



The Attitude of Students, Parents and Teachers Towards Examination Malpractices in Secondary Schools: A Challenge for Educational Standards

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ABSTRACT

The paper focused on the role played by parents and Teachers in examination malpractice in plateau Nigeria. 400 secondary school students were randomly sampled for the study. Three null hypotheses were raised. A 15 item questionnaire titled "students Attitude towards Examination Malpractice (SATEMQ) was developed by the researcher and administered to the selected sample. The data generated were analyzed using the Chi Square. The result showed that there was no significant effect of parenting styles on students attitude towards examination malpractice. Also there was no significant difference between Junior secondary and their counter parts in the senior secondary school in their attitude and reasons for engaging in examination malpractice in the school. Based on these findings recommendations were made.

INTRODUCTION

Parents and teachers whose role and responsibility is the in calculation of moral and societal standards in their children have become useful tools for examination malpractice. This development has raised the incidents of examination malpractices while enhancing its acpenistication. Parents in the past send their children to school not because they are ambitious but because they want their wards to be educated. The interest and aptitude of the child is considered above parental interest. Wards are not pressurized into offering courses they are incapable of doing. It is the duty of the school teachers and the counselor to assist the child where his/her decision is respected. Today, the reverse seems to be the case as parents not only pressurize their wards into offering difficult courses and even go to the extent of employing subject specialists to write examination for their wards or provide the money that

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these wards use to bribe examination officials. As role models to their children, many parents are by the way they conduct their lives, job and business; teach their children immorality and unethical behaviors. Parents like to aid, abet and finance examination malpractices for their children. Rather than being assets, children from such families grow up to become liabilities and threats to the society Onyechere (1997).

Teachers who were in the past looked upon as the custodian of societal values and traditions have lost their place. Anakwe (2008), reported that between 2006 and 2007, over two hundred teachers were involved in aiding and abetting examination malpractices in different parts of the country in WAEC and NECO Examinations. Also 600 schools were indicated and warned while 300 schools were derecognized. In respect to the conduct of these two important examinations. She said teachers perpetrate examination malpractice through the following ways:

- 1) Teachers selected for invigilation act as accomplices to help candidates pass by rendering various assistances to candidates.
- 2) Aiding and abetting impersonation.
- 3) Having dubious dealings with students so as to render assistance during examinations.
- 4) Dictating answers to candidates during examinations.
- 5) Organizing contribution from students to settle supervisor.
- 6) Allowing students to use mobile phones with answers stored in them during examination.
- 7) Allowing students to communicate with outsiders who dictate answers to them during the examination.
- 8) Allowing students to use ear-phones to listen to dictated answers during examinations.
- 9) Divulging official confidential information on practical examinations.

Denga (1991) opined that some teachers directly or indirectly promote examination malpractices through the direct means, they could show questions to their lover or girl friends in advance. Indirectly they could sit glued to a place while invigilating examination and all sorts of information can be passed from one student to the other in the interim. Some teachers who do not teach well during the semester for one reason or the other make up for their deficiencies by propping up the marks of their students so that eye brook will not be raised as to why so many students have failed that particular course.

Other teacher who lobby for marks from their fellow colleagues in respect of certain students can be accused of Examination Malpractice because indirectly one can infer from such a practice, that it is what they do in their own courses. Some parents are considered to be the most influential agents of their children's behavior. As the child grows up, he is assisted by parents to acquire and assimilate all the value and norms cherished by the society. Ibrahim (2008) reported that the child's behavior and learning are greatly influenced before they leave home to secondary school. The influence

of parents on the virtues of patriotism, morality, obedience, dignity of labour, transparency, honesty and accountability is supreme.

Fajonyomi (2004) attributes all forms of deviant behavior to poor parenting and moral decadence in the society. It is sad to note that today, most Nigeria children and adolescents manifest all kinds of deviant behaviors such as violence and disobedience to constituted authority, poor attitude to work, cheating during examinations, sexual promiscuity, unwanted pregnancies etc. Carew (2004) observed that parents, children, government officials, teachers, security agencies and even staff of these examination bodies are involved in this corrupt practice of aiding and abetting examination malpractice at all levels of our educational system. He maintains that teachers leak question papers to favoured students, invigilators are settled to allow cheating in the hall or give advanced copy to unauthorized group and parents who give out huge sums of money to their children to purchase question papers. These examination malpractitioners serve as social reinforcers in the promotion of anti-social behaviors such as cheating during examination. This immoral practice has made it very difficult for universities and employers of labour to use the certificates presented by these products of exam malpractice for admission and employment.

These propose are attributed to peer influence and modeling. This therefore means that children that are properly brought up are most likely to manifest acceptable behaviors and are expected to shun all forms of manifest acceptable behaviors and are expected to shun all forms of corrupt tendencies such as examination malpractice, stealing, immorality etc. On the other hand, if children experience poor parenting and modeling where parents indulge in all forms of corrupt and immoral practices, their children are bound to copy their behaviors. When they later come to school.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian post primary school student manifest all kinds of deviant behaviours, particularly cheating during internal and external examination. Fajonyomi (2004) and Onyechere (1999). In the research reported that some people in the society encourage examination malpractice. Some times the family, the school and society serve as social reinforcers. The consequences arising from this moral decadence, range from poor performance, loss of confidence in the value of examination, result and falling standard of education. In spite of all the efforts made by government and spirited individuals to stamp out examination malpractice in schools, the immoral act is still increasing daily and more sophisticated methods are used by students, invigilators and parents to perpetuate cheating during examination. Ibrahim (2007) argues that parental influences and poor modeling are the major factors responsible for this moral decadence. This therefore means that children that have enjoyed good parenting are those who shun all forms of corrupt tendencies whereas those who experienced poor parenting and modeling exhibit all forms of anti-social behaviors such as examination

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misconduct Mohammed (2008). Although much work has been done on the causes and effects of examination malpractice in schools, little attention has been paid to the effects of parental influence on children's attitude towards examination malpractice. More importantly, much attention has not been given to the need for value re-orientation and attitudinal change.

Purpose of the study

This study examines the effects of parental attitude toward examination malpractice in the secondary schools in Jos south. The aim is to find out whether in poor parenting leads to the development of positive attitude towards examination malpractice and at what level of our education system does it manifest itself. To this end, the study aims at finding out the effects of parental influence on children's attitude towards examination malpractice and the consequences of examination malpractice

Significance of the study

The significance of this emanates from the fact that students behaviors in school are affected by the kind of child rearing practices they have received at home and neighborhood. The results obtained will provide parents with information that are useful for necessary adjustments in the home in order to assist other stakeholders in stamping out examination malpractices in our schools. It will also help psychologists and administrators by providing insight into the causes of students' deviant behaviors and how they can be assisted to remedy the problems.

Hypotheses: the following hypotheses are thus formulated to guide the students.

1. There is no significant effect of parenting style on students attitude towards examination malpractice.
2. There is no significant difference between students attitude towards examination mal-practice at the junior secondary school level and senior secondary school.
3. There is no significant difference between students in junior and senior secondary school on their reasons for indulging in examination malpractice.

METHODOLOGY

The target population of this study comprised all secondary school students Plateau state. 400 secondary school students formed the sample for this study. The stratified sampling technique was used to classify the schools in to junior secondary school and senior secondary schools. A simple random sampling was then applied to select 8 schools: 4 junior secondary and 4 senior

secondary schools in Plateau state in Nigeria. The research instrument used to gather data for the study was a self-designed questionnaire titled “students” attitude towards examination malpractice”. (SATEM) The instrument was divided into 2 sections. The first part was designed to obtain students’ biographical data the second section was directed at identifying the causes, effects and students attitude toward examination malpractice. The questionnaire contained 15 items, which the subjects were expected to tick. The hypotheses postulated guide the item formulated to elicit information from the respondents.

Procedure

The questionnaires were administered in the selected schools by the researcher with the assistance of the teachers in the schools. They were collected and thereafter analyzed.

Data analysis

There are no significant effects of parenting style on students’ aptitude towards examination malpractice.

Parenting Style and Students Attitudes Towards Examination Malpractice

Hypothesis 1:

Table 1 reveals that there is no significant effect of parenting styles on students attitude towards examination malpractice. The calculated X^2 values of 0.15. is greater than the tabulated values of 12.50. this led to the acceptance of the hypotheses. Therefore, there is no significant effect of parenting styles on children’s attitude toward examination malpractice, which is contrary to general expectations.

Table 1: Effect of parenting styles on students attitude towards examination malpractice.

Parenting style	Junior sec. schs.	Senior sec. Schs.	Junior sec. schs.	Senior sec. schs.	Total	D.F.	X ² Cal.	X ² Cal.	Remark
Democratic	30	27	40	30	127	6	-0.50	12.50	Not sig.
Laissez-faire	40	28	29	38	135				
Autocratic	30	45	31	12	118				
	100	100	100	80	380				

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between students attitude towards examination malpractice Junior and Senior Secondary Schools.

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Table 2: Students' Attitude Towards Examination Malpractice.

Attitude	JSS	SSS	Total	D.F.=1	X ² Cal.	Critical
Positive	174	178	352		-4	3.84
Negative	6 ₄	2 ₄	08			
	180	180	360			

Table 2 shows no significant difference between Junior Secondary and their counter parts in Seniors Secondary Schools. This is because the calculated X² values of -4 is less than the critical X² values of 3.84 which led to the acceptance of the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between students Junior secondary School and Senior Secondary in their reasons for indulging in examination misconduct.

Table 3: Students Responses for Engaging in Examination Malpractice

S/No	statement	Junior sec. schs.	Senior Sec. Schs.	Total	X ² Cal.	X ² Crit	X ² Crit
1	Everybody is doing it	12	19	31	0.83	5.99	Insignificant
2	I want to pass at all cost	103	143	2465			
3	Teachers do not teach us well	32	35	67			
4	Fear of examination	32	35	67			

Table 3 shows the analysis of the responses of students for engaging in examination malpractice. It revealed that the calculation X² value of 5.99. the hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference between children in Junior and Secondary School on their reasons do indulging in examination misconduct, was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the extend to which parental influence affect children's attitude towards examination malpractice in Plateau state, Nigeria. The result of hypothesis 1 revealed no significant effect of parenting styles on students' attitude towards examination malpractice contrary to general speculations and findings of (Onyechere, 1997). The present findings is however in line with the study of Fajonyomi

(2004) whose studies revealed that lack of adult models, crave for material wealth, moral decadence and peer influence are the major factors that encourage the development of positive attitude towards examination malpractice. It seems as if parents and all stakeholders in the child rearing industry are fast losing the battle. The result of hypothesis 2 revealed no significant difference between children's attitude towards examination malpractices in Junior and Senior Secondary Schools. This is true because according to Fajonyomi (2004) and Onyechere, (1997) some people in the society encourage examination malpractice, Ibrahim (2007) reported that examination malpractice leads to expulsion, suspension cancellation of results, loss of confidence on results obtained and employment of incompetent and fraudulent people into public and private sector organization with disastrous consequences to the society. The finding of this study is supported by Mohammed (2008) who observed that students who find it difficult to meet the conditions for achieving certain goals, employ unacceptable means, this means that students who feel that they cannot pass their examination due to laziness, poor teaching and truancy are prepared to use any means, no matter the cost, to cheat during examinations in order to get the desired grade. These reasons cut across board. Examination malpractices is a bone in the neck and its is getting more sophisticated every day. We must do something about it.

Hypothesis 3 there is no significant difference between students in Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School in their reasons for indulging in examination malpractice. There was no significant different in the reasons for indulging in examination malpractice in both the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools. This shows that examination malpractice has eaten deep into the fabric of our students. It seems as if parents and all stakeholders in the child rearing industry have a big job ahead of them. Anakwe (2008) attributed this to the influence of electronic and print media. From the result, one might be right to say that the examination malpractice must be clobbered before it escalates into a "big ulcer".

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequent upon the above discussion the researcher would like to advance the following suggestions:

1. Teachers should serve as models for students to follow; this implies that they should try to live above board by not compromising anything for their status and position. Also they should be dedicated to their duty by giving the students the best training they need which will lead to desired goals of success.
2. The examination ethics projects should motivate teachers, parents and individuals on the society by commending them when they

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- demonstrate ethics-friendly attitude. On the other hand, punish those who abet examination malpractice.
3. Parents should counsel and caution their wards on the importance of hard work as a path to success in life. On the other hand, they should see themselves as models for the reinforcement of good behavior and should not engage in aiding and abetting Examination Malpractice themselves.
 4. The government and educational planners should give serious attention to the funding of education. Facilities should be provided in all institutions of learning.
 5. Decree 22 Of 1984 of special Tribunal (miscellaneous offenses) which has been silenced should be revisited by government to make it a more realistic tool for fighting examination.
 6. Religious bodies should preach against the evil of cheating.
 7. Guidance and counselling services should be provided in all secondary school in order to help and guide the students. As well as build confidence in them and remove discomfort, anxiety and low self esteem. Above all help them to believe in themselves.
 8. The government should ensure consistency in the implementation of its policies.
 9. Security agents whose role it is to implement laws should be educated not to be parts of the law breakers.
 10. The high premium placed on paper qualification over and against skill should be de-emphasized.
 11. Artisans should be encouraged by providing conducive atmosphere for them to thrive.
 12. The government should build and furnish Libraries with books.
 13. The government should motivate and train teachers whose spirit are near breaking point through appropriate reward measures do greater productivity.
 14. Students should be subjected to proper searching before entering any examination hall.
 15. Students should learn to make use of their time, learning and preparing before hand for what ever task is ahead of them and accept failure or success in good fate and as a means of improving performance.
 16. Parents who set solid foundation at home which the teachers build upon should actively be involved in correcting all forms of examination malpractice; if this is done the job will become light for other stakeholders in the development of the child and the society.

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