

EXAMINATION IRREGULARITIES: A VIEW INTO FINE ART AND INDUSTRIAL DESIGN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

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Abstract

In any academic setting most especially one like Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, there must be checks and balances this could either be through examination, tests, assignment or exhibitions. The examinations vary –examination for art studio or Laboratory and for theory courses. The essence of examination either in the art studio or theory courses is to evaluate the entire teaching and learning processes, to ascertain the progress, knowledge ability and competence the students have attained. The issues of examination irregularities are similar to examination malpractice as it relates to both Fine Art and Industrial Design. Examination irregularities leads to certification of incompetent and uncreative artists to be, or industrial designer to be, who cannot initiate artistic ideas on their own and resort all the times to copy or pirate someone's artwork/design. This situation leads to low productivity among graduates of art and design. This paper discusses the concept, causes of examination irregularities and role of teachers in curbing the unwanted ordeal of examination irregularities at the university level. the role of teacher includes proper guidance and counselling, avoidance of unethical practices like social relationships of teachers with students, intimacy between examiners and examinees, extortion, lobbying, generosity in marking and reckless invigilation by examiners and so on.

Keywords: Examination, Irregularity, Art and Design Undergraduate Students.

Background

One of the objectives of education in Nigeria is to prepare young people to face future challenges and develop them to meet the nation's man power requirements. Schools need to conduct examinations as yardstick for assessment. It is the most practical way of assessment in education. Madumezia (1997) defined examination as a way to ascertain how much of a subject matter in a particular field of study the candidate has mastered. Hornby (1995) defined

an examination as a formal test of somebody's knowledge or ability in a particular subject, especially by means of answering questions, practical activity or exercises. Balogun (1999) also defined examination as the process through which students are evaluated or tested to find out the quality of knowledge they have acquired within a specified period. Examinations could be internal, external, oral, written, theoretical or practical or both.

Examples of internal examinations are continuous assessment tests, terminal or semester and annual or promotion examinations. Examples of external (public) examinations common in Nigerian schools are Common Entrance Examination for admission into secondary school. School certificates examination are conducted by West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). The Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB)

and National Teachers' Institute (NTI) conduct admission tests into tertiary institutions while the National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) conducts professional examinations for teachers and technicians respectively.

Examination malpractice is any wrong doing before, during or after any examination. Although one may not be able to rule out examination malpractice in the past, the current trend is alarming and calls for proper management in order to rid the school system of its consequences. Whereas in the past, students tended to hide the acts, now it is no longer a thing of shame, they advertise it with positive blatancy.

The things that others thought right to draw a veil across, the modern biographer reveals with all the gusto of a showman. Denga (1997) traces back examination malpractice to 1914. He further reported that in the University of Maiduguri, about 25% of the students interviewed admitted to have engaged in one form of examination malpractice or another. Examination malpractice occurs in both internal and external examinations. In short, it has become an epidemic in the

nation's educational system, which needs prompt attention. A new paragraph to the situation of examination malpractice is so embarrassing to the nation that the federal military government in 1984 promulgated Decree 20 to deal with it. Part of the Decree reads thus:

Any person who fraudulently or with intent to cheat or secure any unfair advantage to himself or any other person or in abuse of his office, produces, sells or buys or otherwise deals with any question paper intended

for the examination of persons at any examination or commits any of the offences specified in section 3 (2 7) (c) of this Decree, shall be guilty of an offence and on conviction be sentenced to 21 years' imprisonment... (Fagbemi, 1998).

However, Examination Malpractice Act 33 of 1999 revised the above decree but now stipulates punishment ranging from a fine of N50, 000.00 to N100, 000.00 and imprisonment for a term of 3-4 years with or without option of fine. This new development is due to the inability of the appropriate authorities to enforce the old Decree 20 of 1985. Despite all these laws, examination

malpractice has continued to thrive could it be the non-implementation of the laws. Part of the reasons for it being the low moral standard in schools, candidates' fear of failure, lack of confidence in themselves, in adequate preparation, laziness and the '419' syndrome that have eaten deep into the life of the society. Denga (1997) stated that students are likely to cheat when they are not prepared for examinations. He also reported that university lecturers

are of the opinion that inadequate teaching and learning facilities, poor conditions of service of teachers fear of failure by students and admission of unqualified candidates into universities are responsible for examination malpractices.

Fayombo (2004) categorized the reasons for examination malpractices into psychological and sociological causes. The over dependence on certification hassled to 'mad rush' by the populace and the resultant effect is that people either acquire certificates legitimately or otherwise. This messy situation is having a negative effect on the nation's educational quality and the kind of certificates issued to students at different levels. So many people can no longer defend their certificates.

Okwilagwe (2001) opined that the interest in non-intellectual factors would seem to have stemmed from the idea that "the human being is a complex whole." That is, man is made up of intellectual, emotional, affective and psychological traits. For them to develop and reach their full potential in life, these traits must be understood, harnessed, and be catered for by the school. Students' involvement examination malpractices have become perennial and institutionalized. It is a testimonial to the flawed process of admission into secondary schools and tertiary institutions. It has invariably, reflected in the multifaceted crises in the nation's educational system.

Moral instruction is the detailed information, which concerns the principles of right and wrong behaviours. The study of moral development has become a lively growth industry within the social sciences.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of the paper:

1. To determine examination malpractices in art and design education;
2. To examine the causes of examination malpractices in art and design education;
3. To suggest possible solutions to curb the problems of examination malpractices in other art schools.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopted the Attitude theory of All port in Zanna, et al, (1993) and the Merton's theory of Anomie to examine the problem of examination irregularities in the departments of Fine Art and Industrial Design Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The paper used these theories to ascertain the causes of examination malpractice or irregularities in Art schools. The theory of All port sees attitude as an expression of favour or disfavor towards a person, thing, or event It can be formed from a person's past and present. It is a "readiness of the psyche to react in a certain way"

It usually comes in pair "the conscious and unconscious". Sometimes psychologists say that attitude is hereditary or inherent while some scholars argued that it is environmentally adopted. For example, Tesser, (1993) stressed that attitude is born out of hereditary factor and hereditary influences attitudes. He added that attitude is controlled by one's cognition and it could be positive or negative. But in the opinion of Merton in Olatunbosun (2009), malpractice originates from anomie. The word 'Anomie' is break down in the cultural structure due to disjunction between the cultural norms and goals and the socially structured capacities of members of the group of a given society. In this conception, cultural values may help to produce behaviours that are odd, with the mandate of values themselves. Merton in Olatunbosun, (2009) added that, it is a factor that gives birth to aberrant behaviour and nonconformity, which is symptom of disassociation between culturally prescribed goals and socially presented means for realizing these goals. He expatiated that:

...a society that places exceptional strong emphasis on institutionalized means of achieving certain goals is bound to exert pressure on some members of the society that may eventually resort to the use of any technically expedient means in achieving these goals irrespective of whether the means employed are legitimate or not. Contemporary Nigerian society places great emphasis on success goals without equivalent emphasis on

institutional means of attaining these goals. The society is characterized by a heavy emphasis on success and wealth without a corresponding emphasis on legitimate means and avenues to be used in achieving success. Everything in Nigeria these days is driven by the desire for success irrespective of the means used in achieving success.

Bearing in mind what the theory of All port and the theory of anomie as reported by Merton in Olatunbosun, (2009) respectively, the paper sees All port's theory of Attitude as derived from Sigmund Freud's Cognitive theory, which stresses on "Id" 'Ego' and Superego. These concepts according to Sigmund Freud co-exists together in terms of functionality in human being. The "Id' and "Ego" are biological and intrinsic and Super-ego is societal oriented, which mean the cultural needs and expectations of society in individual as a member of a given society. This is what is called societal aspirations, standards, values, beliefs and taboos. If the opinion of Sigmund Freud on what constitutes the thinking of man and why man behaves the way, he or she does? The paper sees the All ports theory as psychological because it contains both man's intrinsic and societal factors. The Merton's theory of Anomie in Olatunbosun, (2009) is purely sociological because it primarily stresses on cultural influences on members of societies. However, to throw more light on the issue regarding what causes examination irregularities in schools of Arts? To accomplish answer to this question, the paper adopts both the theories of All port and Merton. The reason why the paper adopted the two theories was for the fact that All port's treated the psychological aspect of human thinking but failed to give or explain the reason why human beings think the way they do? What influences human to do certain things in terms of attitude or behaviour? While the Merton's theory emphasizes on the influences of culture on an individual, which is relates to sociological perspectives. Merton's theorization has also failed identify the psychological motive that drives a person to do certain things. It is for this reason the paper merged the two theories to support the study and come up with cogent research outcomes. The paper considers the All ports theory of Attitude to clarify the two responsible factors that push human to do certain things as they do whether negative or positive as well as favourable or unfavorable. Having adopted these theories, the paper assumed that cultural beliefs, aspirations, standards, values and taboos are definitely the factor that every member of a society hopes to achieve. To prove the opinion of Olatunbosun, (2009) that indicated that

...Nigerian society that places exceptionally strong emphasis on goal achievement without a corresponding emphasis on institutionalized means of achieving these goals is bound to exert pressures on some members of the society that may eventually resort to the use of any technically expedient means in achieving these goals irrespective of whether the means employed is legitimate.

Concept and Causes of Examination Irregularities

Concept of Examination Malpractice

Improper **practice** applied by **examinee** in order to be declared **successful in an examination**. Generally, it is any illegal act by the **examinee** or **examiner** or both, before, during or after the examination with the intent to make the examinee earn an unmerited grade or gain unfair advantage (Asuru in Awanbor, 2010). Malpractice can be used interchangeably with the word irregularities or dishonesty which simply means destitution in integrity, or deceitful or been fraudulent. He opines further that the activities constituting dishonest practices in public examinations which includes any irregular behaviour exhibited by candidates or anybody charged with the conduct of examination in or outside the examination hall, before, during or after such examination (Amali 2007). The examination malpractice is an act or acts of wrong doing carried out by a candidate or group of candidates or any other persons with the intention to cheat or gain unfair advantage in an examination. It could therefore, be deduced from the above perspectives that examination malpractice encompasses the acts that insult or impugn the integrity of the examination and/or its procedures. Hence, examination malpractice is the application of unusual means to obtain good results/grades perhaps? in an examination that is normally beyond the mental capability or the state of preparedness of a candidate for that examination. (Amali,2007).

Causes of Examination malpractice

Examination irregularities may not be limited to any one cause, but series of factors which act in concert (Awanbor, 2010). He identified such factors as value system of the society, economic factors, emphasis on paper qualification, psychological factors, poor and inadequate teaching-learning environment/facilities and admission policy as causes of

malpractice in both internal and public examinations: -

i. **Societal Value System:** Nigeria is a nation of paradoxes, a nation of climax and anti-climax. Ours is a society where morality, honesty and social ethics which are the basis of humanism have been thrown to

the dogs (Awanbor, 2010). It is the end that justifies the means. This is manifested in the series of electoral fraud, bribery and corruption, perversion of justice,

“thuggery”, et cetera. From these, our youths learn that anything could be won or gotten not by merit, but through fraud. The low emphasis on merit as shown by the principles of Federal Character or quota system, man-know-man syndrome, tribalism, statism, favoritism, et cetera, resulting to the gaining of undue advantage, thus sacrificing merit on the altar of mediocrity.

The Combined effect of these is that the school being a microcosm of the larger society, cannot be “holier” than the macro-society. It is thus logical to say that examination malpractice is a reflection of the degenerating morals, and decadence in our society.

ii. **Economic Factors:** Because of the shift on societal value from moral rectitude to wealth at whatever means, and coupled with the continued dwindling economic fortunes of the teacher, most teachers in a bid to meet with societal standards expected of them and make ends meet, involve themselves in examination malpractice for economic gains. This, in the parlance of examination malpractice is known as “Settlement” or “sorting”. Teachers see their job as the least rewarding and regarded in society, hence are scorned. This makes them susceptible to the allurements of gifts, money and promise of better jobs/contract by students/candidates or their relations. It is an open secret that invigilation of public examinations is now money-spinner jobs for teachers who use the opportunity to extort money from candidates so as to allow them cheat. It is worthy of note too that teachers in most cases pay bribe to be listed as Invigilators/Supervisors; hence they have to recover the money so invested. As observed by Awanbor (2010), some good candidates come from poor homes and to make ends meet, they accept money from richer but less intelligent students/candidates to assist them in examination. Also, the willingness of “Mercenaries” to accept to write examinations for their clients is purely for monetary gains.

iii. **Over Emphasis on Paper Qualification:** In Nigeria, undue emphasis is placed on paper qualification to the utter neglect of actual performance. Thus, as long as one has a certificate to show, which is regarded as a meal ticket, it does not necessarily matter whether he can perform what he claims to be. This is predicated on the premise that less emphasis is placed on the assessment of the effective and psychomotor domains. These have a resultant effect of making the candidates/students get the certificate at all cost.

iv. **Psychological Factors:** Students in a bid to portray to their parents, teachers, peers, relations, colleagues and so on, of their brilliance, indulge in examination malpractice. Also, in a frantic bid to avoid bearing the stigma of failure, they indulge in malpractice. It is pertinent to state that some students may have become regular customers to WAEC, JAMB, et cetera, or have failed a particular course many times. The fear of such previous failures, resulting to lack of self-confidence makes them resort to malpractice to avert a re-occurrence.

v. **Bandwagon Effect:** Examination malpractice to say the least has tended to be the rule rather than the exception in most cases. Hence, what matters is whether a candidate has passed and not how. In order to be among the “achievers”, candidates who ordinarily would not have been involved in malpractice, indulge in it in line with a popular saying that “if you cannot beat them, you join them”.

vi. **Poor and Inadequate Teaching-Learning Environment:** Conducive learning environment as well as availability of facilities is common problems militating against teaching-learning and good performance in examination. Most of our institutions today lack the basic teaching-learning facilities. As a result, the students are ill prepared for examinations.

Dangers of Examination Irregularities

Some of the dangers of examination malpractices include:

- a. Not being able to defend the certificate (failure in job performance).
- b. Perpetual condemnation of the conscience.
- c. Possibility of unfulfilled dreams and vision, if the student is rusticated from school or terminated at the working place.
- d. Spillover effect borne by parents and other relatives of culprits.
- e. The culprit may be initiated into a system of dishonesty and corrupt practices by which they become hardened.
- f. it makes nonsense of the educational system and it militates against the country’s goal of technological advancement.
- g. it discredits certificates issued by national examination bodies and institutions of higher learning and the nation as a whole.
- h. It makes students to lose the ability to study or work hard in their studies.
- i. When a candidate is caught and expelled, there will be no certificate to show for whatever year(s) they might have put into their educational career.

Research Methodology

The research methodology of the paper was sample survey. Sample survey as research design has aided the study to administer closed ended five point Likert Questionnaire on respondents under study.

Population and Sample

The paper considers one hundred (100) undergraduate students to serve as population. Fifty (50) Fine arts and Fifty (50) Industrial design students. The paper used stratified random sampling technique to reduce biasness and allow the participants being properly represented. The paper used non-proportionate stratified sampling technique which was done by using Rule of Thumb to justify the sample sizing of the research.

Research Instrument and Data Analysis

The paper used four-point scale closed ended Likert scale questionnaire to help the participants to respond properly within an ample time, to avoid the copies of research instruments being misplaced or missing.

Data Analysis

The following are the analyses of the paper on Examination Irregularities amongst art and Design undergraduate students, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, the analysis was arranged according to the objectives of the paper.

1. Determining the examination irregularities amongst art and design undergraduate students, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria;

Types of Examination Irregularities	Yes	No	Percent
Pre-Examination	75%	25%	100.0
Expo	81%	19%	100.0
Falsification	80%	20%	100.0
Multiple Registration	70%	30%	100.0
Impersonation	75%	25%	100.0
Thuggery	70%	30%	100.0
Sharing of ideas in the studio	40%	60%	100%

The table above indicates that Pre-examination were 75%, Expo was 81%; Falsification of examinations were 80%; Multiple Registration were also 76% as well as thuggery 70% and sharing of ideas during examination in the studios were 40%.

2. Examine the Causes of examination irregularities amongst art and design undergraduate students, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria;

Causes of Examination Irregularities	Yes	No	Percentage
Societal Values	64%	36%	100.0
Psychological Factors	76%	24%	100.0
Teacher Generosity	51%	49%	100.0
Studio Crowdedness	80%	20%	100.0
Poor Admission Policy	95%	15%	100.0
Intimacy of Teacher and Students	76%	24%	100.0
Extortion of Money by teachers	81%	19%	100.0

The table above is showing the factors that causes of examination irregularities in higher institutions. The result shows that societal values were 64%; psychological factor 76%; teacher generosity 51% while studio crowdedness was 80%. Poor admission policy was 95%, intimacy of teachers with students were also 76% as well as extortion of money from students was 81%.

3. To suggest possible ways to curb the problems of Examination Irregularities amongst Fine arts and Industrial design students, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Ways to Curb Examination Irregularities	Yes	No	Percentage
Fairness in assessment	80%	20%	100.0
Allowances for Examination	51%	49%	100.0
Adequate Facilities be provided	81%	19%	100.0
Committees on Examinations matters	85%	15%	100.0
Edict on Examination Irregularities	85%	15%	100.0

Table above indicates that there is need for fairness in marking examination which shows 80%; the table also shows there is need for payment of allowances which was 51%. Need to provide adequate facilities to reduce crowdedness were 81% as well as committees on examination matters 85%.

Major Findings

4. The paper revealed that various types of examination irregularities in the universities do exist. The irregularities of examinations like expo, falsification, multiple registrations do occur.
5. It has been realized in this paper that factors like societal values, Extortion of Money by teachers, poor admission policy and Studio Crowdedness, intimacy of teachers with students among others are responsible for Examination Irregularities among students in the university.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

The paper discusses the findings according to the following:

Discussion

It is paramount in this paper to discuss the findings and the related literature to ascertain the position of the outcome of the paper to avoid biasness. The issue of examinations irregularities are matters of social vices of the day. This notion was clarified by Awanbor, (2010) where he said "examination irregularities are not limited to one factor rather it was generalised to several factors". The opinion of Awanbor, (2010) has concurred with the analytical interpretation of this paper, where the finding indicates that examination irregularities are being caused by factors like societal values, psychological factors, teacher generosity, poor admission policy, extortion of money from students as well as intimacy of teachers and students. It is a candid truth that if class or studio is crowded with large population. There will be possibility of malpractice.

Conclusion

The paper realized that examination irregularities have been the reflection of social vices and government alone cannot drastically curb it. Rather, the government, school administrators as well as parents are to put hands on deck to curtail gradually out of schools.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the paper recommends the following:

1. There should be fairness in assessment in the universities at all times;
2. Allowances for marking and invigilation should be made attractive to discourage enticements from candidates sitting for examinations;
3. Government should provide adequate studios and lecture theatres. Studio should be made available to all levels 100-400

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