

**EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES, CAUSES, EFFECTS AND  
SOLUTIONS.**

**BY:**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The whole mark of teaching/instruction in the classroom is examination, where the expected behavioral change is to be displayed through writing and passing examination. Writing and passing examination in Nigeria is becoming a do or die affair to some families who can go to any extent to ensure success of their children.

Thus the concern for tertiary levels of Education, responsible parents, Governments, Agencies concerned with Education. The main factor that make some parents, guardians and students to see that their children pass examination at all cost is the strong emphasis given to Certification in the Nigerian National life. This is prompting reason for hustling by all to succeed in life.

## **WHAT IS EXAMINATION?**

The oxford advanced learners dictionary (2000) defined exam as spoken or practical test at school or college especially an important one that you need to do in order to get a qualification. The Wikipedia further asserted that a test or examination is an assessment intended to measure a test-takers knowledge or skill, aptitude, physical fitness or classification in many other topics (e.g. beliefs). A test may be administered orally, on a paper, on a computer or in confirmed area that requires a test taker to physically perform a set of skills.

## **WHAT IS EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE?**

Malpractice is defined as any deliberate act of wrong doing, contrary to the rules of examinations designed to give a candidate an unfair advantage or able frequently, to place a candidate at a disadvantage. Malpractice therefore introduces equities into the examination system. In some examinations, the level of

malpractice is so high that it seriously undermines the credibility of the examination system.

## **FORMS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The following are some identified forms of examinations malpractice:

- **Leakage:** This means that the content of examination or part of it is disclosed prior to taking the examination. Usually it involves one or more of the following: staff members of the examination authorities, printers, proof readers, messengers, personal to develop the papers(setters) or to determine its suitability(moderators) and school administrators.
- **Impersonation:** An individual who is not registered as a candidate takes the place of one that is registered. Usually this involves collusion between the chief examiner and the examination supervisor. It frequently involves tertiary institutions students taking the test for monetary reward or a favour for a girl friend or boy friend. Sometimes young employees are coerced to take the examination in place of the rightful examinee.
- **External Assistance:** Individuals who are not examination candidates giving unauthorized assistance to candidates. Usually this involves invigilators (exam room supervisors) dictating answers, writing answers on the black boards, calculating sheets of worked out answers during the course of the examinations or acting as couriers of materials into the examination center. In some instance entering helpers here used phones or broadcast answers.
- **Smuggling of foreign materials:** This is perhaps the most common form of malpractice. It relates to the introduction of unauthorized materials (e.g. note books, crib notes, charts and answers) into the examination hall. Material is

frequently smuggled in pants, shoes, hems and bras or information is written on parts of the body.

- **Copying:** Reproduction of another candidate work with or without permissions.
- **Collusion:** Unauthorized passing of information between candidates usually by exchanging notes or scripts. Usually involves only the candidate but can be facilitated by inadequate spacing between desks and lax supervision.
- **Intimidation:** Examinations official including supervisors and makers of papers are physically threatened. Usually involves people seeking support for individual candidates. Candidates here also placed weapons in clear view of supervisors to intimidate them. Substitution of scripts, replacing answer sheets handed out during the course of examination. Usually involves examination office officials, invigilators and some teachers working outside the examination room.
- **Improper Assignment:** Deliberate placing of candidate in centers under the supervising of corrupt officials. This is perpetrated by examination officers and examination officials of ministries of Education and representatives of examination bodies.
- **Ghost Centers:** Fictitious examination centers. This is established by corrupt examination officials where candidates can complete the examination with the support of helpers and without supervision.
- **Makers Malpractice:** Deliberate alteration of marks designed to inflate or deflate a candidate's original mark. This can be initiated by examination officials, by candidates (making contract with the makers) or making contracts with the candidates.

- **Awards and Certification:** Deliberate alteration of. In the past usually confined to examinations officials but in more recent years include printers and candidates with high level of skills in technology.

## CAUSES OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE

The idea that, in the Nigerian Education certificate is most important than the skills to deliver is what prompted most students into malpractice so as to have the required certificate to be there. Therefore, the following could be advanced as reasons why we have examination malpractice in our educational system:

- **High Stakes of Examinations:** Success in an examination can have profound, immediate and long term impact on a candidates life. In many developing countries like Nigeria, examination success and secondary school graduation represents the whole avenue for poor students to secure a non menial job. Many parents are seen to resort to various corrupt practices to ensure that there children “PASS” the public examination.
- **Teacher and School Status:** In many instance, teachers and school reputations depends on the success of students in public examinations, this is particularly true where official or un-official school position in external examinations are published. There is also the problem of prizes awarded to wining schools or individual subject teachers which triggers malpractice from both school administrators and teachers.
- **Personality Disposition:** Some students are more prone to cheating than others, because they are either lazy or dubious.
- **Desire of some parents to place their children:** Some parents would blindly want their children to get into lucrative courses like medicine,

accountancy, etc. as such would collide with any person who can at all cost get their children the required credits.

- **Inadequate school facilities and Teachers:** Textbooks shortages, inadequate teacher training, teacher absence from work, teacher lacking subject matter competency, strikes and frequent schools closure are common features of education in developing countries like ours. Parents and students may perceive conditions of learning to be so inadequate that they have little option than the resort to unfair means to increase the likelihood that the student will pass the examination.
- **Inadequacies of the Examinations:** Where the standard aimed at is too high or obscure, teachers and students may lose confidence in their abilities to master the material. In such instance, students may resort to smuggling materials such as textbooks and notes in the examinations room.
- **Location of Examination centers:** Remote centers tend to receive materials in advance, thus increasing the opportunity of gaining access to examination papers. Due to distance or remoteness of the centers, proper supervision cannot be done as such any corrupt practice can be committed.
- **Low Salary Levels:** Salary levels of teachers, examination officials and examination supervisors are frequently below the poverty line. In such instance bribes from parents may prove irresistible.
- **Respect for Certificate:** The society regards possession of certificate as Alfa and Omega where an individual is only recognized if he possesses a certain certificate built professionals skills are not recognized.
- **Threats and Intimidation from Parents:** Parents especially of wards from private schools and specialized schools, threaten proprietors of withdrawal

of children or closure of schools in their children do not make excellent results

## **EFFECTS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

### **The Consequences of Examination**

The consequences of examination malpractice both to education and the society will be catastrophic in the long run candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination will now depend on quack arrangement. Since such arrangements rarely failed. Then the fraud or malpractice may eventually be seen as a way of academic exercise. The candidates produced in this manner will grow into adults and teachers or examinations officials who will not see anything wrong with such sophisticated and high class examination fraud thus defeating the goals of education by turning out certificated illiterates.

Examination malpractice increases lack of confidence among students. Students who would have ordinarily passed an examination feel disappointed and loss of confidence when less intelligent ones perform better than then through cheating, thus leading to loss of confidence in themselves and in the examination and the system at large.

Examinations malpractice may lure some students into others areas of misconducts such as prostitutions and or armed robbery, female students who lack money to fund external assistance or pay for scores may take prostitution while male may as well take stealing or armed robbery in a bid to make money to pay for scores.

Other general effects of examinations malpractice can be summarized as follows:

- The products of examinations malpractice are square pegs in round holes. They lack the required knowledge and experience to carry out their assignment and professional duties effectively.
- Examinations malpractice produce candidates with low moral and academic values.
- The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career
- Examinations malpractice is a negative orientation for future leaders who may end up being fraudulent and corrupt in their various offices.
- Anyone who engages in examinations malpractice is building on a false foundation which can led to serious professional errors.

## **CONCLUSION**

Examination malpractice is an act or irregular manner of testing examiners contravenes the rules and conventions guiding the conduct of examinations. The causes could be attributed to the behaviour of examiners, parents and system. The consequences could be catastrophic to both education system would turn out the society certificated illiterates.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Sound educational policy should be put in place with de-emphasis on the supremacy of certificates over skills and professional competence.
2. Appointment of supervisors of proven integrity and who are independent of the examinations centers.
3. The remuneration of invigilators and supervisors should be attractable that would not allow one to think of taking bribe to add to his earnings.
4. Ensure that only formally registered candidates sit for the examination.



5. Religious and community leaders should be used to intervene on parents who insist on their children getting the best result without genuine efforts for it.
6. Prohibit the use of electronic devices including cellular phones and IPADS
7. School teachers should be motivated and remunerated adequately and learning environment made friendly so that they can do their work satisfactorily and cover the syllabus before examinations.
8. There should frequent unannounced visits by officials of examination centers and erring centers should be punished.
9. The rigidity and timing of examinations should be reviewed in a such a way that when a student complained genuinely that he cannot write an examination another time suitable should be organized for him, this will eliminate the phobia of failure which may result in malpractice.

Thank you for listening