



EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE AS A MALADY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on examination malpractices as one of the major problems militating against the efforts of government, her agencies and other stakeholders in achieving the national goals of providing reliable, functional and programmatic educational service to the populace. It highlights the causes; form and agents of academic malady in our schools and institutions of higher learning. This paper recommends the involvement of all stakeholders in concerted efforts towards curbing or eradicating this academic cancer through re-orientation and effective enlightenment of all involved in education on the dangers of examination malpractices, and also states that government and private sector should de-emphasize the use of certificates rather, the individual physical abilities and capacities should be considered for place and enrolment. Also it further suggested that learners should be allowed to study the course in which he or she has comparative advantages; that parents should not force certain course or courses on their words, that parents roles is to guide and advice the children by supporting their choice of carriers.

INTRODUCTION

Examination plays several roles in the teaching learning process. The outcomes of the examination are regarded as a basis for decision-making on the students' abilities. The students are consequently awarded Certificates which could qualify them for admissions into high schools; promotions into higher level both in schools and place of work and employment opportunities. Due to the syndrome of passing by all means; students, parents, teachers and even security agents are involved because they want good grades for their wards; teachers and security agents and others are involved because of the financial, materials and other intangible gains. Several studies have been devoted to the problem with a view to identifying the causes, the styles and to proffer solutions to examination malpractices. Evidence from such studies have listed among other ill-preparedness of students for examinations leading to lack of confidence, poor facilities especially sitting arrangement in examination halls, low morality, etc, as among the cause of examination malpractice in Nigeria institution.

EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES

Examination Malpractices can simply be defined as irregular, behavior exhibited by candidates or anybody charged with the conduct of examination in or outside the examination halls before, during, or after such examination (Imogie, 2009). Examination malpractices as an act of wrong doing or neglect that contravene the rules of acceptable practices before, during and after an examination by anybody in any way tantamount to malpractices (Ibukun, 2011). Examination malpractices are an improper and dishonest act associated with examination with the view to obtaining unmerited advantage. It is unhealthy phenomenon that is detrimental to the growth and development of education in



any society to a developing nation like Nigeria, who requires the contributions of its skilled and knowledgeable nationals in the building of a virile economy.

Forms of Examination Malpractices in Nigeria

It is generally believed that examination malpractices occur before, during and after examinations, and the principal actors are the candidate, the invigilator, the school personnel's parents and personnel's of examination bodies. In specifics terms the followings are the basic forms of examination malpractices in Nigeria's Educational system.

Leakage of Examination Question Ahead of Examination

Impersonation/External assistance i.e. a case where candidate hire someone to write examination for them at agreed price. Smuggling of prepared answer scripts into examination halls. Selling and buying of live question papers for students through the printers, secretaries, teachers, lecturers and the custodians of live question papers. Jotting of some relevant point on the table, chairs, walls, cloths, blackboard and sensitive part of the body, slippers, mathematical sets and student identity cards or on examination clearance. Swooping of the answer booklet by the student after assaulting invigilator who seems to have integrity. Given detailed area of concentration to a specific student before the examination by the teacher. Selling hand out to students and attaching certain percentage to those that purchases such incident. Deliberate alterations to marks to favor or disfavor some candidates. Purchase such incident. The use of hand set in examination halls. Re-writing the examination privately after the official hours either for cash or kind. Copying directly or indirectly using giraffe method or spying approach to copy from other candidates talking whispering of answer during examination. Kolo (2007)

Causes/Reasons for Examination Malpractice

Several factors are responsible for the act of examination malpractice in Nigeria: The following as reasons why students, parents, teachers and others are involved with examination malpractices courage as: The desire to succeed at all cost by the students. High premium placed on certificate rather physical capabilities. Infrastructural decay, i.e. ill-equipped laboratories and overcrowded classroom. Inadequate invigilators in classrooms/ examination halls. Non-courage of the syllabus by the teacher due to strike or closure of schools. Conditioning teacher's promotion to success in exams, hence teachers would want to impress, therefore he/she will aid and a bet examination malpractice.

Corruption and Poor Leadership

Government policy (automatic promotion at primary schools level). General economic downturn and poor remuneration level for teachers and invigilator (Teachers salary and allowances cannot take them home). Admission/employment requirement, (5 credits including English and Mathematics). Socio-economic status of parents chooses or forces courses on their offering which may not interest the Children. Societal decays which leads to celebration and praise of money rather than hard-work.



Effects of Examination Malpractice on Educational Development in Nigeria

The consequences of examination malpractices on our educational system and national productivity as a whole is great, the effects are found in all spheres of our national life. Examination Malpractices indicate a declining quality of education. This implies that, the quality of education in Nigeria is low since involvement in examination malpractices is spread across the country. This will affect national development adversely. Moreover, those who engage in cheating at a lower level are likely to continue at higher level of education. When they graduate into the society, their previous attitudes can easily lead them into corruption practice (Ijaiya, 2001). Another consequence is that people who possess certificates through cheating could use the certificate to secure jobs which would not be able to perform. Poor performance would lead to poor productivity. Esu (2010) states some of the negative effects of examination malpractices in Nigeria Education System as follows: It poses intractable threat to the very worth and merits of education generally in Nigeria, because if a graduate of Senior Secondary/Higher Schools cannot read or write, then something is wrong somewhere. Examination Malpractices lead to the production of quacks in all field of life. The effect is great on Sustainable Human Development. Examination Malpractices weakens the entire educative system, because garbage-in, garbage-out. A teacher who is a product of examination misconduct will definite not a good teacher, the teacher will sought for all avenue to cover-up his or her inadequacies. In an attempt to do that, examination malpractices would surface again and the circle continues. This will have a negative multiplier effect on the quality of education in country. Examination malpractices destroy moral integrity of the perpetrator, the offender would believe that nothing is impossible, by extension it leads to corruptions, and corruptions destroy the leads education system.

Base on the menace of examination malpractices, our certificates are fast loosing international recognition and respect in academic arena. It was reported that the British Council in Nigeria advised the British Universities to disregard Nigeria degrees, and again it is widely claimed that employers of labours in the United States and other countries of the world are skeptical about Nigeria Certificates and degrees (Stapper, 2015). Another serious effect of examination malpractices is that, it promotes indolence among students; even the serious ones will see no reasons why he or she should extra-mile to source for extra knowledge in a particular discipline or subjects, if there is a shortcut to excel. Thus, examinations kill initiatives and since there is a direct relationship between research and development, it might be difficult to break new ground hence it will affect national development. Examination malpractices weakens the morale of the students especially, if the offenders are not caught or if caught but not punished as deemed, it dampens their spirit, and there is direct relationship between ones' morale and overall productivity.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative education stands for the production of lower middle and high level manpower for the nation and as well a vehicle for full and complete participation in national development, Examination malpractices has been the cog in the wheel of achieving the



predetermined objectives of education as contained in the national policy on education in Nigeria. Examination malpractices connote criminal behaviours exhibited by candidates, parents, school personnel and staff of the examination bodies before during or after a particular examination. These criminal acts are informed of examination leakage, impersonation, collusion, substitution, falsification of official documents, physical assault on invigilators with the sole aims of getting undue advantage over and above others pass the examination. The menace has done a great harm to our educational system in Nigeria and if the demon called examination malpractices is not tackled with all seriousness it deserves, the entire educational system would be a waste in relation to predetermine objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURBING MALPRACTICE

The dangers of examination malpractices to the individuals and the larger society is too enormous and costly to be negotiated or compromised, hence everything should be done to tackle this problems with every seriousness it deserves. And if urgent and drastic steps are not taken to checkmate this enemy of the educational sector it will utterly destroy the quality of education in Nigeria. Hence, the following recommendations are made to curb examination malpractices in Nigeria: Admission of only quality and well-motivated students into our tertiary institutions instead of the policy and practice of using some skewed and unpopular criteria for admission. Instilling the spirit of hard word in students through good examples from staff. Students should be encouraged to accept the maxim that says "it is an undeserved honour". Also they should be made to know that the end doesn't always justify the means. Provision of adequate facilities, including chemicals, equipment's, laboratories, workshops, etc. Provision of specious classrooms and lecture halls, lecture theatres, and educational technology rooms.

Training and Re-Training of the Teaching Force

Evolving an open examination system in which high imaginable questions requiring innovative answers will be used. Ethical re-orientation for teachers, students, examination agencies and the entire society to protect the sanctity and validity of examinations religiously if necessary. Government and private sector should de-emphasize the use of certificates rather individual's physical abilities and capabilities should be considered for placement. Examination bodies in collaborations with the federal, state and Local Government Education Authority should mount a serious company against examination malpractices in both electronic and print media in all major languages stressing the negative effects of examination malpractices on our educational system. Student should be allowed to study the course in which he or she has comparative advantages parents should not force certain course or courses on their children. Cancellation of part or entire result of a particular student cut in the act of cheating in any form, and barring the student from taking examination conducted by the same body for a given numbers of years.



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