

Assessment of Examination Bodies' Control on Examination Malpractice in Nigeria Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract:- Examination malpractice has been a cankerworm in the bloodstream of the educational system in the world and most especially Nigeria. Examination malpractice has become an order of the day at all levels of educational institutions in the country. Efforts have been made by all stakeholders and mostly the government or examination bodies to curb or curtail the vices at all levels, considering the negative impacts it is having on the quality of education and the integrity of the country's educational system. The main concern of this study is to assess the efforts of examination bodies in curbing examination malpractice in the country, to upgrade the quality, validity, and reliability of our educational certificates. Some different examinations bodies were in charge of monitoring and controlling the menace of examination malpractice, among these are the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), Ministry of Education officials, and Security Agents. This study aims to look into the meaning of examination, examination malpractice, types of examination malpractice, impact of examination malpractice on the educational development in the country and individual, and the assessment of the efforts of the examination bodies to control the vices. A survey research design was used in collecting information from participants. Multiple simple random sampling techniques were used in selecting 132 members of Parents and Teachers Association from eight Secondary Schools out of fourteen public and thirty-three private schools (4 public and 4 private) purposively. Research designed questionnaire titled – Questionnaire on Assessment of Examination Bodies' Control on Examination Malpractice (QAEBCE) was used to collect information from participants.

Keywords:- Assessment, Examination, Malpractice, and Control.

I. INTRODUCTION

Examination is one of the means of evaluating teaching and learning activities in any educational institution. It is also a method of assessing the understanding or comprehension of students' knowledge of a subject matter.

Emaikwu (2012) opined that examination as part of the evaluation in education is aimed at determining a learner's level of skill acquisition or intellectual competence and understanding after a given training. George and Ukpong (2013) also opined that examination is the most common tool around which the entire system of education revolves. It is the instrument used to decide who is permitted to move to the next academic level.

Examination is the instrument used in determining the next level of an examiner. Examination is the only means of assessing the progress of students' and teachers' efforts of imparting knowledge.

Akaranga and Ongong (2013) observed that examination is not only a process of assessing the progress of students but, it also motivates and helps them to know their academic strengths and weaknesses apart from proving teachers with opportunities to try new methods of teaching. Failure to conduct and monitor examinations properly may result in examination irregularity or malpractice. Examination Malpractices in Nigeria is as old as the country herself. According to (Anzene, 2014, Uzoigwe, Onuka&Amoo, 2011), examination malpractice was first reported in Nigeria in the year 1914, when the question papers of the Senior Cambridge Local Examination were reported seen by candidates before the scheduled date of the examination.

Examination malpractices are irregularities in the conduct and monitoring of examination processes. These irregularities could be before the examination proper, during examination (different forms) and after examination to attain success easily and cheaply (Abonyi, 2015).

Onuka and Amusaas cited in Onuka and Durowoju (2013) defined examination malpractice as any dishonest or unauthorized action or deed committed by a student on his own or in collaboration with others like fellow students, guardians, parents, teachers, headteacher, examination officials, supervisors, invigilators, security officers and anybody or group of people before, during or after examination to obtain undeserved marks or grades.

The effect of examination malpractice calls for urgent attention by all stakeholders. Examination malpractice has done a lot of damage to the quality of students graduating from our Secondary Schools. Students were not ready to read for examination again rather they were mostly all looking for a shortcut to pass the examination.

Okon, Cifa and Adie (2016) stressed that examination malpractice has done a lot of harm to students since many of them have neglected their books with the hope of performing the magic they are used to in every examination. Ogunkola (2011) further opined that the quality of a nation's manpower development is indirectly proportional to the quality of its educational system. It will have very poor manpower, as the value of certificates obtained through malpractice in the examination will be worthless. Considering the negative impact of examination malpractice on the educational system of the nation, government officials, examination bodies, nongovernmental organizations, and security agents must therefore swing into action by monitoring and controlling the number of the vices in the society. Consequently, there is a need to know how far the efforts of the examination monitoring bodies have gone, to assess whether the efforts are yielding desirable results or not. All hands have to be on deck to curb or reduce these vices if not to eradicate them in our country.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Examination malpractice has become the order of the day and it started during the increase since the colonial era, on increase during the time of military regime and it has skyrocketed during this millennium.

Students at all levels have been exposed to examination malpractice in the country. Primary school pupils that sat for Common Entrance Examination were being assisted in the examination halls. Secondary School Students were not left out. Searching for question papers, different forms of assistance during the examination, and purchasing of the certificate are different forms of examination malpractice employed to get cheap results.

All the pranks used by students and their accomplices were noted and observed by all stakeholders in the country. This necessitated the intervention of government officials, examination bodies and non-governmental organizations to take steps to curb or eradicate these vices in our educational system.

Monitoring, controlling, and curbing of examination malpractice has been of paramount concern to the examination bodies and others. Reliability and validity of any stakeholder's examination lie in the effective

administration of the processing of the examination. The Nigeria government has assisted tremendously to curb the trends of examination malpractice in our schools. Ijaiya, (2004) and Oduwaiye (2014) mentioned that the federal government stipulated penalties in Act 33 of the 1999 constitution ranging from cancellation of results to 21 years jail term for examination malpractice offenders. He stressed that it has failed to achieve any significant shift from the cheating culture due to the effect of collusion.

The Federal Ministry of Education was not left out of the crusade. In 2006, the Federal Ministry of Education blacklisted and derecognized 324 Secondary Schools across the nation as centres for conducting public examinations from 2007 to 2010, due to involvement in examination malpractice.

The distribution of the schools that were involved according to Olatunbosun (2009) is shown below:

| ZONE | No of SCHOOL INVOLVED | % |
|---------------|-----------------------|------|
| North-Central | 54 | 16.6 |
| North-East | 08 | 2.5 |
| North-west | 12 | 3.6 |
| South-East | 48 | 14.8 |
| South-South | 116 | 36.0 |
| South-West | 86 | 26.6 |

Table 1

The above figures show that examination malpractice occurs in all geographical zones in the country, in which the South-South zone has the highest number of schools having (116) involved followed by the South-West zone with 86 schools. The Northeast zone has 8 schools which is the least in the six zones. Following the above analysis, examination malpractice cut across all the states of Nigeria. The menace has been of concern to the government and other stakeholders thereby devising different strategies to curtail it. Part of government and non-governmental agencies' efforts is through the act of law, technology devices like CBT examination, CCTV camera, capturing of individual candidates and recently through the use of NIN for registration. This study aimed at assessing the extent of the efforts of government and non-governmental agencies.

A. Purpose of Study

- The purpose of this study are as follows
- To understand the meaning of examination malpractice
- To know the different forms of examination malpractice
- To identify the impact of examination malpractice on the educational development of individuals and the society/nation
- To assess the efforts of examination bodies in controlling or curbing examination malpractice
- To provide solution to curbing or curtailing the menace of examination malpractices in the country

B. Limitation:

Examination malpractice is a problem that affects all levels of educational institutions, but this study is only to assess its efforts on secondary schools in Nigeria and mainly in Nazarawa State in the Northern part of Nigeria.

Further work can be conducted on the primary and tertiary institutions in the country.

C. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Were there any acceptance of the involvement of students in examination malpractice in secondary schools by respondents?
- Were there any improvements or remarkable impact of the agencies on curtailing the vice of examination malpractice in the country?

III. METHODS**A. Scope of the Study**

All members of Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) in Nazarawa State formed the target population for the study, however the study sampled only 132 members of PTA from both public and private school in Nazarawa state.

B. Methodology

The Research design that was adopted for this study was a survey research design. The population of the study comprised all parents and teachers in Nazarawa State. Eight secondary schools were used out of which four were public and four were private schools. The study consisted of 132 subjects purposively selected as those who can give information on the assessment of examination bodies control on examination malpractices in secondary schools in Nigeria.

C. Instrumentation

The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire tagged "Questionnaire on Assessment of Examination Bodies Control on Examination Malpractice in Secondary School" (QAEBCEM). It was a 20 item questionnaire consisting of Section A on personal data of the respondents and Section B on the extent of the control of examination malpractices. It was administered during the regular PTA meeting and collected on the spot to ensure hundred percent submissions.

D. Method of data analysis

The data collected from the respondents were analysed using frequency counts and simple percentage after the responses had been collated on the weight items or option such as Yes/No.

| SEX | No of Respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Female | 45 | 34.1 |
| Male | 87 | 65.9 |
| Total | 132 | 100 |

Table 1: Showing the number of respondents in accordance with the variables

| Age range | No of Respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 30 – 34 | 39 | 29.5 |
| 35 – 39 | 24 | 18.2 |
| 40 – 44 | 27 | 20.5 |
| 45 – 49 | 13 | 9.8 |
| 50 – 54 | 29 | 22.0 |
| Total | 132 | 100 |

Table 2: Showing the age range of respondents

| Education Qualification | No of Respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Post Primary | 22 | 16.7 |
| Post-Secondary | 24 | 18.2 |
| Post Graduate | 70 | 53.0 |
| PhD and Above | 16 | 12.1 |
| Total | 132 | 100 |

Table 3: Showing the Educational qualification of respondents

| Relationship | No of Respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Parents | 87 | 65.9 |
| Teachers | 45 | 34.1 |
| Total | 132 | 100 |

Table 4: Showing the Relationship of the respondents

| Position | No of Respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| PTA Executive | 49 | 37.1 |
| Parent | 34 | 25.8 |
| Teacher | 49 | 37.1 |
| Total | 132 | 100 |

Table 5: Showing the status of the respondents

E. Research Question One:

Were there any fact acceptance of the involvement of students in examination malpractice in secondary schools?

To answer this question, the responses of the sample for the study were analyzed using simple percentage. The summary is presented in Table 6.

| S/N | ITEMS | F | % | F | % |
|-----|---|-----|-------|----|-------|
| 6 | Examination Malpractices is common among the students | 116 | 87.87 | 16 | 12.13 |
| 7 | Students prefer to cheat in the examination than to read | 114 | 86.36 | 18 | 13.64 |
| 8 | Society approves the act of cheating in the examination | 91 | 68.93 | 41 | 31.07 |
| 9 | Agents assist students to cheat during examinations | 100 | 75.75 | 32 | 24.25 |
| 10 | Some Parents/Teachers assist their children/students in cheating in the examination | 95 | 71.96 | 37 | 28.04 |

Table 6: Students involvement in Examination Malpractice

Table 6: shows the certainty of students' involvement in examination practice in secondary schools. From table 6, 116 (87.87%) of the sample indicated that examination malpractice is common among the students in secondary school, 114 (86.36%) indicated that students prefer to cheat in the examination than to read, 91 (68.93%) indicated that

society also approves the act of cheating in the examination, 100 (75.75%) indicated that some government agencies assisted students in cheating during the examination, 95 (71.96%) indicated that some assisted their children in cheating during the external examination.

F. Research Question 2:

Were there any improvements or remarkable impact of the agencies in curtailing the vice of examination malpractice?

| S/N | ITEMS | F | % | F | % |
|-----|---|-----|-------|----|-------|
| 11 | Examination bodies have helped in controlling the act of examination malpractices | 102 | 77.27 | 30 | 22.72 |
| 12 | Rate of examination malpractice still increases on yearly basis | 82 | 62.12 | 50 | 37.88 |
| 13 | Examination bodies have not done enough in reducing examination malpractices | 87 | 65.90 | 45 | 34.10 |
| 14 | Prosecutions of culprits have always been done by the examination bodies | 81 | 61.36 | 51 | 38.64 |
| 15 | Examination bodies have reduced examination malpractices through public awareness of rules and regulation of examination | 100 | 75.75 | 32 | 24.25 |
| 16 | Leakages of examination questions have drastically reduced through examination bodies' efforts | 69 | 52.27 | 63 | 47.73 |
| 17 | Examination bodies through seminars and workshops for the invigilators have reduced the act of examination malpractices | 82 | 62.12 | 50 | 37.87 |
| 18 | Monitoring team by the examination bodies has helped in reducing examination malpractices | 82 | 62.12 | 50 | 37.87 |
| 19 | Blacklisting of centres involved in examination malpractices by the examination bodies has reduced examination malpractices | 75 | 56.82 | 47 | 43.18 |
| 20 | Better remuneration for the invigilators has reduced collaboration in the act of examination malpractices | 80 | 60.61 | 52 | 39.39 |

Table 7: the extent of examination bodies in curbing examination malpractice

Table 2: Shows the extant the government agencies control examination malpractices in senior secondary schools external examination. From Table 2, 102 (77.27%) indicated that examination control bodies have helped in controlling the act of Examination Malpractices, 82 (62.12%) indicated that the rate of examination malpractices areas once yearly, 87 (65.90%) indicated that examination control bodies have not done enough, 81 (61.36%) indicated that culprits has always been prosecuted, 100 (75.75%) indicated that examination control bodies has reduced examination malpractices through public awareness, 69 (52.27%) indicated that examination questions leakages has reduced averagely by the agencies, 82 (62.12%) indicated that seminars and workshops have helped in reducing examination malpractice; 82 (62.12%) indicated that examination monitoring team has helped in reducing examination malpractice, 75 (56.82%) indicated that blacklisting of centres that involved in examination malpractice has averagely reduced examination malpractice, and 80 (66.61%) indicated that better remuneration for invigilators has reduced examination malpractice.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings for this study revealed the efforts of the examination bodies in curbing examination malpractices in secondary schools. It was indicated by the respondents that students in secondary schools were involved in examination malpractices. High percentage of the respondents indicated that students were influenced or encouraged by the parents, agents and teachers in perpetrating examination malpractices during external examination in secondary schools. These findings are supported by Hounvenou and Hounvenou (2015) which stated that, there are cases where parents waited outside the examination centres, contribute money to influence the invigilator for their children to cheat in the examination. The study is also in line with Fasasi (2006) that many candidates would want to pass examination by all means. Also, many school authorities and parents would want to explore means of getting good grades for their students and children. Therefore, they resort to different forms of malpractices before, during and after examination.

The results on efforts of the examination bodies in curbing examination malpractices showed that the respondents recognized the efforts of the bodies in controlling the menace of examination malpractice through different strategies such as prosecutions of culprits, awareness of rules and regulations of examination by public,

blacklisting of centres involved in examination malpractices and increment of invigilators' remuneration among others. This finding is in consonance with the opinions of Ijaiya, (2004) and Oduwaiye (2014) who mentioned that, the federal government stipulated penalties in Act 33 of 1999 constitution, as amended, ranging from cancellation of results to 21 years jail term. They also, stated that, in 2006, the federal ministry of education blacklisted and derecognized 324 Secondary Schools across the nation as centers for conducting public examination from 2007 to 2010, due to involvement in examination malpractice.

The finding also revealed that the agencies still have much work to do in order to reduce vices to the leanest minimal level. This is supported by Onah (2010) agreed that none of the strategies so far adopted in fighting examination malpractice has been able to yield the desired result.

V. SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

Examination malpractice has been revealed to be involved by students and that mostly the stakeholders such as parents, school authorities, agents and some government officials abetted the vice in most examinations conducted in the country. Government examination bodies that are in control of examination malpractices have been identified as having tools in reducing the menace but still need to be more proactive in curbing the vice in the secondary schools. Respondents were of the opinion that the agencies have tried and can still do more by promulgating more laws that will still be implemented without any sentiment.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- Government (both federal and state) should create more awareness on the negative effects of examination malpractice to the total growth and development of the nation.
- Government should sponsor programmes, jingles on impact of examination malpractices in educational system of the nation.
- Government should employ more teachers in the public schools to fill in the gaps of insufficient hands to handle some basic subjects.
- Government should emphasize more on monitoring of teaching and learning activities in the secondary schools.
- Government should provide a conducive environment and facilities for effective teaching and learning in secondary schools.
- Government should employ more guidance counsellors in schools for disseminations of guidance programmes.
- Examinations should be conducted under strict and monitored environment, with installation of CCTV monitoring camera in the examination hall.
- Government should mandate all private schools to have a well-placed examination hall with CCTV camera.
- Parents should be guided and discouraged from influencing their wards' performance by involving in Examination malpractice

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