CAUSES OF EXAMINATION DISHONESTY BY CONSUMERS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN ENUGU, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study evaluates the causes of examination dishonesty by consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria. The consumers' actions and inactions have implications for educational development in any nation. The study objective was to ascertain the causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Examiners of external and internal examinations in post-primary schools in Enuqu, Nigeria were the target population for the study. A sample size of 246 was chosen from this population. A structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection, while the t-test was used for the hypothesis test at 5% level of significance. The hypothesis test reveals that inadequate preparation, environmental influence and poor infrastructure in schools are the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria ($t_{cal} = 3.262$, P = 0.031 <0.05). Following the finding, the study concludes that examination dishonesty among consumers of educational services in Enugu, Nigeria are caused by a combination of personal attributes of the consumers and group/societal influences.

Keywords: Consumers, Dishonesty, Examination, Post-primary School, Students.

1.1 Introduction

Examination dishonesty is an unauthorized action, inaction, activity, behavior or practice that is associated with the preparation, conduct and processing of examination and other forms of assessment and carried out by

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any person involved in preparing for, giving, taking and processing the examination at any level (Joshua, 2008a). Thus, perpetrators of examination dishonesty span across students, teachers, school administrators, parents, government, society, among others. However, this study concentrates on the examination dishonesty of students who are the primary consumers of educational services in Nigeria.

A consumer refers to the user of a good or service (Craven & Piercy, 2013; Kotler & Armstrong, 2014; Kotler & Keller, 2012). The consumers' inactions and actions determine the survival of service providers (Berger, Bolton, Bowman, Briggs, Kumar, Parasuraman & Terry, 2002). Thus for educational service providers, the dishonest behavior of students has implications for educational development in any nation.

According to Onyechere (2003) in Jega (2006), examination dishonesty has become a national disaster in Nigeriaand every disaster brings an emergency situation that requires all hands on deck. A summary of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) annual statistical report of examination malpractice for the WAEC/ SSCE post-primary exit examination between the year 2000 and 2010 shows that 781,091 (8.25%) of 9,465,978 candidates who sat for WASSCE were either withheld or canceled during the period as a result of examination malpractice. The records further show that the Examination Malpractice Index (EMI) had remained persistently high ranging between 5.47 and 12.87 during the period surveyed. The implication is that out of every 100 students who wrote WAEC between the period of 2000 and 2010 in Nigeria, not less than 8 of them exhibited examination dishonesty (WAEC, 2010).

According to Ivowi (1997), lack of confidence as a result of inadequate preparation, peer influence, societal influence, parental support and inadequate facilities in schools are some of the factors responsible for examination dishonesty among students. Nwandiani (2005), Okafor (2006), Ayua (2006), Azare (2006), Aminu (2006) and Badmus (2006), identify school programs, teaching environment, the teacher, the student, over value of certificates, decadence in the Nigerian society and parental support as some factors responsible for examination dishonesty in the Nigerian educational system. There is, therefore, the need to find out the underlying factors that contribute to the incidence of examination dishonesty among students in post-primary schools in Enugu, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem 1.2

The persistent occurrence of students' examination dishonesty is a major concern for educational administrators, managers and marketers (Cromwell, 2000; Jega, 2006). Despite the high value placed on examinations by the Nigerian National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004), it seems that the issue of examination cheating behaviors has not been adequately tackled in Nigeria (Adeyemi, 2010). The non-solution of the problem of students' examination dishonesty poses a grave threat to education standards and credibility of school certificates in Nigeria. Thus, there is an urgent need to find a lasting solution to the menace of students' examination dishonesty, as its persistent occurrence has enormous consequences on the credibility of the schools, administrators and teachers, the quality of teachers and students alike, as well as the moral characters and employability of the certificate holders and indeed the value system in the society in general.

Several views (e.g., Jega, 2006; Murdock, Hale & Webber, 2001; Olatoye, 2004; Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2002) have been expressed on the incidence of students' cheating behaviors in schools. However, there is yet no research evidence on the influence of the underlying factors on the occurrence of examination dishonesty among students in post-primary schools in Enugu, Nigeria. To avoid speculation, there is need to establish empirical evidence on the influence of these underlying factors on the incidence of academic dishonesty among students in post-primary schools in Enuqu, Nigeria as we plan to do in this study. Hence, the need for this study, which is on causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of postprimary education in Enuqu, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

This study seeks to ascertain the major causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis 2.

The following hypothesis was formulated in the null form to guide the study. Inadequate preparation, environmental influence infrastructure in schools are not the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enugu, Nigeria.

3. Justification for the Study

The researchers cannot pinpoint any previous research that sought to ascertain the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enugu, Nigeria. It is envisaged that this study will add to the literature and also generate interest among various stakeholders for additional research on the cheating behaviors of consumers of educational services to minimize and possibly eliminate the adverse effects of such behaviors on educational development and societal well being.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Nature and Causes of Examination Dishonesty

Notwithstanding the importance of examinations in the educational system of a State, the instances of dishonesty during examinations have been identified (Cromwell, 2000). These dishonest behaviors misrepresentation of identity or impersonation, theft of other students' works, tampering with the works of others, bringing prepared answers to examination halls, wrong use of academic resources, fabrication of results and showing disregard to academic regulations (Gross, 2003). These vices are seen as academicmisbehaviorcapable of truncating an educational system (Glasner, 2002; Ogunwuyi, 2005). They are also viewed by researchers (Omotosho, 1992; Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2004) as dishonesty in examinations perpetrated by a person or a group of persons. Kleiner (1999) asserts that students' definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty are varied and often lax. In a study of 500 middle and high school students, the Center for Academic Integrity (2005) note that only one-third of the students view working with other students on assignments as cheating and just half of the students thought it wrong for parents to do their homework. Murdock et al. (2001) carried out a study on American high school students and found that half of them do not believe cheating was always wrong and nearly all cheaters said that they had never been caught. In line with these assertions, it can be deduced that most students view working together in assignments as academic dishonesty.

Furthermore, Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2002) in the review of the literature on college students report that academic dishonesty such as cheating and plagiarism was higher among students who feel pressured to succeed and who claim a history of such dishonesty in the past. Moreover, persons who engage in academic dishonesty have moderate expectations for

success, anticipate high rewards for their success, and are competitive about obtaining grades (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2002).

Bowers (1984) reports that the highest rate of academic dishonesty takes place inhomework and laboratory assignment (unsupervised assignments). These unsupervised assignments may be given to students to be completed by group efforts. Ravenscroft and Buckless (1992) opine that take-home tests which are unsupervised provide an opportunity for low performing students to cheat on high-performing students.

Also, Bowers (1963) as cited in Newberger (2003) surveyed 5,000 college students, 11% of whom admitted to collaborating with other students on work that was assigned to be done individually. McCabe and Trevino (1993) replicated Bower's study in some of the same colleges and found 49% admitting to the same kind of forbidden collaboration. The results of these two studies imply that collaboration in assignments which is supposed to be done individually is cheating and this has also been the case among Nigerian students (Onwuamanam, 2005).

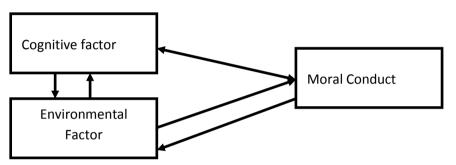
In essence, students' examination dishonesty are influenced by many factors. According to Ivowi (1997), lack of confidence as a result of inadequate preparation, peer influence, societal influence, parental support and inadequate facilities in schools are some of the factors responsible for students' examination dishonesty. Writing in the same vein, Badmus (2006), Nwandiani (2005), Okafor (2006), Ayua (2006), Azare (2006) and Aminu (2006) identify school programmes, teaching environment, the teacher, the student, over value of certificates, decadence in the Nigerian society and parental support as some factors responsible for students' examination dishonesty in the Nigerian educational system.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

There are some psychological theories on how educational administrators, managers and marketers could make sense of rationales for education services consumers' behaviors. Some of these theories include social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991ab), deterrence theory (Gibbs, 1975) theory of crime (Gottfredson & Hurschi, 1990). The social cognitive theory Bandura (1991ab) is relevant to the present research, as it seeks to explain the factors that could influence the examination dishonesty of students who represent the particular segment of educational services consumers under study. The social cognitive theory has been known to be useful for analyzing a student's moral development and thought making process. The figure below depicts the model.

Bandura (1991a) analyzed complex concepts relating to students moral actions in a three-part bi-directional model. According to the theory, moral behavior (e.g., honesty/dishonesty) is shaped by cognitive and environmental factors. Cognitive aspect according to Bandura (1991b) includes intellectual and moral developmental level, reaction to situations and commitment to social norms.

Figure 1: Social Cognitive Theory



Source: Bandura, A. (1991a). Social Cognitive Theory of Self-Regulation. Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes, 50, 248-287.

According to Bandura (1991b), environmental variables, in this case, include a commitment to social norms, code of conduct and modeling by others. By social norms, Bandura (1991b) implies the perceived acceptable behavior. These norms influence what people feel they should or should not be doing. Codes of conduct also affect behavior by providing a better understanding of social norms and expectations. Finally, modeling provides people with visual clues regarding what is or is not acceptable behavior. This theory, therefore, suggests that students' behaviors could be positively impacted through the formidable code of conducts, creating a friendly learning environment and working to develop desirable social norms that are congruent with appropriate character development. According to the theory, social norms and students' commitment to them play a part in determining academicbehavior.

Environments and social systems influence human behavior through psychological mechanisms of the self-system hence, social cognitive theory posits that factors such as economic conditions, socio-economic status and educational and formal structures do not affect human behavior directly instead they affect it to the degree that they influence people's aspirations, self-efficacy beliefs, personal standards emotional states and other selfregulatory influences (Bandura, 1991a&b).

2.4. **Empirical Review**

Ossai (2011) investigated the relationship existing between examination anxiety and students' attitude towards examination malpractices in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 2,000 first year regular students in eight tertiary invitations in Delta State, Nigeria. Ossai (2011) found out that there is a significant positive relationship between examination anxiety and students' attitude towards examination malpractice in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. This result implies that students who manifest high examination anxiety levels are more likely to be positively disposed towards engaging in examination malpractices.

Gap in Literature 2.4.

Several types of research have been undertaken on the examination dishonesty in schools (e.g. Jega, 2006; ,Murdock, Hale and Webber, 2001; Olatoye, 2004; Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002). However, there is yet no research evidence on the underlying causes of examination dishonesty in post-primary schools in Enuqu, Nigeria. This apparent gap in the literature thus necessitate this study.

3.1 Methodology

The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Survey research tools were used. For this study, the target population was examiners of external and internal examinations in post-primary schools in Enuqu, Nigeria. The examiners are considered knowledgeable on the topic under investigation. A sample size of 246 was chosen from this population. Convenience sampling technique was adopted for the study. The respondents were chosen according to their readiness and willingness to participate in the study. The respondents were made up of examiners of internal and external examinations in the selected post-primary schools. The post-primary schools were chosen purposively to ensure adequate representation of all categories of schools in the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study (see Appendix I). A t-test was used to test the formulated hypotheses.

4.1 Analyses, Results And Discussions

A total of 246 (Two hundred and forty-six) copies of the questionnaire were distributed amongst the respondents. 232 copies were returned and valid, while 14 copies were not returned. This gives a returns rate of 94.31%. Only the 232 returned copies of the questionnaire were used for the analysis. The demographic data of the respondents, as well as the responses to the questions in the questionnaire, are presented in Appendix 2. A 5-point Likert measurement scale was employed to extract the data used in testing the hypotheses formulated for this study. The respondents indicated the extent of their agreement or disagreement with the statements in the questionnaire. Options included strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). A 5% level of significance was assumed for the hypotheses test.

4.2. Test of Hypothesis

H_O: Inadequate preparation, environmental influence and poor infrastructure in schools are not the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria.

H_a: Inadequate preparation, environmental influence and poor infrastructure in schools are the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria.

To test the hypothesis, the responses to question 10 as contained in the questionnaire was used.

Tables 1 and 2 contain the descriptive statistics and t-test for the questions used to test the hypothesis.

Table 1: One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The causes of examination dishonesty	5	46.4000	31.80880	14.22533

Source: Data Analysis

Table 2: One-Sample Test

	Test Valu	je = o				
				Mean	Interva	nfidence I of the rence
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Difference	Lower	Upper
The causes of examination dishonesty	3.262	4	.031	46.40000	6.9042	85.8958

Source: Data Analysis

As shown in table 2, the t-test resulted in a t-value of 3.262 and P - value of 0.031 which is less than 0.05. Following this, therefore the null hypothesis which states that inadequate preparation, environmental influence and poor infrastructure in schools are not the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria $(t_{cal} = 3.262, P = 0.031 < 0.05)$ is rejected. The alternate hypothesis which states that inadequate preparation, environmental influence and poor infrastructure in schools are the significant causes of examination dishonesty among consumers of post-primary education in Enuqu, Nigeria is accepted.

This finding is in agreement with the findings of some other researchers including Badmus (2006), Nwandiani (2005), Okafor (2006), Ayua (2006), Ivowi (1997). Ivowi (1997) notes that lack of confidence as a result of inadequate preparation, peer influence, societal influence parental support (environmental influences) as well as inadequate facilities in schools are some of the factors responsible for examination cheating behaviors.

Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, it can be concluded that examination dishonesty among consumers of educational services in Enugu, Nigeria are caused by a combination of personal attributes of the consumers and group/ societal influences.

In essence, consumers (students) alone are not to blame for the occurrence of examination dishonesty in post-primary schools in Enugu, Nigeria because the environment, quality of staff and facilities are also contributory factors.

More effort should be intensified to fight the menace of examination dishonesty in post-primary schools in Enugu, Nigeria. There is a need for proper orientation and sensitization of all concerned, especially students, teachers and examiners on the need to curb this menace. It is also necessary to improve the quality of facilities and the teaching staff in post-primary schools before the incidence of examination dishonesty can be curtailed. A conscious effort should be made to see that students are well prepared for

A conscious effort should be made to see that students are well prepared for examinations before sitting for these examinations. This will go a long way to reduce the effect of inadequate preparation on the incidence of examination dishonesty in post-primary schools.

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Qι	estion	naire

Instructions: Tick ($$) for the	appropriate answer for each question
Section A. Personal Data	

2.	Are you a male or female? Yes [] No []
3.	What is your age bracket? 18-30 [] 30-40 [] 41-50[] Above 50 []
4.	What is your highest educational qualification? NCE/OND [] HND/B.Sc []
	Masters [] Ph.D []
5.	What is your Marital Status? Single[] Married[] Divorced[] Widowed[]
6.	What is your years of work experience?
	1 — Less than five years [] 5 years — less than 10 yrs [] 10 yrs — less than 15yrs [] 15yrs and above []
Sectio	on B:
7.	.Are you a post-primary school teacher? Yes [] No []
8.	Which of these have you examined? Internal examination only [] External examination only [] Both internal and external examinations []
9.	Which of these is the most common type of examination cheating behavior among consumers of educational services in Enugu, Nigeria?
	Impersonation [] 'Girraffing' /copying [] Bringing in foreign materials [] Changing of grades [] Leaking of examination papers []
	Others (please specify).

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements (10-14)

- Examination cheating behavior is a serious issue facing post-primary 10. schools in Enugu, Nigeria. Strongly Agree[] Agree[] Undecided[Disagree[Strongly Disagree[]
- Inadequate preparation, environmental influence and poor 11. infrastructure in schools are the major causes of examination cheating behaviors in post-primary schools in Enugu, Nigeria.

Strongly Agree [] Agree[] Undecided[] Disagree[] Strongly Disagree[]

Appendix 2

Gender Distribution of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	64	27.6	27.6	27.6
	Female	168	72.4	72.4	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Age Distribution of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-30	21	9.1	9.1	9.1
30-40	72	31.0	31.0	40.1
41-50	84	36.2	36.2	76.3
50 and Above	55	23.7	23.7	100.0
Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Educational Qualifications of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent		Cumulative Percent
Valid HND/Bachelor	185	79.7	79.7	79.7
Masters	47	20.3	20.3	100.0
NCE/OND	О	.0	.0	100.0
Ph.D	О	.0	.0	100.0
Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status of Respondents

		Frequency			Cumulative Percent
Valid	Divorced Married Single Widowed Total	8 124 68 32 232	3.4 53.4 29.3 13.9 100.0	3.4 53.4 29.3 13.9 100.0	3.4 56.8 86.1 100.0

Source: Field Survey

Work Experience of Respondents

					Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	10years — Less than 15years	84	36.2	36.2	36.2
	15years and above	48	20.7	20.7	56.9
	1year – less than 5 years	37	15.9	15.9	72.8
	5 years — less than 10 years	63	27.2	27.2	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Whether Respondent is a Post-primary School Teacher

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	232	100.0	100.0	100.0
	No	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Type of Examination Respondent Has Examined

			Valid	Cumulative
	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid Both Internal and				
External	219	94.4	94.4	94.4
External Examination only	0	0.0	0.0	94.4
Internal Examination only	13	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Most Common Type of Examination Cheating Behavior.

		F			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Percent	Percent
Valid	Bringing in foreign				
materials		3	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Changing of Grades	1	0.4	0.4	1.7
	'Girraffing'/Copying	207	89.2	89.2	90.9
	Impersonation	21	9.1	9.1	100.0
Leaking of Exam papers		0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Others		0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total		232	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Examination Cheating Behaviour is a Serious Issue Facing Post-primary Schools in Enuqu. Nigeria.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	99	42.7	42.7	42.7
	Agree	124	53.4	53.4	96.1
	Undecided	7	3.0	3.0	99.1
	Disagree	2	0.9	0.9	100.0
	Strongly	О	0.0	0.0	100.0
	Disagree				
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Examination Cheating Behaviours Occur More in External than Internal **Examinations in Post-primary Schools**

		Frequency	Percent		Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	89	38.4	38.4	38.4
	Agree	107	46.1	46.1	84.5
	Undecided	13	5.6	5.6	90.1
	Disagree	15	6.5	6.5	96.6
	Strongly	8	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Disagree				
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey

Inadequate Preparation, Environmental Influence and Poor Infrastructure in Schools are the Major Causes of Examination Cheating Behaviours in Post-primary Schools in Enugu, Nigeria.

		Frequency	Percent		Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree Agree	79 83	34.1 35.8	34.1 35.8	34.1 69.9
	Undecided	21	9.1	9.1	79.0
	Disagree	29	12.5	12.5	91.5
	Strongly Disagree	20	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	232	100.0	100.0	