

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Olayinka (1998) said that examination malpractice is a “misconduct or improper practice in any examination with a view to obtaining good result through fraudulent means”.

Some of the examination malpractices include: Cheating, giraffing, taking prepared answers to the examination hall, impersonation, writing on pieces of paper and hiding same under the private part, writing on the palms, thighs and using a certain finger to indicate the correct option in the objective test items such as thumb for ‘A’ and the smallest finger for ‘B’ or ‘C’ option. Some unscrupulous invigilators do indulge in dictating the correct answers to students, they also extend the time allocated to the examination paper. Some teachers show examination papers to their favoured students due to gratification either in cash or in kind. All these are examination malpractices.

Some messengers abuse their offices by selling photocopied question papers to their students, parents connive with teachers and students to purchase examination question papers and so on.

The examination malpractices in this country have got to an alarming peak, whereby all concerned citizens are taken aback, thinking whether we have gone beyond redemption point (Olayinka, 1998).

Liman (1997) said that we read daily in nearly all the Nigerian Newspapers reports of fraud here and there. The impression at present is that our governments are touched, institutions of learning are flagrantly defamed, parents are cast down and the West African Examination Council (WAEC) formally untiring, seems to be throwing in the towel by being unable to conduct a hundred percent fraud-free examination any longer.

The practice of examination fraud initiates the manners of a syndicate operation and in keeping with the glorious tradition, it is said that whoever that refuses to co-operate is assaulted.

There are the disturbing trends surely and they have serious implications for the educational system whose foundation is threatened.

With teachers and parents so actively involved in this unwanted fraud, the nation faces the prospect of breeding a generation of dishonest youths, half baked college products and invariably, an unreliable labour force for the future.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In the Nigerian society today, examination fraud is an important aspect of indiscipline,

ineptitude, corruption and other vices that have eaten deep into the fabrics of the Education sector. Examination malpractices spread across the country and involve both sexes irrespective of tribe and religion.

The practice covers various forms of leakages, certificate alteration and forgery, swooping answer scripts, beating up examination invigilator for non-cooperation and so on (Obe, 1996).

Education in Nigeria these days has been seriously undermined by the hydra headed monster called examination malpractice. This is an obvious evil that has bedeviled all the strata of our educational sector. Examination fraud seems to have gained the upper hand and has conquered the morality and religiosity of the students. The attitude of students towards examination malpractices is total and overwhelming and almost all caliber of students from secondary to the higher institutions of learning participate in it.

According to Olayinka (1997) our public examinations have lost its credibility, the certificate which is the main reason of participation in examination fraud is questionable in terms of academic excellence and prowess but to the participants the end truly justifies the means because of the facts that Nigeria is now certificate oriented. Olayinka is of the opinion that there are various reports of this unwanted phenomenon known as examination malpractices in all the tiers of our school system, for example the primary, the secondary and the tertiary institutions. At the national level, efforts are being geared towards controlling all forms of indiscipline in all spheres of our national activities, for instance, in 1979, a national conference on discipline and motivation in schools was organized by the National Policy Development Centre (NPDC) in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) with the full support of the Federal and State government.

The basic purpose of that conference was amongst other things, to find out the root causes of indiscipline in school system, mostly examination fraud, drug abuse, cultism, prostitution among the female students. It is a truism that of all the notable indiscipline in our school system today, examination malpractice is the worst because it tends to destroy foundation of the Nigerian educational system and lower its standards.

In an attempt to bring about great order to the Nigeria society the military regime of Buhari in (1984) coined an idea of War Against Indiscipline (WAI), which was meant to wage war against prominent vices and to sanitize the society.

To extirpate or control all forms of malpractices, the government of General Babangida in 1996,

promulgated a decree covering the miscellaneous offences which included examination malpractices more so with very stiff penalty attached for example cheats at examinations are to serve a jail term of twenty one (21) year. But suffice it say that this heavy penalty did not in any way abate or deter students involvement and their burning attitude towards examination malpractices.

Obviously, it seems that the general attitude of students at all levels of our school system towards examination fraud is high and unabated and this has affected their academic performance greatly for example most students cannot even speak good and passable English not to talk of writing well in English and many students cannot even defend the stolen certificates which they got through Examination malpractices (Ejiogu, 1996) and this has brought disgrace to our educational system and the cheats in particular.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Examination malpractices have been identified with such names as: the monster, national disease, national disgrace, a cancer in educational underbelly.

Examination malpractices, which began as isolated cases of examination leakage and other malpractices in all institutions across the country, have turned out into an avalanche, thus calling to question, the credibility of admissions and assessments based on examinations held within the country (Obe, 1992).

The problems of examination fraud to the growth and development of our educational sector are enormous. The three of examination malpractices over the years, grown gigantic satanic roots spreading its tentacles to even the most revealed of Nigeria institutions and examination bodies.

The problem is not just associated with the lower examination bodies like (WAEC, JAMB or NECO) it is not strange to the higher institutions such as the medical examinations, the law school examinations and so on. The most striking issues is that students of various beliefs and faiths, for example, religious fanatics who belong to Muslim or Christian religious are often times found to be victims of this moral misconduct called examination malpractice.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of students attitudinal behaviour towards examination malpractice on their academic performance.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed to guide the conduct of this study.

- i. To what extent can the problem of examination malpractice be solved?
- ii. How can we identify the culprits of examination malpractice?
- iii. How do we determine the extent of damages examination malpractices has done to our educational system?
- iv. To what extent does examination malpractice affect the academic performance of students?
- v. Who do we blame for examination malpractice?

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

- i. Students' involvement in examination malpractice does not significantly affect their academic performance in mathematics.
- ii. There will be no significant difference between the involvement of male and female students in examination malpractice.
- iii. There is no significant influence of students' behaviour towards examination malpractice on their academic performance in English language subject.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research work is going to assist in many ways in proffering solution to the problem of examination malpractice in Nigeria and in Surulere Local Government Area of Lagos State in particular for example.

- i. The solutions provided by this study will go a long way in helping the government and the Ministry of Education to tackle the problem of examination malpractice.
- ii. This investigation will enable students to understand the effect of examination malpractice on their academic performance.
- iii. Also the society will benefit from the investigation as well as the solution proffered in this study.
- iv. This work will help parents, teachers and examination officers to know the dangers involved in aiding or abetting their children or students to cheat in examinations.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study will cover the causes, effects and solution to the examination malpractice in the educational sector, especially in the Surulere Local Government Area of Lagos State.

This study has been limited in order to have an in depth study of students' behaviours towards examination malpractice on their academic performance. This is because the issue of

examination malpractice is national phenomenon that cut across all thesectors of our educational sector in Nigeria.

1.8DEFINITION OFTERMS

To make thisstudy understandable, all ambiguous words and terms are operationally definedthus:

i.**Examinationmalpractice:**This is misconduct or improper practice in any examination with a view toobtaining good result through fraudulent names (Olayinka 1998).

ii.**Fraudulent:** The advancedlearners dictionary defines fraudulent as something got or done by deceiving orthrough deceit.

INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS ATTITUDINAL BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE ON THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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