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EXAMINATION DISHONESTY AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHERS AS PERCEIVED BY SS3 STUDENTS IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

This study examines the perception of senior secondary school science students on the extent of teacher's involvement in examination dishonesty in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The targeted population comprised of all the six thousand three hundred (6300) Senior Secondary 3 Science students in 2019/2020 academic session in the public/private co-educational schools in Akwa Ibom State. Sample was drawn through a stratified random sampling technique in the ratio of 1:1:1 and 600 students forms the sample for the study. Data for the study were obtained through a questionnaire tagged Science Teachers Examination dishonesty Questionnaire (STEDQ) with a reliability coefficient of 0.75. A Research Question guided the study. The instrument was administered by the principals of the selected schools on the day they were to collect their examination identification numbers in preparation for the public examination. Data generated from the study were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation. The study revealed that science teachers were involved in examination malpractice in the area of supporting extortion of money from student, inducement as well as falsification of science practical data values. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended among others that science teachers should be

given value re-orientation as well as improved upon their salaries, this will help to curtail examination dishonesty.

Keywords: Examination dishonesty, value re-orientation, senior secondary science students, teachers

Introduction

Education has been the dominant influence in the development of the Nigerian economy and in many ways has shaped the character of Nigerian society. The ability of a nation to develop depends on the quality and quantity of education given which in turn are dependent upon the quality of teaching provided by the teacher. High quality teaching according to NPE (2014) is widely acknowledged to be the most factor influencing students' academic performance. This therefore showed the importance of education from initial and induction for beginning teachers to ongoing professional development. Wengrzyn (2016) observed that the Nigerian schools serve as literacy centers where emphasis is placed on certificate acquisition rather than ethics and morals like honesty, patriotism, loyalty, modesty and obedience. This could be the reason why the Federal Government of Nigeria re-introduced civic education as a compulsory subject in secondary school.

In order to have high achievement among all student groups, and high public confidence in schools, there must be an acceptable method of measuring the achievement of students, which is capable of promoting public confidence in the school. Many people do not have confidence in the school system today due to many reasons. One of such reasons pertains to students' performance in public examinations. Another reason has to do with the moral standard (on academic matters) of students, teachers, head teachers, parents and the community in which the school is located. The concern is that if students are not able to perform well in their school subjects; they should fail nobly without any form of academic dishonesty. The term "academic dishonesty" according to the Guidelines for Academic Conduct from University of Saskatchewan Council (2003) includes both plagiarism and other forms of cheating, such as taking notes into an exam or lying about admission qualifications. This definition brings to mind concepts such as educational fraud, academic dishonesty and examination malpractice. Nigeria examinations play vital roles not only in our educational system but also in the society as a whole. The

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society demands from its members a diversity of specialized functions. In the Nigerian school system various forms of examinations are noticed. These are the entrance examinations, the terminal and promotion examinations, the senior school certificate examination and the degree or diploma examinations. Students are required to pass any forms of examinations they partake in. But these days' students now find various means of achieving success in these examinations and one of such ways is by cheating in examinations through leakage in examination papers, impersonation, external assistance, copying, smuggling of foreign materials, substitution of script and improper assignment.

The fact remains that examination malpractice has become a canker worm in the educational system or call it the usual practice in Nigeria. Examination has been recognized as forming the nucleus of education without which the enterprise will be incomplete. Empiricism shows that examinations indicate the extent of factual knowledge acquired by students, predict future educational achievement and provide a means of selecting suitable candidates for certain educational courses or occupation. One of the principal aim of examination is to assess how much learning has taken place and to what extent the educational objectives and goals have been achieved. One serious problem plaguing Nigeria system of education today is large examination malpractice leading to intellectual dishonesty. Our students devise as a daily routine, new tricks to beat genuine supervisors and examiners. The incidence of examination malpractice is multidimensional in nature. Smuggling of prepared notes into examination hall is just one of them, they insult, embarrass, threaten and even assault invigilators and supervisors who failed to co-operate with them in their unholy and nefarious acts. The teachers themselves are not helping matters; they cheapen themselves in involving themselves in such degrading practices like aiding and abetting dishonest practices during examination because of transient reward. With respect to the issue of teachers being corrupt, earlier study had indicated that some teachers (supervisors and invigilators) are corrupt. In the study of Makaju, Adewale, Nwargwu and Shuaibu (2004) they concluded that one of the social menaces the government and her agencies is fighting is the issue of corruption. This cast some doubts on the honesty and integrity of the examination body, teachers and students.

Teachers are important in the school setting (Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 2014). They constitute the principal agents that can ensure honesty and integrity in schools. In their ten Principles of Academic Integrity,

Donald, Cabe and Pavela (2003) explained that teachers have primary responsibility for designing and cultivating the educational environment and experience. They must clarify their expectations in advance regarding honesty in academic work, including the nature and scope of student collaboration. Most students want such guidance, and welcome it in course syllabi, carefully reviewed by their teachers in class. Furthermore, with proper guidance by the teachers, students can be given significant responsibility to help protect and promote the highest standards of academic integrity. A high proportion of students want to work in settings, where competition is fair, integrity is respected, and cheating is punished. However, in this paper academic dishonesty is used in accordance with the title of this study and due to the fact that the researchers perceived that academic dishonesty is wider in scope. There are media reports on an intermittent basis that shows the cancellation of examination papers by either National Examination Council (NECO) or the West African Examination Council (WAEC), of examination papers such as: English Language, Geography, Physics I and II, Chemistry 1 and 11 etc. Lowe (2013) raised questions and frowned seriously the direction Nigeria is going in the midst of the present global trend of ICT and technological know-how.

The study of Science Teachers Association of Nigeria (STAN) 2011 on the issue of examination malpractice reflected in STAN Position paper No.6 revealed that most teachers inflate continuous assessment and examination scores which is also part of examination dishonesty (Morrison 2012). Adewale (2004) had earlier found out that teachers impersonate students. For instance a candidate registers with his/her names but submits the photograph of another (the mercenary which could be a teacher) with whom arrangement has been made to take the examination on his/her behalf. In this arrangement, the candidate may enter another arrangement with the invigilator to replace the mercenary's photographs with his/her own or the mercenary submits a poorly taken photograph, which will fade within a few months of production. When they fade and replacement is demanded, those of the original candidate are now submitted. These results do not seem to anchor well with the school system, especially when viewed from the point of view of the fact that teachers are expected to be character molders Davis (2014). Consequently, as important as academic integrity is in any educational system, there are some elements that encourage academic dishonesty in our educational system. It has been said that teachers play important role in making school effective and a

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school cannot be said to be effective if it encourages academic dishonesty Afemikhe & Adewale (2004). Mike (2016) examined the Nigerian values system. He discovered that core values that could promote political stability, unity and national integration were not imbibed by Nigerians. As such it has resulted to socio economic problems that have hindered national progress. Change of attitude is capable of promoting sustainable value orientation which can break the vicious cycle of social-political and economic problems in the country. Therefore, there was a need to find out the extent in the perceptions of students to which teachers are involved in academic dishonesty. Furthermore, there was need to find out the various ways that teachers in the views of students are involved in the acts that inject stain in academics. This study therefore, sought to provide data on the views of senior secondary school students on academic dishonesty perpetuated by teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are important in the school setting .They constitute the principal agents that can ensure honesty and integrity in schools. Teachers also have primary responsibility for designing and cultivating the educational environment and experience. They must clarify their expectations in advance regarding honesty in academic work, including the nature and scope of student collaboration. But however, the study of Science Teachers Association of Nigeria (STAN) 2011 on the issue of examination malpractice reflected in STAN Position paper No.6 revealed that most teachers inflate continuous assessment and examination scores resulting in examination dishonesty based on this assertion, the problem of the study is to find out the extent of senior secondary school science teachers involvement in examination dishonesty as perceived by students? This study is an attempt to find answers to these questions.

Purpose of the Study

1. To find out the attitude of senior secondary school science teachers involvement toward examination dishonesty with reference to
 - a. Extortion of monies from students during public examinations,
 - b. Supporting the inducement of examination supervisors and
 - c. Falsification of records relating to science practical as perceived by science students

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to achieve the stated objectives:

1. What is the attitude of senior secondary school science teachers towards examination dishonesty with reference to?
 - a. Extortion of monies during public examinations
 - b. Supporting the inducement of examination supervisors
 - c. Falsification of records relating to science practical as perceived by students

Methodology

The design for the study is survey design. The target population in this study involved senior secondary school 3 student in Akwa Ibom State. Therefore, the present analysis was conducted as a sample survey covering all the thirty two Local Government Area (LGA) of Akwa Ibom States and consequently a good proportion of the 31 Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State participated. The questionnaire was designed to generate data for analysis on contextual variables including senior secondary school science teacher's involvement and related factors that impact on academic dishonesty. The questionnaire comprised items on background information like gender; school type; frequency and various ways of teachers' involvement in academic dishonesty. To ensure reliability of the questionnaires, the draft instruments were subjected to pilot testing in three LGA selected on the basis of one from each of the three senatorial districts: Uyo, Eket and Ikot Ekpene. The reliability coefficient obtained for the instrument was 0.75 via the application of Cronbach alpha as a measure of the internal consistency of the instrument. This value is high enough to guarantee the use of the instrument. Administration of instruments was carried out in 18 Local Government Areas, six from each senatorial district. Eighteen senior secondary schools including nine public and nine private schools were sampled. The questionnaires were administered to thirty five students from each of the selected schools. A total of six hundred and thirty questionnaires were administered and only six hundred were retrieved and used for the study. The questionnaires were administered in November/December 2019, on SSS 3 students. The retrieved questionnaires were subjected to mean and standard deviation analysis

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Results

Research Question 1:

What is the attitude of senior secondary school science teachers towards examination dishonesty with reference to?

a. Extortion of monies during public examinations

Table 1: Response of respondents on extortion of monies by Senior Secondary School Science Teachers during public examination in Akwa Ibom State.

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD
1.	We are compel to pay a little token for conducive environment during practical examination	9.20	6.11
2.	We are asked to contribute money for external supervisors to help give more time for practical examination	9.20	6.12
3.	We were compel to contribute money for the purchase of life examination specimen	13.9	3.44
4.	Our school teachers asked us to bring specimen relating to practical exams such as a pair of battery (for Physics), Onions bulb and tomato (Biology) etc.	15.42	1.93
5.	We pay for internal and external securities during our external examination	9.40	5.82
6.	We pay for settlement of monitoring team from WAEC/NECO during our external examination	11.20	5.88
7.	We pay sundry fees we cannot all account for in our school during external examinations	7.40	4.72
8.	We contribute money for resource persons that will assist our science teachers during external examination	11.23	6.27

Table 1 shows the response of respondents on extortion of monies by Senior Secondary School Science Teacher during public examination in Akwa Ibom

State. Therating is as follows: We are compel to pay a little token for conducive environment during practical examination ($\bar{X}=9.20$) ($SD=6.12$), We are asked to contribute money for external supervisors to help give more time for practical examination ($\bar{X}=9.20$) ($SD=6.12$), We were compel to contribute money for the purchase of life examination specimen ($\bar{X}=13.19$) ($SD=3.44$), Our school teachers asked us to bring specimen relating to practical exams such as a pair of battery (for Physics), Onions bulb and tomato (Biology) etc. ($\bar{X}=15.42$) ($SD=1.93$), We pay for internal and external securities during our external examination ($\bar{X}=9.40$) ($SD=5.82$), We pay for settlement of monitoring team from WAEC/NECO during our external examination ($\bar{X}=11.20$) ($SD=5.88$), We pay sundry fees we cannot all account for in our school during external examinations ($\bar{X}=7.40$) ($SD=4.72$), We contribute money for resource persons that will assist our science teachers during external examination ($\bar{X}=11.23$) ($SD=6.27$). From the forgoing, it is apparent that science teachers in our private and public schools in the area of the study supports and encourages extortion of money during public examination.

b.Supporting the inducement of examination supervisors

Table 2: Response of respondents on supporting the inducement of external examiners

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD
1.	The invigilators allowed student to write examination outside the exams hall in my school	7.80	4.49
2.	In my school the external examiner allowed special preferences for number of scripts written by experts outside the examination hall	10.80	4.62
3.	In my school the examiner allowed for extra time not minding the allocation of time to the subject	9.60	5.61
4.	In my school the examiner allowed answers to questions to be read for copying in the examination room	5.00	3.35
5.	In my school our science teachers are very supportive	6.80	4.12

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	when external examiners permit student to have freedom in exam hall		
6.	In my school our science teachers frowned at the none supportive standard of external examiner during external exam	1.92	3.50

Table 2 shows the response of respondents on inducement of external examiners by Senior Secondary School Science Teacher during public examination.

The rating is as follows: in my school the invigilators allowed student to write examination outside the exams hall ($X=7.80$) ($SD=4.49$), in my school the external examiner allowed special preferences for number of scripts written by experts outside the examination hall ($X=10.80$) ($SD=4.62$), in my school the examiner allowed for extra time not minding the allocation of time to the subject ($X=9.60$) ($SD=5.61$), in my school the examiner allowed answers to questions to be read for copying in the examination room ($X=5.00$) ($SD=3.35$), in my school our science teachers are very supportive when external examiners permit student to have freedom in exam hall ($X=6.80$) ($SD=4.12$), in my school our science teachers frowned at the none supportive standard of external examiner during external exam ($X=8.40$) ($SD=3.50$). The table shows that science teachers of the sample schools are supportive of the external examiners inducement during public exam. This is as indicated in the high rated means and standard deviation of each item in the questionnaire as well as item No 6 of the questionnaire which item sought to find out whether science teachers frowned at the none supportive standard of external examiner during external exam which rated scale of the item indicated low mean score.

c. Falsification of records relating to science practical as perceived by student

Table 3: Response of respondents on falsification of values recordings by Senior Secondary School Science Teachers during public examination

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD
1.	In my school during practical exam, students depend solely on teacher made practical values.	10.40	2.80

2.	In my school teachers supply results of practical values for students to copy during examination.	8.80	4.88
3.	In my school we have firsthand information about end points values for use in calculation during external examination.	7.80	2.40
4.	In my school a range of practical values are provided for students during practical examination, hence students end up falsifying practical values.	11.80	5.04
5.	In my school our science teachers help us to plot graph during practical examination.	10.00	2.45
6.	In my school science teachers direct us on calculation solving during practical examination.	10.60	4.92

Table 3 shows the response of respondents on falsification of values recordings by Senior Secondary School Science Teachers during public examination. The rating is as follows: in my school during practical exam, students depend solely on teacher made practical values ($X=10.40$) ($SD=2.80$), in my school Senior Secondary School Science Teachers supply results of practical values for students to copy during examination ($X=8.80$) ($SD=4.88$), in my school we have firsthand information about end points values for use in calculation during external examination ($X=11.80$) ($SD=2.40$), in my school practical values are given to us in groups for use during practical exams ($X=10.80$) ($SD=5.04$), in my school our science teachers direct us to plot graph during practical examination ($X=10.00$) ($SD=2.45$), in my school science teachers direct us on calculation solving during practical examination ($X=10.60$) ($SD=4.92$). The table clearly shows that that science students do not carry out independent practical work as required. Teachers direct and or overstepped their bounce by giving the students the necessary values which they use. The table also clearly indicated that teachers guide the students in the exam room to solve the calculations associated with the practical.

Discussion of Findings

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The findings in table I, 2 and 3 reveals that science teachers in the area of the study were seriously involved in the examination dishonesty. In as much as these science teachers supported and encouraged the extortion of monies from the student, inducement of examiners as well as falsification of data and values in practical examination. The finding of these study is in line with Shauibu (2004) assertion that science teachers are deeply involved in examination dishonesty. Queen (2012) also observed that issues relating to exam dishonesty is no more a hidden agenda. The implication of these findings is that we have students who graduate with As and Bs in the sciences but their certificates are not useful to themselves or to the society, the findings went further to buttress the fact that Nigerians have quest for certificate at the expend of entrepreneurial skills Donald(2003). The finding is also inline with Mike (2016) who observed that the Nigerian schools serve as literacy centers where emphasis is place on certificate acquisition rather than ethics and morals like honesty, patriotism, loyalty, modesty and obedience. Abdulahi (2000) went further to stress that there is a gradual shift away from moral values to vices that mar our national identity and integrity in the face of international community. Anchor and Ukwuru (2003) in their study on academic dishonesty and falsification of data values opined that most teachers tend to inflate continuous assessment and examination scores. This is in agreement with the findings of STAN, (2011), who reported in a National survey that teachers (and school personnel involved with examination score) unduly inflate examination scores.

Conclusion

Based on the fore-going research about examination dishonesty by Science Teachers, it is concluded that science teachers in the sample schools support and encourages examination dishonesty through the process of extortion of funds from students, inducement of supervisors/invigilators as well as falsification of data values generated by the student hence the science teachers encourages examination dishonesty.

Recommendations

One of the precincts of this study is that its scope is on academic dishonesty in which teachers are indicted. Since the study did not gather information on teacher integrity, it will be wrong to conclude that teachers do

not have integrity. In addition, it is not all the stakeholders in education information were collected. However, in order to reduce involvement of teachers in academic dishonesty, the following suggestions are recommended.

1. Teachers should spend more time in preparing students for examinations. If they do it, it is likely that the science teachers would have confidence on their student's capability of facing the examination without any assistance.
2. The researchers advocated for improved science teachers allowances as well as hazard allowance with reference to the practical conducted by the teachers, these will help to motivate the teachers and invariably, the teachers would be satisfied in their job which in-turn will affect their performance and denial of any form of inducement from the students.
3. Science teachers should be given value re-orientation as well as improved upon their salaries, this will help to curtail examination dishonesty. It is hoped that when and if this is done, most teachers will know what to do when faced with such challenges as being bribed by parents in order to have their children/ward pass; helping students to change marks and sexually harassing female students.

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