



MANAGEMENT OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE PROBLEMS IN UNIVERSITIES IN THE NIGER DELTA REGION

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the management of examination malpractice problems in universities in the Niger Delta Region. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study and guided by two research questions with a population of 900 students from nine universities in the nine states of the Niger Delta Region. A sample of 450 respondents was drawn through Proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The research instrument for the study was titled Management of Examination Malpractice Problems in Universities Questionnaire (MEMPUQ). The validation of the instrument was done by experts in measurement and evaluation, the researcher and research assistants administered the questionnaire to the respondents directly and retrieved them immediately. The results were analyzed using mean. The findings of the study were that there are many problems of examination malpractice in universities that needs to be properly managed. The implication of the findings was the need to monitor lecturers and students properly to avoid examination malpractice. It was thus recommended among others that Universities should prepare students adequately before assessment which should be on both the cognitive and psychomotor domains.

Keywords: Management, Examination malpractice, Problems, Universities, Niger Delta Region

INTRODUCTION

Education is the development of an individual through training and transmission of worthwhile knowledge that will enable learners to fit into their environment, contribute to a successful living and the wellbeing of the society. The process of education cannot be complete without the assessment of the student's performance, this process of assessing and grading student's performance in school is generally referred to as examination. Examination in Nigeria schools is used to promote students from one level to another as a result students who do not want to repeat classes involve themselves in examination malpractice. The issue of examination malpractice is a major problem in schools at present but

before the advent of western type of education, there were no examination malpractice as traditional education was based mainly on experience and practice. The method of instruction was simple, as knowledge was passed on verbally and through practical experience. Learners only had to commit to memory as learning was through observation. Since traditional education placed little or no emphasis on certification, learners had the proper view of education, seeing it as a means to an end not an end in itself.

Examination is the assessment of a student's ability, achievement or performance in a given task or subject matter. In the past, many opinions have been expressed about the value of examinations in the education of students. It has been said and believed that examination is not the true test of any student's ability or competence. But the fact is that, examination is a useful tool for measuring student's competencies and capabilities. Badejo and Gandonu (2010) opined that education is the key to any individuals or nations development and Nigeria is not out of place in trying to provide quality education to its citizens. This has led to a quest to acquire education by all means and at any cost by individuals as employers of labour emphasize on certificates especially the university certificate before employment is given to applicants hence the introduction of examination malpractice in schools in Nigeria.

The origin of examination malpractice can be traced back to 1914 when senior Cambridge examination papers leaked. Examination malpractice is an irregular behaviour exhibited by candidates or anybody charge with the conduct of examination in or outside the examination hall before, during or after such examinations. It is any act that contravenes examination rules and regulation as dictated by the necessary authorities in a given examination which negates the purpose or essence of examination and its ethics (Ajibola, 2008). Examination malpractice is viewed by many authors as any sort of misconduct or improper practice in any examination with a view to obtaining good results through fraudulent means. Philemon (2007) defined examination malpractice as any deliberate act of wrongdoing contrary to official rules and regulation



designed to place a candidate at an advantage or disadvantage over other examinees. Ejembi, (2007). Sees it as any irregularities which are deliberate and propagated by candidates or their agents with the intention of gaining undue advantage in the examination.

Olatoye (2002) views it as an act of commission or omission which compromises the cogency and reliability of any examination. According to Annan, (2005) examination malpractices could be explained as behaviours contrary to a set of expected code of conduct or a set of ethic and norms exhibited in the course of examination by a person or group of persons such as carrying information on parts of the body and pieces of papers. The definitions cited makes it clear that examination malpractice is not only unlawful but is also effecting and demeaning the educational system and needs to be managed to prevent the consequences. Management is the systematic use of human and material resources for the purposes of achieving set objectives. Matthew (2017) defines management as systematic process of accessing and utilizing both human and material assets optimally to achieve desired objectives. According to Manilla (2003) management is the coordination of human and material resources towards the attainment of some predetermined objectives hence the causes of examination malpractice in universities are problems that should be managed for the restoration validity of any examination for the achievement of educational goals. The problem of rampant occurrence of examination malpractices in several institution of learning in Nigeria have become a matter of concern to all due to the rate of indulgence in examination malpractice by stakeholders such as lecturers/students collaboration, supervisors and student's mutual understanding, replacement of answer-scripts or changing of scores, paper leakage before the commencement of the examination, sorting by parents and students, impersonation, copying during examinations, certificate forging among others which is alarming and puts the country's system of education in an humiliating position. Examination malpractice is now a very big issue in the Nigerian educational system that needs urgent attention for remedy as it has actually stood as a hindrance to a reliable and sound educational system

in Nigeria. It is true that the aims and objectives of education is been gradually drifted due to the influence of examination malpractice on student's academic development. Examination malpractice in the society is bad as candidates who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination now depend on examination malpractice arrangements with the popular slogan 'read to acquire knowledge, pay to pass' resulting to students losing their confidence in their special abilities in schools that is creating unhealthy environment for the new generation of students in schools. Hardworking students feel disappointed when less intelligent ones earn higher grades than them through cheating hence luring more students into examination malpractice and other areas of misconducts such as prostitution for female students to pay for unmerited scores and armed robbery for male students in a bid to make money to pay for high grades. Most students in schools are truant they use the school hours to visit friends leaving their academic pursuits while others do not care about academic activities due to examination malpractice. These students neglect classes and other extracurricular activities that could boost their academic development leading to an increase in reports of cases of students who are found committing one crime to another in the society.

The influence of examination malpractice on the academic development of students is disastrous as it undermines the credibility of the educational system. Candidates produced in this manner will grow into adults and teachers or examination officials who will not see anything wrong with such examination fraud thereby defeating the goals of education. It is on this note that the study seeks to investigate the causes and management of examination malpractice problems in universities in the Niger Delta Region. Specifically, the study seeks to examine:

1. The causes of examination malpractice problems in Universities in the Niger Delta Region.
2. The strategies of managing examination malpractice in Universities in the Niger Delta Region.

Research questions

1. What are the causes of examination malpractice problems in Universities in the Niger Delta Region?



2. What are the strategies of managing examination malpractice in Universities in the Niger Delta Region?

METHOD

The design adopted for the study is the descriptive survey design with a population of 900 students, fifty percent sample size of 450 respondents randomly selected from nine universities consisting of 50 students from each of the nine university selected in the nine states in the Niger Delta Region. The study was guided by two research questions. The instrument was titled Management of Examination Malpractice Problems in Universities Questionnaire (MEMPUQ) developed by the researcher and validated by experts in measurement and evaluation, administered directly by the researcher and research assistants to the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using mean.

Results

Research question 1

1. What are the causes of examination malpractice problems in Universities in the Niger Delta Region?

Mean score on causes of examination malpractice problems in Universities in the Niger Delta Region

No	Item statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	Inadequate monitoring of lecturers and students	1.28	1.70	0.16	0.03	3.17
2.	Inadequate lecturer/students interaction during lectures.	1.96	0.99	0.25	0.05	3.25
3.	Inadequate lectures for examination	1.86	0.69	0.32	0.14	3.01
4.	Unstable school calendar	1.75	0.96	0.27	0.10	3.08
5.	Poor lecturers/ student class attendance	1.97	0.74	0.25	0.18	3.03
6.	Inadequate preparedness before examination	1.89	0.74	0.33	0.11	3.07
7.	Collaboration between lecturers and student	1.75	1.02	0.46	0.07	3.29
8.	Negative peer influence on students	1.79	1.01	0.32	0.05	2.86
9.	Focus on cognitive assessment	1.33	1.25	0.11	0.04	2.73
10.	Improper structure of examination time table	1.12	1.35	0.19	0.02	2.68
11.	Frequent strike actions	0.56	0.47	0.92	0.25	2.20
12.	Emphasis on paper qualification	1.11	1.13	0.71	0.22	3.01
	Grand Mean					<u>2.90</u>

Table 1 shows that respondents generally agreed that there are causes of examination malpractice problems in universities in the Niger Delta Region with a grand mean of (M= 2.90). Respondents strongly agreed that Collaboration between lecturers and student is a major problem that needs to be properly addressed with the highest mean of (M=3.29) followed by inadequate lecturer/students interaction during lectures (M=3.25), inadequate monitoring of lecturers and students (M=3.17), Unstable school calendar, (M=3.08), Inadequate preparedness before examination (M=3.07), Poor lecturers/ students class attendance (M=3.03). Respondents also agreed to the item statements that emphasis on paper qualification is another major problem with a mean of (M=3.01). Negative peer influence on students was also agreed on with a mean of (M=2.86), Focus on cognitive assessment (M=2.73), Improper structure of examination time table (M=2.68) but disagreed to frequent strike actions with a mean of (M=2.20).

Research question 2

What are the strategies of managing examination malpractice in universities in the Niger Delta Region?

Mean score on strategies of Managing Examination Malpractice Problems in Universities in the Niger Delta Region

No.	Item statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Adequate monitoring of lecturers / student examination practices	1.23	1.22	0.31	0.08	3.04
2	Less focus on cognitive assessment	1.39	1.02	0.59	0.06	3.06
3	Compulsory lecture/ student class attendance	1.10	1.16	0.66	0.09	3.01
4	Stringent sanctions on lectures/student caught in examination malpractice	1.45	1.30	0.21	0.06	3.08
5	Adequate lecturer/student interaction during lectures	1.14	0.93	0.44	0.02	2.53
6	Adequate lecture and examination facilities	1.42	1.50	0.32	0.03	3.27
7	Prompt submission of results	1.03	1.12	0.37	0.06	2.58
	Grand mean					<u>2.94</u>



Table 2 shows that the identified variables are strategies of managing problems of examination malpractice in universities in the Niger Delta Region with a grand mean of ($M=2.94$). Respondents strongly agreed to the item statement adequate lecture and examination facilities ($M=3.27$) followed by Stringent sanctions on lectures/student caught in examination malpractice ($M=3.08$), Less focus on cognitive assessment ($M=3.06$), adequate monitoring of lecturers / student examination practices ($M=3.04$) Compulsory lecture/ student class attendance ($M=3.01$), prompt submission of results ($M=2.58$) and adequate lecturer/student interaction during lectures ($M=2.53$),

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The response from respondents on causes of examination malpractice shows that the mean score is greater than the criterion score. The findings indicated that collaboration between lecturers and student and inadequate monitoring of lecturers and students are major problems causing examination malpractice in universities. This finding are in agreement with Bandejo and Gardonu (2010) who studies predisposing factors toward examination malpractice among students in Lagos Universities which showed that examination malpractice is common among students in higher institutions of learning. The reason for the result could be due to the inability of university management to have the strong will to discipline defaulter of exam malpractice rules appropriately due to favourism, involvement of majority of the stake holders in the art or fear of been hunted by defaulters.

Results on table 2 shows that respondents strongly agreed on the item statements on the strategies for the management of exam malpractice in universities with a grand mean of ($M=2.90$). Respondents strongly agreed to adequate monitoring of students and lecturers which is in agreement with Maciver (2016) who studied Predisposing factors towards examination malpractice among students of Delta State Colleges of education implication for counseling. His results indicated that monitoring of examination will reduce examination malpractice in schools. On disciplinary measure on offenders of examination

malpractice the results are in agreement with Matthew (2017) who studied management of deviant behavior in secondary schools and Oduwaye (2003) who studied student's perception of factors and solutions to examination malpractice in Nigerian Universities. The results showed that disciplinary measure on offenders of examination malpractice reduces examination malpractice in universities. The reason for this could be that lecturers would not want to jeopardize their carrier due to involvement in examination malpractice. In the same vain students would not want to be suspended as penalty for examination malpractice.

CONCLUSION

Educational system is system that involves the processes of transferring knowledge, skills, norms and values for the transformation of individuals in to useful members of the society needs to be managed effectively especially the tertiary institutions which is the last lap of education. Those who manage these institutions that produce tomorrow's leaders should be disciplined for the students to follow their example to achieve set goal. For examination malpractice to be eliminated in universities administrators, parents, lecturers and students have to play their roles to achieve desired results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Universities should prepare students adequately before examination which should be on both the cognitive and psychomotor domains
1. Staff and Students of universities should be given awareness on the dos and don'ts of examination conduct and manage them strictly to stop examination malpractice.
2. All examination conducts and environment should be properly handled before, during and after examination.

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