

**Causes and Consequences of Examination Malpractice among
Senior Secondary School Students in Eti-Osa L.G.A. of Lagos State, Nigeria**

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Abstract

This study investigated the causes and consequences of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research method was used for the study as was a simple random sampling technique to select 540 students from twenty selected secondary schools that supplied information to the questionnaire tagged Causes and Consequences of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire (CCEMQ). The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Social Sciences Education of University of Ilorin. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test re-test method. A reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained. The instrument was analysed using percentages and t-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the major cause of examination malpractice was sexual harassment by teachers and the main consequence of examination malpractice was that it deprived innocent students' the opportunity for admission. Findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice based on gender and age. Based on the results, the researcher recommended that sound educational policy should be put in place with the de-emphasis on the supremacy of certificates over skills and professional competence. There should be improvement in the delivery of instruction especially from the foundational level to the secondary level. Also, stakeholders should stop leak services to examination malpractice.

Keywords: examination malpractice, Nigeria, sexual harassment, teachers, educational policy, causes, consequences

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Introduction

An examination is the main yardstick used for the measurement of a learner's achievement. Examinations on a wider perspective are used as an instrument for academic stratification, assessing grades, evaluating and accreditation. The end product of such a judgment is used for diagnosing placement, guidance, and certification. Examinations are also used to choose those who intend to enter into government services, state schools, and some other educational institutions.

The bodies for these examinations are the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), the National Examinations Council (NECO), the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), and the National Business and Technical Education Board (NABTEB). Examinations are either public or external and they are carried out on behalf of the state with opportunities given to those who meet the criteria (George & Ukpong, 2013; Akanni & Odofin, 2015). Public examinations provide an adequate basis for qualifying students' abilities and also to exert control over the attainment of the curricula across schools. Moreover, public examinations are different from school examinations, which are more or less internal or school-based, in which case the teachers, are directly involved in the assessment of their students. School-based examinations include continuous assessment, terminal, and promotion examinations.

In Nigeria, all of the stakeholders of education and learners place their judgments concerning the quality of educational outcomes (most of the time) on performance at public examinations (Anzene, 2014). Public examinations, therefore, seem to be the most popular parameter by which society judges the products of its educational system. This is because performance in public examinations is now used as a prerequisite for admission into other levels of schooling, job placements, and awards of certificate and diploma (Emiukwu, 2012; Asore, 2014; Adegboyega, Okesina, & Jacob, 2017).

Examinations can be used to classify students into those with higher and lower abilities. Those with high abilities have a performance level above those with low abilities. (Of course, those with low abilities desire to have a higher performance level). This type of grading encourages some students to engage in examination malpractice in order to obtain good results. As such, to demonstrate that they too have high abilities, they take part in all kinds of vices, including examination malpractice (Idahosa, 2014). Examination malpractice can be seen as any irregular behaviour (that contravenes examination rules and regulations) exhibited by a candidate or anybody charged with this type of conduct before, during, or after an examination. In Nigeria, examination malpractice has continued to appear in different forms including the sale of examination question papers, the smuggling of relevant text materials into examination halls, impersonation, disorderliness in examination halls, and forgery of result slips (Uzoigwe, 2014; Nnam & Inah, 2015). Generally, it is believed that it is not only students who are involved in these acts. Parents, teachers, school heads, and examination officials, all collude with students to perpetrate this misconduct and the collusion between one or more of these agents makes it more difficult to combat (Joshua, Oba, Joshua, Edet & Ekpoh, 2010; Onyechere, 2014).

Examination malpractice has become prevalent within all levels of Nigeria's educational systems. To buttress this point, the West African Examination Councils (WAEC) Chief Examiner reported in 2006, that in Nigeria between May/June 1996 and May/June (2005) a total of 1,367,726 of students representing 9.4% were involved in examination malpractice. This large figure shows how widespread the menace of examination malpractice has eaten into the very fabric of the educational system (Onuka & Durowoju, 2013).

However, various methods have been adopted by different examination bodies at the federal, state and local government levels to seize perpetrators of examination malpractice. Some of these efforts include checking the passport of the candidate sitting for the examination, prohibiting the use of electronic devices (such as GSM and pagers), questioning unannounced visits to examination centres by examination officers, and prohibiting answers written on papers other than ones provided. Such efforts hamper those involved by discountenance or cancelling their results (due to mass cheating) (Onyibe, Uma & Ibina, 2015).

Examination malpractice has proven to be a tug of war in the Nigerian educational system and this has caused some examination to lose credibility and expose the entire educational system to ridicule, to the extent that many students cannot defend their certificates and are not employable. This is why this researcher has embarked on this research, in order to discover the causes and consequences of examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Examination malpractice has become a serious problem in the Nigerian educational system. Onyibe, Uma and Ibina (2015) researched examination malpractice in Nigeria and its causes effects on national development. Akanni and Odofin (2015) also worked on reducing examination malpractice in Nigerian schools through effective Continuous Assessment (C.A.) techniques as an alternative to one-shot examinations in Osun State, Nigeria. Asore (2014) likewise carried out research on examination malpractice including its causes, consequences and probable solutions. All of these research works are position papers and some of them are foreign based, however this present research is empirical and considers senior secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. In particular, it highlights the causes and consequences of examination malpractice.

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of examination malpractices among secondary school students in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State?
2. What are the consequences of examination malpractices among secondary school students in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice among secondary school students in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice among secondary school students in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice among secondary school students in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age.
- H₀₄:** There is no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice among secondary school students in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age.

Methodology

The research design used in this study was a descriptive survey with a target population of 540 from 20 selected secondary schools. 27 respondents were selected from each school using random sampling techniques. A self-developed instrument titled the “Causes and Consequences of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire’ (CACOEMQ) was used to collect the data. The CACOEMQ has 15 items and two sections; Section A and B. Section A relates to the demographic data of the respondents and section B contains the variables on causes and consequences of examination malpractices. The instruments were validated by experts in test construction and measurement from the University of Ilorin and a reliability coefficient of 0.76 was established. Rank order was used to test the research questions while t-test was used to analyse the research hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results obtained from the data analyzed are presented and all the hypotheses formulated for this study were subjected to independent t-test statistics and tested at a 0.05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for Social-Sciences (SPSS 23.0).

Demographic Description of the Respondents

The data presented in Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents using percentages.

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender, Age, Class, Religion

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	225	41.7
Female	315	58.3
Total	540	100.0
Age		
10 – 15 years	268	49.6
16 years and Above	272	50.4
Total	540	100.0
Class		
SSS I	123	22.8
SSS II	254	47.0
SSS III	163	30.2
Total	540	100.0
Religion		
Christian	330	61.1
Muslim	210	38.9
Total	540	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 revealed that out of the 540 respondents that participated in the study, 225 of them (representing 41.7% of the respondents) were male, while 315 (representing 58.3% of the respondents) were female. This implies that there were more female respondents than male respondents in this study.

In addition, Table 1 revealed that out of the 540 respondents that participated in the study, 268 (representing 49.6% of the respondents) were between the ages 10 – 15 years, while 272 (representing 50.4% of the respondents) were between the ages 16 years and above. This shows that the majority of the respondents in this study were between the ages 16 years and above.

Furthermore, Table 1 revealed that out of the 540 respondent that participated in the study, 123 (representing 22.8% of the respondents) were Senior Secondary School (SSS) I students, 254 (representing 47.0% of the respondents) were SSS II students, while 163 (representing 30.2% of the respondents) were SSS III students. This implies that there were more respondents from SSS II in this study.

Additionally, Table 1 revealed that out of the 540 respondents that participated in the study, 330 (representing 61.1% of the respondents) were Christians while 210 (representing 38.9% of the respondents) were Muslims. This implies that there were more respondents that were Christians than Muslims in this study.

The Research Questions Answered

Six research questions were raised and answered in this study. Research questions 1 and 2 were answered using a mean rating, while research questions 3 to 6 (that had a corresponding hypothesis) were tested with the use of the independent t-test statistical tool.

Research Question 1: *What are the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State?*

Table 2: Ranking Order of causes of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State

S/N	Items	Mean	Ranking
15	Sexual harassment by teachers can lead to examination malpractice	3.32	1 st
14	Inadequate teacher student's interaction can lead to examination malpractice	3.23	2 nd
13	Extortion of money from student by invigilators can lead to examination malpractice	3.10	3 rd
4	Students laziness can promote examination malpractice	2.72	4 th
5	Negative peer influence can bring about examination malpractice	2.72	4 th
12	Inadequate funding in school and teacher's welfare can encourage examination malpractice	2.66	6 th
3	Inability to get reading materials in the library can make students indulge in examination malpractice	2.57	7 th
6	Too much involvement in social activities can make students engage in examination malpractice	2.53	8 th
9	Frequent strike actions can lead to examination malpractice	2.52	9 th
8	Using students to mark students' scripts can lead to examination malpractice	2.40	10 th
1	Poor attendance by teachers can make students indulge in examination malpractice	2.31	11 th
2	Inadequate preparations for examination by the students can cause	2.27	12 th

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	examination malpractice		
10	Collaboration between staff and students in relation to marks can lead to examination malpractice	2.16	13 th
11	Improper structure of examinations can lead to examination malpractice	2.16	13 th
7	Inadequate concern for student's welfare and activities can lead to examination malpractice	1.97	15 th

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 indicates that 540 respondents participated in this study. The major causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State was 'sexual harassment by teachers can lead to examination malpractice' which has a mean score of 3.32 (1st), 'inadequate teacher students' interaction can lead to examination malpractice' which has a mean score of 3.23 (2nd), and 'extortion of money from students by invigilators can lead to examination malpractice' which has a mean score of 3.10 (3rd).

Also, 'student laziness' can promote examination malpractice and 'negative peer influence can bring about examination malpractice' both of which have a mean score of 2.72 (4th). 'Inadequate funding' in school and teachers welfare can encourage examination malpractice' has a mean score of 2.66 (6th), 'inability to get reading materials in the library can make students indulge in examination malpractice' which has a mean score of 2.57 (7th), and 'too much involvement in social activities can make students engage in examination malpractice' has a mean score of 2.53 (8th). 'Frequent strike actions can lead to examination malpractice' has a mean score of 2.52 (9th), while other statements have a mean score below the 2.50 benchmark.

Research Question 2: *What are the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State?*

Table 3: Ranking Order of Consequences of Examination Malpractice in Secondary School in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State

S/N	Items	Mean	Ranking
2	Examination malpractice deprives an innocent student's opportunity for admission	3.39	1 st
1	Examination malpractice discourages good students from studying hard	3.26	2 nd
3	Students with examination malpractice results in decreased job efficiency	2.95	3 rd
5	Examination malpractice renders the goals of education invalid	2.89	4 th
4	Examination malpractice leads to dissatisfaction on the part of the candidates	2.67	5 th

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 3 indicates that 540 respondents participated in this study. The main consequences of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State was that ‘examination malpractice deprives an innocent student’s opportunity for admission’ which has a mean score of 3.39 (1st), ‘examination malpractice discourages good students from studying hard’ has a mean score of 3.26 (2nd) while ‘students with examination malpractice results in decreased job efficiency’ has a mean score of 2.95 (3rd). ‘Examination malpractice renders the goals of education invalid’ has a mean score of 2.89 (4th), while ‘examination malpractice leads to dissatisfaction on the part of the candidates’ has a mean score of 2.67 (5th).

Hypotheses Testing

Having considered the demographic data of the respondents and answering research questions, the researcher proceeded to test the null hypothesis generated in the study. The research hypothesis postulated for this study was tested using the independent t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: *There is no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender.*

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondent’s responses on the causes of examination malpractice questionnaire were collated based on gender. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of Difference in the Causes of Examination Malpractice in Secondary School in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD.	Df	Cal.t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	255	37.61	10.79	538	1.65	0.11	H₀₁ Not Rejected
Female	315	39.39	11.43				

$p > 0.05$

As shown on Table 4, male respondents had a mean score of 37.61 with a standard deviation of 10.79, while female respondents had mean score of 39.39 with a standard deviation of 11.43. The calculated t-value was 1.65, while its calculated significance value was 0.11 of df 2/538 at alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, null hypothesis one was therefore not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.11) was greater than 0.05 alpha level ($p > 0.05$).

H₀₂: *There is no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender.*

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondent's responses on the Consequences of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire were collated based on gender. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of Difference in the Consequences of Examination Malpractice in Secondary School in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on Gender

Government Area of Lagos State based on Gender							
Gender	N	Mean	SD.	df	Cal.t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	225	15.18	2.99	538	0.11	0.92	H₀₂ Not Rejected
Female	315	15.15	3.33				
p >0.05							

As shown on Table 5, male respondents had a mean score of 15.18 with a standard deviation of 2.99, while female respondents had a mean score of 15.15 with a standard deviation of 3.33. The calculated t-value was 0.11, while its calculated significance value was 0.92 of df 2/538 at alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, null hypothesis two was therefore not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.92) was greater than 0.05 alpha level ($p > 0.05$).

H₀₃: *There is no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age.*

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondent's responses on the Causes of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire were collated based on age. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of Difference in the Causes of Examination Malpractice in Secondary School in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on Age

Area of Eagles State based on Age							
Age	N	Mean	SD.	df	Cal.t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
10 – 15 years	268	39.05	11.41	538	0.76	0.45	H₀₃ Not Rejected
16 yrs and Above	272	38.23	10.97				
p >0.05							

As shown on Table 6, respondents between the ages of 10 – 15 years had a mean score of 39.05 with a standard deviation of 11.41, while respondents between the age 16 years and above had a mean score of 38.23 with a standard deviation of 10.97. The calculated t-value was 0.76, while its calculated significance value is 0.45 of df 2/538 at an alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, null hypothesis three was therefore not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.45) was greater than the 0.05 alpha level ($p > 0.05$).

H₀₄: *There is no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age.*

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondent's responses on the Consequences of Examination Malpractice Questionnaire were collated based on age. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of Difference in the Consequences of Examination Malpractice in Secondary School in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on Age

Government Policy on Maternal and Child Health Care							
Age	N	Mean	SD.	df	Cal.t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
10 – 15 years	268	15.37	3.21	538	1.38	0.17	H₀₄ Not Rejected
16 years and Above	272	14.95	3.16				
p > 0.05							

As shown on Table 7, respondents between ages 10 – 15 years had a mean score of 15.37 with a standard deviation 3.21, while respondents between the ages 16 years and above had a mean score of 14.95 with a standard deviation of 3.16. The calculated t-value was 1.38 while its calculated significance value was 0.17 of df 2/538 at an alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, null hypothesis four was therefore not rejected. This means that there was no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary school in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.17) was greater than the 0.05 alpha level ($p > 0.05$).

Discussion of the Findings

This study investigated the causes and consequences of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area, Lagos State. From the analysis presented, the following discussions of the findings were made.

The findings of this study revealed that the major causes of examination malpractice in secondary school in Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State was sexual harassment by teachers. This finding supports that of Oko and Adie (2016) who in their studies reported that an array of factors were responsible for examination malpractice in Nigeria which included what most respondents called the “wrong value system which leads to serious quests for certification instead of knowledge and skills”, These factors included laziness, a lack of preparation or inadequate preparation for the examination, a lack of self-confidence, poor school facilities, poor invigilation, and weak parental factors. Another finding revealed that the main consequences of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State was that examination malpractice deprives an innocent student’s opportunity for admission. This finding is congruent with that of Uzoigwe (2014 and Oko and Adie (2016) who found that candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass their examinations now depend on quick arrangements since they believe so much in such arrangements as they rarely failed.

Findings further revealed that there was no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender. This finding is congruent with that of Emaikwu (2012) and Petters and Okon (2013) who reported that there was no significant difference in the male and female causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Furthermore, findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on age. This finding corroborates with that of Ojonemi, Enejoh, Enejoh and Olatunmibi (2013). These researchers found that there was no significant difference in the consequences of examination malpractice in secondary school on the basis of age.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. A change in the value system. The situation where people place so much value on certification does not augur well for our academics as it encourages examination malpractice. Sound educational policy should be put in place with a de-emphasis on the supremacy of certificates over skills and professional competence.
2. It is recommended that there should be an improvement in the delivery of instruction especially at the foundation (i.e. at the primary and secondary levels).
3. Stakeholders in education should be firm in instilling moral values in their children and wards to avoid examination malpractice at all levels of education.
4. Teachers and supervisors should be persons of proven integrity. The invigilators should be very vigilant in the supervision of examinations and should be fair to all. The question of double standards should not arise.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study revealed that the major causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State was that sexual harassment by teachers can lead to examination malpractice. Another finding revealed that the main consequences of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State was that examination malpractice deprives an innocent student's opportunity for admission.

Findings further revealed that there was no significant difference in the causes of examination malpractice in secondary schools in the Eti-Osa Local Government Area of Lagos State based on gender and age.

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