



Investigating Parental Pressure and Test Anxiety as Predictors of Examination Malpractice Tendency among University Undergraduate Students in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Examination malpractice has been reported as a problem in education systems globally; recently in Nigeria the problem has become alarming and requires more attention. This study investigates parental pressure and test anxiety as predictors of examination malpractice tendency among undergraduate students at the University of Calabar and Cross River State University, Nigeria. Survey design was adopted, the study population comprised 3,068 final year undergraduate students in Faculties of Education in the two Universities (UNICAL = 1,811, CRSU = 1,257) and a sample of 1,534 selected through purposive and accidental sampling procedure. Two research questions and two corresponding hypotheses guided the study. “Parental pressure, Test Anxiety and Examination Malpractice Tendencies Questionnaire (PPTA & EMTQ)” with a Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate of .83 was used to collect data. Data was analyzed using simple linear regression. Results revealed that parental pressure and test anxiety are significant contributors to examination malpractice tendencies among undergraduate students. It was recommended that school counselors in conjunction with school management and Ministry of Education should organize counseling conferences at regular intervals to counsel parents on how to stop undue pressure on their wards, as well as counsel students on how to avoid test anxiety.

Key words: parental pressure, test anxiety, examination malpractice

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Introduction

Examination malpractice refers to any illegal means or improper practice before, during or after any examinations by examinees or others with a view to obtaining good results (Bichene & Ogba, 2021). Globally, examination malpractice has become increasingly popular in to the extent that the menace is now topic of groups' gossip among many. In Nigeria, the spate of examination malpractice has gained so much ground in the last decade to the extent that it is fast becoming a 'norm' in the society, posing serious threat to the school system, undermining the quality of education and attracting negative comments about graduates from Nigerian Universities, and if not adequately checked, the situation could become worst (Anagbogu, Idajor & Owan, 2016; Ogunji, 2011).

Examinations are meant to assess students learning in order to determine the level to which learners have acquired the knowledge and skills required from a given content area (Anagbogu & Bichene, 2018). Consequently, unless examinations are properly administered, devoid of any form of cheating, results cannot be relied upon for any useful judgment (Bichene & Ebuta, 2019). There are several reports in academic literature, social commentary and the media suggesting that examination malpractice is sustained by a myriad of factors in developed and developing countries. Some studies (Anagbogu & Owor, 2021; Use 2013; Zegejir, 2014) have shown positive correlation between parental expectation and students career aspirations. Anagbogu, Idajor and Owan (2016) attributed examination malpractice to socio economic factors, school factors (Anagbogu and Owor, 2021), albeit very little is known about the extent to which parental pressure and anxiety could predict examination malpractice tendency, especially among University undergraduate students. Thus, the study was designed to investigate if parents and anxiety could still be contributing to the menace of examination malpractice manifested by students at higher level of education, hence the choice of final year undergraduate students in Universities as respondents in this study.

Research Questions

1. Does parental pressure contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among undergraduate students?
2. Does test anxiety contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among undergraduate students?

Statement of Hypotheses

1. Parental pressure does not significantly contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among undergraduate students.
2. Test anxiety does not significantly contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among undergraduate students.

Method

Survey research design was adopted for this study; study population consisted 3,068 final year undergraduate students in faculties of education in the two Universities in Cross River State, Nigeria (UNICAL = 1,811, CRSU = 1,257). Sample consisted of 1,534 final year undergraduate students selected through purposive and accidental sampling procedure in which the researchers visited the Universities, identified lecture rooms of final year undergraduate students in faculties of education with the assistance of faculty officers and lecture timetable, and administered the data collection instrument to those they met in lecture halls during the time of visit. The researchers repeated the visits until the targeted sample of 1,534 students (50% of the population) had responded to the questionnaire, at every visit identification number was assigned to respondents in order to prevent them from being administered the instruments on another visiting day. Two research questions and two corresponding hypotheses guided the study, Parental pressure, Test anxiety and Examination Malpractice Tendencies Questionnaire (PP, TA & EMTQ) consisting 60 items with Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate of .83 was used for data collection. Data was analyzed using simple linear regression to test the hypotheses at .05 Alpha level.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis 1: Parental pressure does not significantly contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (in terms of impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among undergraduate students. The result is presented in Table 1.

In terms of impersonation: results as presented in Table 1, revealed R-value of $.245^a$, $R^2 = .057$, adjusted $R^2 = .055$; $p < .05$ for relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.245^a$ shows a

positive relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies. However, the R^2 -value of .057 imply that 5.7% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (parental pressure). The regression ANOVA ($F(2, 1532) 10.375$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that parental pressure contributes to examination malpractice tendencies (in terms of impersonation). The adjusted R^2 (.055) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.057) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

As for Swapping scripts; results revealed R-value of $.261^a$, $R^2 = .068$, adjusted $R^2 = .067$, $p < .05$ for parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (in terms of swapping of scripts). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.261^a$ shows a positive relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (swapping of scripts). However, the R^2 -value of .068 imply that 6.8% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (parental pressure). The regression ANOVA ($F(2, 1532) 13.356$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that parental pressure contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (swapping of scripts) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.067) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.068) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Similarly, for smuggling answer scripts into examination halls; results revealed R-value of $.257^a$, $R^2 = .066$, adjusted $R^2 = .065$, $p < .05$ for parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (in terms of swapping of scripts). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.257^a$ shows a positive relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (smuggling answer scripts into examination halls). However, the R^2 -value of .066 imply that 6.6% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (parental pressure). The regression ANOVA $F(2, 1532) 12.415$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that parental pressure contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (smuggling answer scripts into examination halls) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.065) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.066) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Furthermore, for dubbing; results revealed R-value of $.247^a$, $R^2 = .061$, adjusted $R^2 = .060$, $p < .05$ for parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (in terms of dubbing). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.247^a$ shows a positive relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (dubbing). However, the R^2 -value of .061 imply that 6.1% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (parental pressure). The regression ANOVA revealed that $F(2, 1532) 12.996$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that parental pressure contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (dubbing) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.060) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.061) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Finally, for overall examination malpractice tendencies; results of data analysis as presented in table 1 revealed R-value of $.274^a$, $R^2 = .075$, adjusted $R^2 = .074$, $p < .05$. The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.274^a$ shows a positive relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies (overall examination malpractice tendencies). However, the R^2 -value of .075 imply that 7.5% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (parental pressure). The regression ANOVA ($F = (2, 1532) 17.731$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null

hypothesis was rejected. This implies that parental pressure contribute to examination malpractice tendencies overall examination malpractice tendencies among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.074) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.061) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

TABLE 1: Summary Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Parental Pressure and Examination Malpractice Tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among Undergraduate Students

Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Impersonation								
Regression	117.102	2	117.102	10.375	.245 ^a	.057	.055	.000 ^a
Residual	17338.470	1532	15.878					
Total	17455.572	1534						
Swapping answer scripts								
Regression	49.563	2	49.563	13.356	.261 ^a	.068	.067	.000 ^a
Residual	16124.954	1532	14.766					
Total	16174.517	1534						
Smuggling answer scripts into examination halls								
Regression	172.362	2	172.362	12.415	.257 ^a	.066	.065	.000 ^a
Residual	15160.559	1532	13.883					
Total	15332.921	1534						
Dubbing								
Regression	760.512	2	760.512	12.996	.247 ^a	.061	.060	.000 ^a
Residual	17771.309	1532	16.274					
Total	18531.821	1534						
Overall examination malpractice tendencies								
Regression	859.419	2	859.419	17.731	.274 ^a	.075	.074	.000 ^a
Residual	12191.355	1532	11.164					
Total	13050.774	1534						

Hypothesis 2: Test anxiety does not significantly contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among undergraduate students. The result is presented in Table 2.

In terms of impersonation: results presented in table 1 revealed R-value of $.233^a$, $R^2 = .054$, adjusted $R^2 = .053$; $p < .05$ for relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.245^a$ shows a positive relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation).. However, the R^2 -value of $.053$ imply that only 5.3% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (test anxiety). The regression ANOVA $F = (2, 1532) 12.762$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that test anxiety contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (impersonation) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.053) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.054) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

However, on swapping scripts; results revealed R-value of $.181^a$, $R^2 = .033$, adjusted $R^2 = .032$, $p > .05$ for test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (in terms of swapping of scripts). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.181^a$ shows a weak positive relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (swapping of scripts). However, the R^2 -value of $.033$ imply that only 3.3% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (test anxiety). The regression ANOVA $F = (2, 1532) 1.446$; $p > .05$, was not significant, thus the null hypothesis was retained. This implies that test anxiety contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (swapping of scripts) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.032) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.033) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Furthermore, on smuggling answer scripts into examination halls; results revealed R-value of $.216^a$, $R^2 = .046$, adjusted $R^2 = .045$, $p < .05$. The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.216^a$ shows a positive relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (smuggling answer scripts into examination halls). However, the R^2 -value of $.046$ imply that 4.6% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (test anxiety). The regression ANOVA $F = (2, 1532) 8.641$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that test anxiety contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (smuggling answer scripts into examination halls) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.045) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.046) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Similarly, for dubbing; results revealed R-value of $.311^a$, $R^2 = .083$, adjusted $R^2 = .082$, $p < .05$ for test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (dubbing). The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.311^a$ shows a positive relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (dubbing). However, the R^2 -value of $.083$ imply that 8.3% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (test anxiety). The regression ANOVA ($F = (2, 1532) 18.079$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that test anxiety contribute to examination malpractice tendencies (dubbing) among undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 (.082) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.083) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Finally, for overall examination malpractice tendencies; results as presented in table 2 revealed R-value of $.308^a$, $R^2 = .094$, adjusted $R^2 = .093$, $p < .05$. The R-value (Correlation coefficient) of $.308^a$ shows a positive relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies (overall examination malpractice tendencies). However, the R^2 -value of $.094$ imply that 9.4% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (test anxiety). The regression ANOVA ($F = (2, 1532) 20.977$; $p < .05$, was significant, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that test anxiety contribute to overall examination malpractice tendencies among university undergraduate students. The adjusted R^2 ($.093$) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value ($.094$) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

TABLE 2: Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis: Test Anxiety and Examination Malpractice Tendencies (impersonation, swapping scripts, smuggling answer scripts into examination halls, dubbing and overall examination malpractice tendencies) among Undergraduate Students

Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Impersonation								
Regression	9.193	2	9.193	12.762	$.233^a$	$.054^a$	.053	$.000^a$
Residual	17446.379	1532	15.977					
Total	17455.572	1534						
Swapping scripts								
Regression	42.769	2	42.769	1.446	$.181^a$	.033	.032	$.064^a$
Residual	16131.748	1532	14.773					
Total	16174.517	1534						
Smuggling scripts into halls								
Regression	59.074	2	59.074	8.641	$.216^a$	.046	.045	$.001^a$
Residual	18703.955	1532	17.128					
Total	18763.029	1534						
Dubbing								
Regression	169.485	2	169.485	18.079	$.311^a$	.083	.082	$.000^a$
Residual	18362.336	1532	16.815					
Total	18531.821	1534						

Overall								
Regression	391.798	2	391.798	20.977	.308 ^a	.094	.093	.000 ^a
Residual	20395.977	1532	18.678					
Total	20787.775	1534						

Discussion of Findings

Result of hypothesis one results as presented in table 1 revealed significant positive relationship between parental pressure and examination malpractice tendencies in all the dimensions; impersonation ($R = .245^a$, $R^2 = .057$, adjusted $R^2 = .055$; $F = (2, 1532) 10.375$; $p < .05$), swapping scripts ($R = .261^a$, $R^2 = .068$, adjusted $R^2 = .067$, $F = (2, 1532) 13.356$; $p < .05$), smuggling answer scripts into examination halls ($R = .257^a$, $R^2 = .066$, adjusted $R^2 = .065$; $F = (2, 1532) 12.415$; $p < .05$), dubbing ($R = .247^a$, $R^2 = .061$, adjusted $R^2 = .060$; $F = (2, 1532) 12.996$ $p < .05$) and then overall examination malpractice tendencies ($R = .274^a$, $R^2 = .075$, adjusted $R^2 = .074$; $F = (2, 1532) 17.731$; $p < .05$) among university undergraduate students.

Similarly, hypothesis two results as presented in table 2 revealed significant positive relationship between test anxiety and examination malpractice tendencies in all other dimensions except swapping of scripts; impersonation ($R = .233^a$, $R^2 = .054$, adjusted $R^2 = .053$; $F = (2, 1532) 12.762$; $p < .05$), swapping of scripts ($R = .181^a$, $R^2 = .033$, adjusted $R^2 = .032$, $F = (2, 1532) 1.446$; $p > .05$), smuggling answer scripts into examination halls (revealed $R = .216^a$, $R^2 = .046$, adjusted $R^2 = .045$, $F = (2, 1532) 8.641$; $p < .05$), for dubbing ($R = .311^a$, $R^2 = .083$, adjusted $R^2 = .082$; $F = (2, 1532) 18.079$; $p < .05$), and then overall examination malpractice tendencies ($R = .308^a$, $R^2 = .094$, adjusted $R^2 = .093$, $F = (2, 1532) 20.977$; $p < .05$)

Generally, findings reveal that parental pressure and test anxiety are contributors to examination malpractice tendencies among university undergraduate students. The implications of these findings is that the more parental pressure and test anxiety students experience, the more the tendency for them to indulge in examination malpractice and vice versa. Findings support some earlier studies (Anagbogu & Owor, 2021; Use 2013; Zegejir, 2014) which have shown positive correlation between parental expectation and students career aspirations, Anagbogu, Idajor and Owan (2016) which attributed examination malpractice to socio economic factors, school factors and home factors (Anagbogu and Owor, 2021). However, the results of this study disagree with that of Ofodile, Odiato, Adenugba and Edun (2019) who found no significant relationship between test of anxiety and examination malpractice among secondary school students.

However, the result is not surprising, we are in a society today where everyone is on the fast lane; values like hard work for success are being eroded, people want to reap without sowing, some parents may want their children to be successful by all means, thus they exert undue pressure on their children which may compel them to indulge in examination malpractice in order to pass examinations and impress their parents. Also, anxiety may have gradually become a major psychological factor responsible for students indulging in examination malpractice, this is because observations shows that students do not study hard these days; they are easily distracted by peers and social media activities, and when faced with examinations

couple with parental pressure and expectations, their anxiety level becomes very high and impacts negatively on them. These factors are largely reflective of societal standards and attitudes which have been found wanting in varied aspects.

Conclusion

Findings revealed that parental pressure and test anxiety are significant contributors to examination malpractice tendencies among secondary school students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is pertinent to recommend that school counselors in conjunction with school management and Ministry of education should organize counseling conferences at regular intervals to counseled parents on how to stop putting pressure on their wards, as well as counsel students on how to avoid test anxiety.

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