



# **INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL FACTORS ON EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CALABAR MUNICIPALITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research was carried out to investigate examination malpractice among secondary school students in Calabar Municipality Local Government area in Cross River State as influenced by societal factors. The project highlights the causes of examination malpractice among secondary school students, the effect of examination malpractice and solution to examination malpractice in secondary schools. In this research work, a sample of twenty (20) teachers and one hundred (100) students were collected by means of simple random sampling techniques from five secondary schools in Calabar Municipality Local Government. The research instrument used for the study was the societal factors and students' involvement in examination malpractice questionnaire which was validated by the supervisor and used for the collection of data from the respondents. The data collected from respondents were analyzed with distribution tables and F-Statistics tests. At the end of the analysis the study revealed the major influence of societal factors on examination malpractice among the students to include parental pressure for good grades, membership of cults group, excessive sporting activities by students, dating and immoral relationships by the students, religious extremism and membership of clubs and organizations.. The study recommends that parents and teachers should ensure that their wards reduce their involvement in social activities while in school.

**Keywords:** Influences, Societal Factor, Examination Malpractices, Students

## INTRODUCTION

Education in the general sense covers the whole life of an individual from birth till death or from cradle to grave that shows that education is as old as man on earth. The formal school system is greatly influenced in its result on the lives of all who pass through it. In Nigeria before the 1840's there was in existence a system of education. This was broadly traditional, occupationally oriented and informal apprenticeship system. This type of education as at that time was relevant to the needs of the society. The advent and influence of the Christian missionary activities affected a change from the informal system of education to the western oriented type of education. Preference was no longer for hardwork but acquisition of certificate. Every achievement or goal oriented tasks a certification of schooling.

However, examinations play vital roles not only in our educational system but also in the society as a whole. The 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 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 coupled with intellectual dishonesty. Our pupils and students devise as a daily routine, new tricks to beat genuine supervisors and examiners.

The incidence of examination malpractice is multi-dimensional in nature. Smuggling of prepared notes into examination hall. They insult, embarrass, threaten and even assault invigilators and supervisors who failed to co-operate with them in their unholy and nefarious acts. Cheating behaviour exhibited by the school, population is a big problem to our people. School administrators were recently called upon to desist from helping their students to perpetrate in examination malpractice. Individual however put the blame on lack of proper social value system; the high premium attached to paper qualifications as prerequisite for admission and gainful employment.

### Statement of problem

The occurrence of examination malpractice at any level of educational stratum possess the greatest threat to the validity and reliability of any examination and consequently to the authenticity and recognition of certificate issued. The numerous examination malpractice among secondary school students in Calabar Municipality Local Government over the years have become a growing concern since cheating is such a longstanding and global problem inherent by human beings. Effort should therefore be directed towards controlling cheating behaviours and also finding the possible causes of the problem among secondary school students in Calabar Municipality Local Government.

The main purpose of this study is to find out the various forms of examinations malpractice among secondary schools students in caliber municipality (A case study of Calabar Municipal Local Government) and also to find out the causes in order to proffer the kind of counselling strategies for curbing the undesirable behaviour.

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- 1) Ho: There is no significant relationship between membership in student cults and students' involvement in examination malpractice.
- 2) Ho: There is no significant relationship between membership in clubs and organizations and students' involvement in examination malpractice.
- 3) Ho: There is no significant relationship between excessive sporting and students' involvement in examination malpractice
- 4) Ho: There is no significant relationship between student's religious extremism and students' involvement in examination malpractice
- 5) Ho: There is no significant relationship between dating and immoral relationship and students' involvement in examination malpractice

### Hypothesis One

Societal factors has no significant influence on students' involvement in examination malpractices

Independent variable: Societal factors

- 1) Ho1: There is no significant relationship between membership in student cults and students' involvement in examination malpractice.

Independent variable: Membership of students' cult

Dependent variable: Students involvement in examination malpractices

Test Statistics: F – test analysis

### Hypothesis Two

Family structure has no significant influence on students' involvement in examination malpractices

- 1) Ho2: There is no significant relationship between membership in clubs and organizations and students' involvement in examination malpractice.

Independent variable: Membership in clubs and organizations

Dependent variable: Students involvement in examination malpractices

Test Statistics: F – test analysis

### Hypothesis Three

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between excessive sporting and students' involvement in examination malpractice

Independent variable: Excessive sporting activities

Dependent variable: Students involvement in examination malpractices

### Presentation of Results

#### Hypothesis One

Societal factors has no significant influence on students' involvement in examination malpractices

Independent variable: Societal factors

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between membership in student cults and students' involvement in examination malpractice.

Independent variable: Membership of students' cult

Dependent variable: Students involvement in examination malpractices

Test Statistics: F – test analysis

Table 2

**F-Statistics for student cults membership and involvement in examination malpractices**

Variable	Variance (F)	F-Calculated	F-Tabulated	Comparison	Conclusion
Dependent	94.54	5.93	3.26*	5.93 > 3.26	Significant (Reject H <sub>0</sub> )
Independent	15.94				

Tabulated F = 3.26; df = 98; N = 100; \* Significant @ 5%

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between student cults membership and examination malpractice

5.93 > 3.26, Reject H<sub>0</sub>

The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted because calculated F is greater than the tabulated F. This implies that students' cult membership significantly influences students involvement in examination malpractices among secondary school students in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

**4.2.2 Hypothesis Two**

Membership in clubs and organizations has no significant influence on students' involvement in examination malpractices

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between membership in clubs and organizations and students' involvement in examination malpractice.

Independent variable: Membership in clubs and organizations

Dependent variable: Students involvement in examination malpractices

Test Statistics: F – test analysis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between club / organization and academic performance

Table 3

**F-Statistics for students club and organizational membership and involvement in examination malpractices**

Variable	Variance (F)	F-Calculated	F-Tabulated	Comparison	Conclusion
Dependent	58.96	2.89	3.26 ns	2.89 < 3.26	Non-significant (Accept H <sub>0</sub> )
Independent	20.40				

Tabulated F = 3.26; df = 98; N = 100; ns = Non- significant @ 5%

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between clubs and organizational membership and examination malpractice

2.89 < 3.26, Accept H<sub>0</sub>

The null hypothesis is accepted and the alternate hypothesis rejected because calculated F is less than the tabulated F. This implies that membership of students in clubs and organization does not significantly influences their involvement in examination malpractices in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

**4.2.3 Hypothesis Three**

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between excessive sporting and students' involvement in examination malpractice

Independent variable: Excessive sporting activities

Dependent variable: Students involvement in examination malpractices

Test Statistics: F – test analysis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between romantic relationship and academic performance.

Table 4

**F-Statistics for student excessive sporting activities and involvement in examination malpractices**

Variable	Variance (F)	F-Calculated	F-Tabulated	Comparison	Conclusion
Dependent	85.62	4.71	3.26*	4.71 > 3.26	Significant (Reject H <sub>0</sub> )
Independent	18.18				

Tabulated F = 3.26; df = 98; N = 100; \* Significant @ 5%

4.71 > 3.26, Reject H<sub>0</sub>

The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted because calculated F is greater than the tabulated F. This implies that students involvement in excessive sporting activities and significantly influences their involvement in examination malpractices among senior secondary schools in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

**Discussion of finding**

The results has shown that excessive sporting activity, religious extremism, membership of students cults and involvement in dating/immoral relationships by senior secondary schools students significantly influences their involvement in examination malpractices in Calabar municipality local government area of Cross River State while their memberships in social clubs and organizations did not significantly influence the students involvement in examination malpractices in the study area.

Academic performance is an excellent measure of the transfer of knowledge in modern society.

Some variables of interaction can be studied. This research finds that student cults are an academic impediment and perhaps an outright evil (Paul & White (1990). Dating and immoral relationships having the significant impact, and may be a psychological barrier to an effective learning process. Excessive sporting activities and involvement in clubs and organizations may pose a threat, and a significant one. Several educational researchers emphasize the importance of conducting longitudinal studies in any kind of educational research (D'zurilla & Sheedy, 1991). It could be added that this is especially important in Nigeria, where political transition and changes in educational policy are of fairly recent origin, in order to closely monitor areas of concern and success. Better use can be made of existing annual household surveys, by including questions on factors such as repeated grades, and age of schooling completion (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

For university students, institutions of higher education should be cognizant of the background characteristics, as well as educational and other needs of previously excluded students.

This includes the pressing issue of "hungry students", which is a fairly recently and addressed phenomenon in some universities (Orbe, 2004). Research found that particularly, first year students at two Nigerian schools and colleges had unrealistic expectations and perceptions of tertiary study, as well as differences between the perceptions of lecturers and students regarding success factors in study. These are the kinds of studies that should receive much more. Even institutions that have student learning support program in place may be placing emphasis and funding onto less efficient efforts at improvement of educational outcomes (Anderson, et al, 2001).

Religious extremism has significant influence in education as a whole. One of the agitations of the Islamic extremist group for instance is the clamp down on Western education, which according to the religious extremist have no place in their religion. Severally, students have been adopted from schools for this reason. Students are forced to do anything like examination malpractices if they must undergo western education in such places for a better future (Anderson, 2013).

A last word: in the whole process of educational integration in Nigeria, matters of maintaining cultural identity should be treated with great sensitivity.

### Summary of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of societal factors on students involvement in examination malpractices among senior secondary school students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the following five research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

1. Student cult membership does not have significant relationship with students' involvement in examination malpractices
2. Students' Membership in clubs and organizations does not significantly influence their involvement in examination malpractices
3. Dating and immoral relationship among students does not significantly influence their involvement in examination malpractices
4. Excessive sporting activities by students does not significantly influence their involvement in examination malpractices
5. Students religious extremism does not significantly influence their involvement in examination malpractices

Literature review was carried out according to the variables under study. Survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was made up of one hundred students in the study area. A total sample of one hundred (100) students were randomly drawn from ten (10) selected secondary schools in Calabar Municipality Local Government Area. The selection was done through stratified random sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire titled "Societal factors influence on students' involvement in examination malpractice questionnaire (SFISIEMQ)". The instrument was both faced and content validated by the supervisor and experts in measurement and evaluation in the department of educational foundations in Faculty of education, University of Calabar, Calabar. The reliability coefficient estimate of the instrument was established through Cronbach alpha reliability method.

The F-Statistics test was the statistical technique adopted for the testing of the hypotheses under the study to ascertain whether to accept or reject the null hypotheses. All the hypotheses were subjected to test at 5% level of significance with the relative degree of freedom.

The results of hypotheses reveals that students' membership of cult, students' dating and immoral relationships, students' excessive sporting activities and students' religious extremism significantly influenced their involvement in examination malpractices among senior secondary schools students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that students should be compelled by school authorities to reduce their involvement in social activities that are inimical to their studies and academic pursuit.

### 5.2 Conclusion

Considering the findings of this study, it was concluded that indiscipline among students is critical variable in students' involvement in examination malpractices in the schools. This was evident in the findings which singled out indiscipline as a root cause of examination malpractices among students of secondary schools in the State. The findings have led the researcher to conclude that societal factors plays significant role in examination malpractices. The findings have also led the researcher to conclude that effective supervision of students during examinations is lacking in many secondary schools while the measures currently taken to discourage, prevent or otherwise address examination malpractices among the students are insufficient as additional measures need to be taken.

### Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

(1) There should be an enlightenment campaign on the evil perpetuated on our knowledge-based environment by student cults, in order to empathetically disabuse the young people and learners from getting involved in these illicit and unwholesome associations, which greatly affects the survival of academics in society.

(2) Efforts should be made to advise young people of the negative role dating and immoral romantic relationships may play in academic performance and the adverse consequences.

(3) Sporting should be seen as an enriching leisure activity, and not an agent of antisocial behavior among students resulting in enmity and distraction.

(4) Regulatory bodies should be charged with the responsibility of setting standards and checking excess on the part of students.

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