

Conquering the Indomitability of Examination Malpractice in Nigeria in Gallantry Through E-Supervision

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Abstract— This study on conquering the indomitability of examination malpractice in Nigeria in gallantry. The study was designed as a descriptive research of the survey type. One Hundred and fifty (150) students participated in the study and questionnaire was used to illicit information from the respondents. The data collected were analysed using percentage to answer the research questions. The study found that lack of reading culture among students was one of the causes of examination malpractice followed by laziness and overloaded syllabus. Students cheated by Smuggling of textbooks and pieces of papers to exam hall, mobile phones and writing answers on their palms and thighs. The study found that cheating could be curbed through improvement of student reading habits, teaching methods and reduction of course workload. The study concluded that all hands must be on the deck to tackle the monster compromising the integrity of our examinations. It recommended that conscious efforts should be made to improve, inculcate reading culture and technology should be deployed for proper supervision of examinations.

Keywords— Examination Malpractices, Undergraduates, Students, Cheating

INTRODUCTION

Examinations are major means of assessing students' achievements world- wide. A good academic grade and certificate are prerequisite for obtaining a good job and furthering one's education. In Nigeria for example, a good class of degree is the only criterion for furthering one's education to a higher degree and to be gainfully employed. Examinations are used to measure students' mastery of the subject matter at different levels of their learning. The outcome of the examination derived as raw scores are used to measure the degree of understanding, abilities and difficulties. Examinations are used to determine and evaluate acquisition of knowledge acquired in actuality. The media used for the assessment are assignments, continuous assessment tests, project work and terminal examinations among others. Such results are further used to determine the teachers' effectiveness, teaching methods and curriculum implementation. Students want to be praised by their parents for excellent performance whether or not they worked hard for it hence, many of them get involved in examination malpractice.

Examination malpractice is an old monster in which concerted efforts has not been made to reduce it into the barest minimum. Yunus (2019) citing Maduemezia (2003) reported that, the first examination malpractice in Nigeria occurred in 1914 during the Senior Cambridge Local Examination papers which were

leaked before the scheduled date of examination. The rate at which students cheat in examinations has become alarming globally. It is has become a canker worm eating deep into the fabrics of nations of the world at all levels of education. These malpractices have become threats to National social and economic developments. Observation has shown that these malpractices are on the increase globally, defying solution in Nigerian educational system. In spite of all the efforts made by the government and other stakeholders to eradicate or reduce this anomaly new and more sophisticated methods are being devised. These vices are perpetrated in disguise through gift items, exchange of money, intimidation of invigilators among others. One of the bold attempts made to curb this menace was the ban placed on "miracle centers" (i.e centres registered by individuals or corporate bodies to fraudulently aid and abet students who write their examinations by collecting exorbitant charges. The operators of these centers secure question papers ahead of the examination and starts or coach the students or in the alternative get an examiner of the examination body to answer the questions and sneak them into the hands of the candidates in the examination halls to copy from and pass around.

Examination malpractice has the tendency to discourage hard work among serious minded students. The emphasis on paper qualification for employment and admissions into higher institutions and the attendant

unhealthy academic competitions among students have continued to pave way for examination malpractices. In consequence, half-baked individuals are produced to reflect the quality of manpower development and needs of the nation. The Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Education, Mr Adejo, in his address attributed the loss of our value system to increase in examination malpractices and to 'loss of core values in Nigerian Society' (Olanrewaju, 2022).

Examination malpractice is not absolutely new in Nigeria as there was a report of leakage of question papers of senior Cambridge in 1914. The report had it that students saw the question papers before the commencement of the examination. <https://www.studocu.com/document>. As a result of this anomaly, students who perform excellently well are suspected of cheating by the examination body and have their results withheld. In most cases, the unfortunate students never get the results released thereby truncating their educational growth and development. Those who fortunately scale through, end up looking like a non performer in higher institutions of learning or in labour market. Nigeria Minister of Education in his remark in Dec 2022, admitted that examination malpractice is a major problem affecting the conduct of public examinations in Nigeria hence his suggestion that technological devices should be employed to curb the menace and protect the sanctity of examinations across the country.

Antitype of Examination Malpractice

Contemporary examination malpractice takes various forms and they get more sophisticated by the day. It comes in form of bringing unauthorised materials like textbooks, cell phones, pieces of jottings into the examination hall, hiring of hoodlums to disrupt the examination process so that malpractices can take place while the pandemonium lasts, threats to the lives of invigilators or supervisors, inducement of the examination officials to "look the other way" among others. All these are done to subvert a good conduct of examination in order to secure high grades and have undue advantage over others. The aftermath is that the menace has continued to lower the standard of education in Nigeria. Conde (2006), opined that examination malpractice is not restricted to the ones identified above but also include the brilliant students impersonating the dull ones, leakage of question papers, copying, giraffing, exchange of answer scripts, writing on question papers, sales of question papers, bringing in and exchange of

already prepared answers into the examination halls among others.

Unfortunately, and sadly too, innovations brought about by information technologies are being abused by students to encourage examination malpractice. They store different information like lecture materials, e-books and browse the internet on their mobile phones with different intentions. Nyamawe and Mtonyole (2014) corroborated the assertion through their observation that there is an increase in the use of mobile devices by students to cheat during examination. Kolawole (2019) in agreement, opined that there are some cases of candidate's entry examination venues with sophisticated phones used for browsing secretly during examinations. Nweke (2009), stated that mobile devices are vital instrument used by students to carry out examination fraud. Akesuola (2009) on the other hand claimed that students who commit examination fraud store answers on the devices and copy into their answer scripts. The students involved in this e-cheating at times use coded information stored in their devices and leaked question papers with answers downloaded from the internet. They also take pictures of notes or question papers with their phones and send to somebody probably in miracle centers to answer and return through same medium. Some also do voice recordings of the notes and playback during examinations.

There proprietors of "Miracle centers" where students go to write examinations always arrange to teach and guide students to the correct answers and in most cases, the students come out with distinctions. Experience has shown that these students who passed through these so call centers underperform when they find themselves in higher institutions.

Consequently, such students fail to do well when they secure admission into higher institutions and they end up becoming deviants who end up threatening lecturers when they fail to make up for their inadequacies. It is therefore rational and logical that students who did not study adequately to pass examination will definitely find it difficult to cope in higher institutions of learning. Such students may even have to withdraw from their departments. Even with the directive of the National University Commission (NUC) that higher institutions of learning should declare war against the menace and eradicate it as a national vice, the monster it has grown into has continued to rear its ugly head.

Causes of examination malpractice

Emphasis on paper qualification: Cheating in examination is motivated by the desperate desire of students to earn high grades and acquire certificates or gain admission into higher institution (Oyerinde 2000). These were said to have been brought about by parental influence, greed of some teachers, peer influence, emphasis on paper qualification in form of certificate and class of degrees among others. All the students who cut corners in order to achieve success are lazy and are not ready to pay the price of hard work like reading, diligence and dignity of labour. They cut classes, abscond from school take advantage of modern technology to do the unimaginable. Anzene (2014), submitted that the root causes of examination malpractices include too much emphasis on paper qualification/certificates without skills to accompany them, learning environments that are not conducive, cultism, and truancy among others.

- **Training and Re-training of teachers:** Teachers on the other hand are not left out from the blame. Inappropriate methods of teaching and
- **Infrastructural facilities:** inadequate textbooks for students with ill equipped libraries can also be a contributory factor.
- **Government Policy:** Many factors can be adduced to examination malpractice in Nigeria it is a crime that needs to be dealt with and stopped because it is affecting the quality of education globally and Nigeria in particular. The menace has to be well tackled if not the quality of manpower in the work force will continue to degenerate. It will invariably affect National economic development.

Consequences of examination malpractice

- **Loss of self confidence:** Examination malpractice has a grievous consequence on those who engaged in it. For instance, during job interview many of them cannot defend their certificates because they lack the knowledge and the necessary skills to perform.
- **Sanctions from Examination Bodies:** Those who like to go further in their carrier get stalled and are not able to go further. Schools and centres caught cheating could be blacklisted and the schools sanctioned. Results could be withheld or out rightly cancelled.
- **Risk of Criminal Conviction:** The Federal Military government of Nigeria in 1984 regarded examination malpractice as a criminal offence and

decreed that anyone caught should either pay a fine of 100, 000 naira or face jail term of three years by decree 20 amended as Act 33 of 1999 in Nigeria constitution. Cheating in an examination is a crime and is a punishable offence. This is corroborated by Adejo (2022) who suggested that offenders of examination malpractices should be prosecuted. Despite the penalties like facing panel of judges, suspension and losing studentship, methods of cheating is still very much on the increase and becoming more sophisticated yearly. Observation has shown that cases of malpractice increasing and penalties are also becoming more severe. Some students have their results cancelled, some schools sanctioned from writing WAEC but anyone caught faces panel of investigators and stands to lose a semester or a session depending on the offence. Nigerian institution of Higher learning like every other institution in the world are not exempted from the cankerworm called examination malpractice that has eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigeria education system. Looking at some of the products who graduate year in year out, it can be observed that the expected skills and mastery have not been achieved because of their inability to perform as expected in the labour market. To corroborate this, Lam, To, and YChan (2017) revealed that ... students' acquisition of knowledge and skills indicate a 'U-shape' trend and a fluctuating learning pattern with a rebound in different outcome variables. Some get involved in impersonation, any student caught stands to lose his/her studentship if found guilty.

- **Miscarriage of justice:** It has also been observed that many invigilators have been blacklisted due to the fact that they refused to compromise or pardon those who were caught cheating.

Curbing Examination Malpractice with technology

Technology supported education system has made the world a global village where nothing is hidden any longer. It can be a veritable tool for arresting and curbing the menace called examination malpractice masterminded by students who delight in cheating. There are technology gadgets can be used to track down such student's night and day. For instance, Close Circuit Television (CCTV) can identify the culprits and their collaborators before, during and after the examination exercise. Once a culprit has been identified and proven beyond reasonable doubt, as a result of the evidences, it can make the application of sanction to be seen

as immediate, open and fair. Akinyemi (2022) in his article ‘deploy technology to tackle examination malpractice suggested that the Federal Government charge examination bodies in the country with responsibility of using technology to curb examination in public examinations in the country. The Minister of Education on the other hand suggested multi-dimensional approach to address the menace by reiterating that ‘ICT is the way to go in order to protect the sanctity of our examinations in Nigeria’. The Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Education in his address also called on the National Assembly to enact laws for sanctions for culprits. Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB), has introduced CCTV cameras into their examination hall to monitor the students during examinations and the cameras can easily identify culprits. In the same vein, CCTV cameras are urgently needed in the examination halls of our higher institutions in order to give the education system a respite. In 2019, the West African Examinations Council in 2019, announced the deployment of new electronic machines to combat examination malpractice. The software is said to detect collusion among the students especially in objective tests.

The use of CCTV Cameras in the opinion of this paper in the detection of those involved in unwholesome acts during examinations can serve as a instrument for ensuring credibility for the waning image of our examination system.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A cursory look at the way some graduates perform in the world of work revealed that little or no skills are genuinely acquired. This has been attributed to students’ laziness, indiscipline and cheating to acquire what they do not deserve. Examination malpractice takes place as a result of desperation to acquire high grades and high class of degree they do not deserve. If students could engage in e-cheating, e-supervision can also be used for minimizing e-cheating hence close circuit television can be effective in monitoring examination halls by supervisors. In view of this, the study aimed to investigate e-supervision in curbing examination malpractices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate students’ instruments of cheating during examinations

- causes of examination malpractice
- agents of examination malpractice
- ways of minimizing examination malpractice
- can e-supervision minimize examination malpractice

Research Questions

- What are the causes of examination malpractice?
- who are the agents of examination malpractices?
- what are the ways examination malpractices could be minimized?
- Can e-supervision effectively minimize examination malpractice?

METHODOLOGY

The study was designed as a descriptive research of the survey type. The target participants were all levels of students across the faculties in Ekiti State university, Ado-Ekiti. The sample size was 150 students from selected from all levels. 150 students selected following a guideline provided by Gorsuch (1983) and Kline (1994 as cite by Pearson and Mundform (2010). The study was conducted by using a descriptive survey design. The study makes use of quantitative techniques (questionnaire) in collecting data. Descriptive statistic was used to analyzing data. The instrument was questionnaire title: E-supervision: Panacea to minimizing examination malpractice among undergraduate students in Ekiti State University. The questionnaire is in three sections using yes/no, true/false and likert scale of strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree. The data collected were analysed using percentage to answer the research questions.

RESULTS

Demographic variable

Research question one: What are the causes of examination malpractice?

Table 1: Demographic Information

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	40	27
Female	110	73
Total	150	100

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
14-18	15	10
11- 25	100	67
26-30	20	13
31 & above	15	10
Total	150	100
Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100	70	47
200	Nil	-
300	30	20
400	45	30
500	5	3
Total	150	100

From table 2 125(83%) of the respondents agreed that lack of reading culture among students is one of the causes of examination malpractices while 25(17%) disagreed. Eighty-five (57%) of the respondents agreed that laziness causes examination malpractices while 65(43%) disagreed. Seventy-five respondents (50%) agreed and disagreed respectively that overloaded syllabus is one of the causes of examination malpractices. Fifty respondents (33%) agreed that parental pressure and too much emphasis on certificate at the expense of skill were the causes of examination malpractices while 100 (67%) disagreed respectively. Sixty-five (43%) of the respondents agreed that faulty teaching method is responsible for examination

malpractices while 85(57%) disagreed. Fifty-five (37%) agreed that poor remuneration of teachers is responsible for examination malpractices 95(63%) disagreed. Sixty respondents (40%) agreed that peer pressure is responsible for examination malpractices while 85(57%) disagreed. Fifty (33%) of the respondents agreed that poor supervision is responsible for examination malpractices while 100(67%) disagreed. Sixty (40%) of the respondents agreed that corruption is responsible for examination malpractices while 90(60%) disagreed. Thirty-five (23%) of the respondents agreed that technology such as mobile phone is responsible for examination malpractices 115(77%) disagreed.

Research question two: Who are the agents of examination malpractices?

Table 2: Causes of Examination Malpractices

S/N	ITEMS	AGREE		DISAGREE		RANK
		N	%	N	%	
1	Lack of reading culture among students	125	83	25	17	1st
2	Laziness	85	57	65	43	2nd
3	Overloaded syllabus	75	50	75	50	3rd
4	Parental pressure	50	33	100	67	7th
5	Too much emphasis on certificate at the expense of skill	50	33	100	67	7th
6	Faulty teaching method	65	43	85	57	4th
7	Poor remuneration of teachers	55	37	95	63	6th
8	Peer pressure	60	40	90	60	5th
9	Poor supervision	50	33	100	67	6th
10	Corruption	60	40	90	60	5th
11	Technology (Mobile Phone)	35	23	115	77	8th

From table 3, 95(63%) respondents agreed that leakage of questions is one of the ways students perpetrate examination malpractices. One hundred and forty (93%) agreed that smuggling of textbooks and pieces of papers

to exam hall is one of the ways students engage in examination malpractices while 10(7%) disagreed. One hundred and five (70%) agreed that mobile devices is used to cheat in examination while 45(30%) disagreed.

One hundred (67%) respondents agreed that students Cheat in examination by writing of answers on their palm and thigh while 50 (33%) disagreed. Eighty respondents (53%) agreed that students cheat by impersonation while 70(37%) disagreed. Eighty-five

(57%) respondents agreed that students cheat by bribing of invigilator/ exam officers while 65(43%) disagreed.

Research question three: What are the ways examination malpractices could be minimized?

Table 3: Agents of Examination Malpractices

S/N	ITEMS	AGREE		DISAGREE	
		N	%	N	%
1	Leakage of questions	95	63	55	37
2	Smuggling of textbooks and pieces of papers to exam hall	140	93	10	7
3	Mobile devices	105	70	45	30
4	Writing of answers on their palm and thigh	100	67	50	33
5	Dictation/passing of papers around	100	67	50	33
6	Impersonation	80	53	70	47
7	Bribing of invigilator/ exam officers	85	57	65	43

In table 3 Fifty five (37%) respondents agreed that curriculum should be redesigned to promote more of skill acquisition while 95(63%) disagreed. Thirty respondents (20%) agreed that stiffer punishment like imprisonment without option of fine should be adopted to minimise examination malpractices while 120 (80%) disagreed. Forty (27%) agreed that less emphasis on class of degree and certificate is a way of reducing examination malpractices while 110(73%) disagreed. One hundred and thirty-five (90%) agreed that improvement of student reading habits are ways of minimising examination malpractices while 15(10%) of the respondents disagreed. Eighty (53%) respondents agreed that conducive learning environment will

minimise examination malpractices while 70(47%) disagreed. One hundred and five (70%) of the respondents agreed that improvement on teaching methods will reduce examination malpractices while 45(30%) disagreed. Forty (27%) of the respondents agreed that teachers' remuneration should be improved to reduce examination malpractices while 110(73%) disagreed. Sixty-five (43%) that reduction of course workload will reduce examination malpractices while the majority 85(57%) disagreed.

Research question four: Can e-supervision effectively minimize examination malpractice?

Table 4: Ways of Minimising Examination Malpractices

S/N	ITEMS	AGREE		DISAGREE		RANKING
		N	%	N	%	
1	Curriculum should be redesigned to promote more of skill acquisition	55	37	95	63	5th
2	Stiffer punishment like imprisonment without option of fine	30	20	120	80	7th
3	Less emphasis on class of degree and certificate	40	27	110	73	6th
4	Improvement of student reading habits	135	90	15	10	1st
5	Conducive learning environment	80	53	70	47	3rd
6	Improvement on teaching methods	105	70	45	30	2nd
7	Teachers remuneration should be improved	40	27	110	73	6th
8	Reduction of course workload	65	43	85	57	4th

Table 5: Deployment of E-supervision

S/N	ITEMS	AGREE		DISAGREE	
		N	%	N	%
1	Deployment of CCTV devices for supervision	45	30	105	70

From table 5 Forty-five (30%) respondents agreed that deployment of CCTV devices for supervision will reduce examination malpractices while the majority 105 (70%) disagreed.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that lack of reading culture by students is one of the major causes of examination malpractices followed by laziness, overloaded syllabus, faulty method of teaching, peer pressure and corruption respectively followed by poor remuneration and poor supervision, followed by parental pressure and too much emphasis on certificate at the expense of skill and technology. The finding of this study is also corroborated by the earlier study of Amadi and Opuyi (2018) who submitted that students lack the appetite for studying but rather want to pass their exams by all means. Apart from lack of reading culture which can be attributed to students, parents are sometimes accomplices in this evil act, some of them collude with examiners and invigilators to assist their children to cheat. This is supported by Peter and Okon (2013) they opined that parents by imposing courses on their children without due consideration of their interest and mental capabilities to cope with such courses often lead students to examination malpractices. bribing invigilators and examination officers.

The findings of the study also revealed that Smuggling of textbooks, pieces of papers to examination hall and hiding devices under the hair are the primary agents of examination malpractices which was followed by use of mobile devices to cheat, writing answers on their thigh and palm, dictating answers or writing answers in pieces of paper and passing them to one another, leakage of examination questions and impersonation.

The finding of this study is supported by Conde (2006) and Kolawole (2019) who submitted that brilliant students impersonating the dull ones, leakage of question papers, copying, giraffing, exchange of answer scripts, writing on question papers, sales of question papers, bringing in and exchange of already prepared answers into the examination halls and smart phones to the examination halls to cheat. Today students are very desperate, no more dignity of labour, want success at all cost without recourse to hard labour. They want to have good grades at all cost and do not mind doing unlawful things such as examination malpractices and are ready to induce invigilators to have their ways.

On the other hand improvement of students reading habits ranked first among the ways of minimizing examination malpractices as revealed by the study followed by improvement of teaching methods, provision of conducive environment for learning, reduction of course workload, redesigning the curriculum to promote to accommodate more of skill acquisition, less emphasis on class of degrees and certificates while stiffer punishment like imprisonment without option of fine ranked the least ways of reducing examination malpractices. The findings clearly revealed that, reducing examination malpractices is a collective effort of students, librarians, teachers/ lecturers, management, curriculum planners (National University Commission and Senate of each institution) the employers and the society and the parents. Studies have shown that the reading culture is dwindling among users and as a matter of fact, majority of Nigerians do not have reading culture. Since the only way to pass examination and acquiring profitable knowledge is by attending classes and compliment it by reading, students need to be encouraged by librarians by their training to inculcate reading culture into the students through user's education courses, collaborating with the department and by making concerted efforts to promote reading culture in students.

Teaching methods should be improved through capacity building of lecturers, and also there should be a proper review of curriculum to make it relevant and prepare students for the reality of present information society and reduce unnecessary workload. The study also revealed that students want to continue to engage in examination malpractices without stiffer punitive measure, there laws regulating the conduct of examination and also stipulating punishment for examination malpractices, such should be impartially enforced to serve as deterrent for others.

The fourth objective is to investigate if e-supervision would effectively minimize examination malpractice. The finding of the study did not support e-supervision, most especially the use of CCTV, the students knew that, this is the right way to go and they would prefer supervision to still be done traditionally because they had mapped out means of outsmarting the invigilators CCTV will definitely create an undeniable digital record of their examination malpractices hence they would not like to support it. The success story of CCTV in detecting highly sophisticated criminal activities abound even in Nigeria. There had been cases where cheats were

tracked down through the CCTV footage, the work of the technology in tracking examination offenders will be very easy because the students have names and matric numbers coupled with the fact that the students will have sit numbers which will make the work easier. This device needs little or no human efforts. The conduct of the examination could be monitored by an individual invigilator who will sit at the control room and the CCTV footage can be used to detect the offenders. For instance, Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) has successfully deployed technology to monitor the conduct of her examination with appreciable success. Akinyemi (2022) corroborated the position of the researchers by submitting that the Federal Government should charge examination bodies in the country with responsibility of using technology to curb examination malpractice in public examinations in the country. The position of the authors is supported by Zakka (2014) who suggested the use of biometric data capturing, writing of examination online, prohibition of mobile phone in examination halls and installation of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of examination malpractices among undergraduates is very alarming, hence all hands must be on the deck to arrest this monster that compromises the integrity of our examination process. The earlier we come to term with the reality of this digital age where students are deploying technology both positively and negatively such as cheating with technology. The students have lost interest in reading which is the sure way to prepare for and pass examination, they want to pass at all cost and would not mind compromising the examination process through any form of manipulations. Institutions are trying to scale-up their method supervision by deploying technology such as CCTV examination supervision. The current mode of supervision may not suffice hence the need for deployment of innovative technology to enhance the integrity of examination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Librarians and lecturers should collaborate to inculcate reading culture in students by deliberately referring them to consult information resources in the library and laziness should be discouraged and

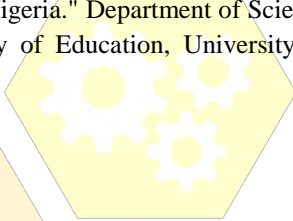
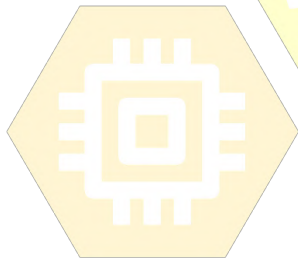
the curriculum should be reviewed to reflect the reality of digital age.

2. The students should be properly monitored to prevent them from smuggling textbooks and pieces of papers to examination halls. The use of mobile devices should be prohibited and any students found with mobile phones in the examination halls should be punished appropriately.
3. There should be special designated halls for examination with the installation of CCTV camera and other surveillance equipment to monitor the conduct of examinations at all levels.

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