction effectively, which ultimately cause bad appraisal. Therefore, they help students to cheat in examinations or assist them to write answers to protect their own false image (Aslam, Niazi and Iqbal, 2021).

The results further revealed several causes of examination malpractices especially in the study area. Some of the causes identified include lack of seriousness of students, inability of parents to provide textbooks, fear of failure, lack of proper supervision during examination, lack of necessary instructional facilities and resources, peer group influence, lack of ability to cope with both social and academic, lack of confidence by the students, scarcity of books in the library and overcrowded sitting arrangement. This tallied with the submissions of Nwankwo & Nwankwo (2020) and Osadebe & Bini, (2018) that students' attitude also play a significant role in examination misconduct. Because they are either sluggish or suspicious, certain pupils are more likely to cheat than others. Azar & Applebaum, (2020) asserted that youngsters witness and copy what other persons do, whether they are their teachers, friends, parents, relatives, or any person from the society. According to Gentina, Tang and Gu (2017), children are merely replicating what they observe in society. They may have witnessed their parents using money to get admittance, jobs, and other favours, either for themselves or for their children.

On curbing the prevalence of examination malpractices in schools, the results revealed that prevention of students from bringing prepared answers to the examination halls, cancellation of affected students' results, cancellation of the affected schools' results, blacklisting of the affected examination centres, making concerted efforts in enhancing discipline among students through counseling services in the schools, full implementation of the examination malpractice decree which provides for the imprisonment of culprits to 21 years jail term, using electronic devices to check candidate before entering examination halls, intensifying efforts in effective supervision of students during examinations, increased emphasis on the use of continuous assessment by schools and examination boards, strict punishment should be meted out to officials caught with the act of examination malpractice can be adopted to curb examination malpractice in secondary schools. This is in line with the assertion of Adeyemi (2010) who called for increased efforts on effective supervision of students during examinations such as serious searching to check for electronic devices on students before entering examination halls, termination of examination officials and teachers involved in perpetrating examination malpractices so as to deter others from doing the same.

Also, Maheka (2015) supported this view by recommending that schools conduct intensified sensitization to both teachers and learners. He further stated that the relevant Ministry, through the standard officers and school managers, should intensify monitoring in order to ensure quality delivery of lessons so as to develop confidence in learners; conduct student awareness campaigns and workshops to highlight the importance of the integrity of the education system and also to stiffen and enforce security policies.

Tawiah, Alberta, Bossman and Ata (2015) recommended withdrawal, rustications and imprisonment of culprits while Pana Press (2016) emphasized the idea of arresting the culprits. In furtherance, Muthaa, Muriungi and Njue (2014) recommended that governments should develop policies that ensure examinations are only manned by security officers trained on examination management and that security officers should be training on examinations management and their role expectations. Corroborating this finding, Muchemwa and Dhliwayo (2017) also concluded in their study that it is possible to curb examination

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malpractices at all examination related levels, that is, student, teacher, examination boards, examination storage and transportation by providing necessary facilities, establishment of standing examination policies and decrees, proper training to all involved, awareness campaigns and workshops, arresting and terminating the culprits and abolishing ranking of schools.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded based on the findings of the study that the teachers' perception of examination malpractice in secondary schools is high meaning they are well aware of the unethical act perpetrated during examinations. Also, lack of seriousness on the part of students, inability of parents to provide textbooks, fear of failure, lack of proper supervision during examination, lack of necessary instructional facilities and resources as well as peer group influence, are some of the reasons for indulging in the practices. Finally, prevention of students from bringing prepared answers to the examination halls, cancellation of affected students' results, cancellation of the affected schools' results, blacklisting of the affected examination centres, making concerted efforts in enhancing discipline among students through counseling services in the schools and full implementation of the examination malpractice decree are some of the ways to curbing examination malpractices in senior secondary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are put forward based on the findings of the study.

- Students should be well prepared for examinations at all times.
- Teachers are expected to be more vigilant during examination invigilation
- Parents should endeavour to make available every necessary equipment and materials needed to complement the school effort to adequately enhance teaching and learning and to prepare students for examinations without engaging in malpractices
- Government through examination bodies or agencies should put every mercenaries to checkmate the practice of examination malpractices

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