

## Forms and Consequences of Examination Malpractices' in Nigeria's Schools and Universities: What Should the Stakeholders Do?

Ayamiyi B. Alhassan<sup>1</sup>  
Anya, Chidimma Adamma<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D (Wales), MNAE, FCAI, FNIER, SFIARSA Dean, Faculty of Education, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D (Lagos). Dept. of Educational Foundations, Federal University Gusau, Nigeria.

### Licensed:

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License.

### Keywords:

Examination  
Malpractices  
Effects  
Consequences  
Stakeholders.

### Abstract

*Education, being a process of teaching and learning is evaluated through examination at the end of the learning period. The paper defined the concepts of examination, malpractice, examination malpractice and its numerous forms and sorting. It revealed the origin of examination malpractice in Nigeria, identified the traces of intended malpractices and explained the causal factors of examination malpractices. The paper highlighted the effects and consequences of examination malpractices in Schools and Universities and the efforts made to curb examination misconduct. Finally, while emphasising the urgent need for institutions to embrace integrity on a sustainable basis, the paper x-rayed what the stakeholders should do to remedy the odious and unacceptable behaviour of examination malpractices.*

## 1. Introduction

Sustainable development in Nigeria requires the availability of competent and committed human resources. Using education as a tool, the government hopes to produce manpower that will serve in different capacities and contribute positively to the nation's socio-economic and political development. Specifically, the government intends to gear higher education towards high level relevant manpower training, self-reliance, national unity, and international understanding (Federal Ministry of Education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004). In pursuit of these objectives, institutions of higher learning such as Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education and Montechinics are established in different parts of the country by the government, private organisations and individuals. These institutions admit, train and graduate students in different fields.

The National Policy on Education (2013) enumerated the values to be inculcated in the Nigerian youth through education and they include:

- 1) Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual.
- 2) Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions.
- 3) Moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and human relations.
- 4) Shared responsibility for the common good of society.
- 5) Respect for the dignity of labour.
- 6) Promotion of the educational, physical and psychological health of all children.

According to the Federal Ministry of Education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004) higher education is set up in Nigeria and is expected to:

- a) contribute to national development through higher level relevant manpower training;
- b) develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
- c) develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- d) acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- e) Promote and encourage scholarship and community service.
- f) forge and cement national unity;

The development of a nation largely depends on the types of values that are cherished, vigorously pursued and applied by majority of its citizens.

Although values vary from place to place, from people to people and from one nation to another, there are universal values that are recognised generally, and accepted in societies globally. These include honesty, hard work, justice and patriotism.

Nigerian society has gradually relapsed in its adherence to laudable traditional values for which traditional societies of the pre-colonial era were known.

In actuality, most of traditional folklores and fireside stories contain lessons to be learned in honesty, hard work, humility, charity to the destitute and dedication. These values has been greatly eroded and many social vices such as drug abuse, cultism, examination malpractice, prostitution, sexual harassment, armed robbery, kidnapping, violent demonstration and volatile and militant students' unionism has emerged and are threatening to wipe out the cherished values. The focus of this paper is **Examination Malpractice**.

## **2. What is Examination?**

An examination is a form of evaluation where the learner is tested in all areas covered in the process of teaching at the end of a semester for proper placement and certification. It has a time table and a time frame. It always has an external body or examination committee to moderate. Moderation in an examination comes after the marking. Examination usually comes in the form of:

- i) **Essay:** which involves choice of questions where lengthy written answers are expected.
- ii) **Objective:** this is designed to make students to answer a large number of questions either by making statements as true or false or by selecting the best of several (multiple choice) given answers.
- iii) **Practical:** this is employed in scientific and technical fields to test theory.
- iv) **Oral:** this is given to simply recognise phonetic symbols in a given word commonly used to test languages.

The examination therefore, lies at the heart of any academic exercise. Its natural tendency is to establish a meritocracy in which power, earnings and status depend, to a high degree, on education and passing of examinations. This may explain why, for example, public examinations conducted by examination bodies such as the West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) and Interim Joint Matriculation Board (IJMB) assume a tremendous importance. That is why teachers and students spend a great amount of time on those topics they expect to appear in a given examination. Students on the other hand utilised all means, right and wrong, available to them to ensure that they passed their examinations. Examinations are conducted in schools year in, year out. Although the period of examinations brings a lot of anxieties to students all over the world, it is an integral part of our educational system and there can be no short cut to it.

## **3. What are the Purposes of Examination?**

Examination can provide information about an individual, student or group of students, a school (in terms of whether it is performing according to expectation), or about educational system (in terms of whether or not the set objectives are being met), (Alhassan, 2006; Oyetunde, 2004). The examination lies in the centre of any educational enterprise as it serves three main purposes:

- i) Measuring competence or achievement in a given field of endeavour.
- ii) Helping predict future success and also assisting in selection purposes.
- iii) As an activity, providing incentives to learning, (Aboki, 2000).

Examination and education are inseparable, for the efficiency and quality of an educational system is usually determined through the performance of its products in an examination or a set of examinations. The examination therefore, influences what is taught and learned in schools, especially when the results of the examinations are used to make important decisions on achievement, selection and placement purposes.

In Nigeria, examinations therefore, become a fulcrum for determining promotion from one level to another and the acquisition of certificates which consequently determine the future occupational career of a student or candidate. The examination therefore, becomes a "do or die" affair. Oyetunde (2004) stressed that examinations exert a very powerful influence on the educational system, on what is taught or how it is taught, and they determine how far students can go in their academic pursuits and job aspirations. Capper (1996) also posited that "entire families' lives can be influenced by a child's performance on an examination because that performance can constrain or expand future employment possibilities for the child".

In this sense, the examination becomes a social issue, a public concern. This high stake associated with examination induces desperation in students to the extent of wanting to do **anything** and **everything** to ensure success. All stakeholders in educational planning have a responsibility to influence positively on how examinations are administered.

## **4. What is Malpractice?**

Malpractice refers to all illegal means adopted by students in passing examination either within or outside the examination hall. It can be taking to mean '**cheating**', '**cooking**' or '**fraud**'.

## 5. What is Examination Malpractice?

Examination malpractice is an act or arrangement from which an examinee is programmed to derive illegal and illicit advantage over and above other candidates (students) in respect of some given examinations. Onokerhoraye (1993) and Maduabum (2001) defined it as 'an improper practice carried out before, during or after any examination by an examinee(s) or others with a view to obtaining good results'. Malpractice therefore, is the use of unconventional behaviour or methods before, during and after examination to aid, assist and attain desired success in examination.

It should, however be noted that examination cheating behaviour has for a long time been a global predicament. The Chinese who introduced the concept of examination for her civil servants were apparently aware of the tendency to cheat. So they took security measures of searching testees vigorously before they enter the examination hall (Holmess & Lauwerys, 1969).

The National Orientation Agency (NOA) and the Examination Ethics Marshals International (EEMI), a non-governmental organisation (NGO), collaborated on a project to analyse the level of misconduct in examinations in Nigeria and suggested solutions to the issue. A report by the Examination Ethics Project revealed that about 12 per cent of the candidates who sat for Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations in 2012 were involved in some form of malpractices during the examination. The report further revealed that Nigeria ranks poorly in the World Examination Malpractice Index (WEMI). Academic dishonesty (including examination malpractice, certificate forgery, plagiarism, lecture evasion and extortion) is one of the major problems plaguing higher education with serious implications for the worth of Nigerian Certificates (Olasehinde-Williams, 2005).

What is the Origin of Examination Malpractice in Nigeria?

Examination malpractice is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria. Adekale (1993) traced the origin of examination malpractice to the year 1914 when the Senior Cambridge Local Examination **leaked**. That was thirty-eight (38) years before the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) was established. In 1948, a Nigerian had his paper on History cancelled for coming to the examination hall with **foreign paper** that was **related** to the examination in question. In 1963, WAEC detected **leakages** in the First School Leaving Certificate and General Certificate of Education/School Certificate Examinations.

This unacceptable scenario took an unprecedented surge and steady growth in 1967, 1970, 1973, 1977, 1974, 1981, 1985, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003 (Ajaja, 2010). Examination Malpractices have taken the shape of an octopus which is multidimensional. Ipaye (1982) asserted that examination malpractice constitute one of the biggest problems facing JAMB. Today, examination malpractices have become a serious concern in the educational sector because it has reached a gigantic dimension with different forms and methods used by students.

## 6. Different Forms of Examination Malpractice

Researchers and educationists such as Alhassan (1991); Olasehinde (1993); Samuel (1995); Solake (1997); cited in Jekayinfa (2007); Adesina (2006); Awanbor (2006) and Banwo (2006) have written on a number of behaviours that are exhibited by students during examinations to cheat:

**Expo.** Is used to describe a situation of exposing the examination questions papers to the candidates before they actually sit for the examinations.

**Giraffing.** This is an act of sticking out one's neck to see another student's answer sheet in the examination hall.

**Lateral Connection.** This is a sitting arrangement whereby the 'bright' student is seated in the centre flanked on both sides by other students.

**Dubbing.** This is when students copy in the examination hall either another student's paper or the material they brought into the examination hall.

**Contract.** This reflects a situation when a students' grade is influenced with the assistance of a friendly Teacher.

**Tatoo.** This is when a male/female student writes information on the tender parts of his/her thigh or in a shoe where he/she can easily adjust to reveal the material and such material can be cleared within a second when there is a problem.

**Rank Xeroxing.** This indicates a situation when a student collects and writes another student's answer word for word.

**Computo.** This involves the use of calculators, which has facilities for multiple entries. The Invigilator may not know that it has such facilities; she/he may think it is an ordinary calculator.

**Missile Catch.** Represent answer written on a piece of paper, squeezed and thrown to a student while the examination is going on.

**Swapping.** Is an exchange of paper booklets so that the bright student can write answers out for his/her friend.

**Token:** Involve jotting of points on the mathematical set, razor blades, rulers, hankies and others of the like for referencing during examinations.

**Body Aids.** Involve jotting of points /answers on the underwear's, or thighs for referencing during examination.

**Mercenary Service.** Involve employing the service of another student/person to write the examination.

**Table Top.** Is writing of anticipated answers on the top of a desk before the commencement of examination.

**CNN.** Is the sharing of questions and answers between groups for eventual connection in the examination hall.

**Time Out.** Is the act of going out to the 'toilet' to read up answers.

**Direct Access.** Is an act whereby an Examiner helps students during examination.

**Stroke.** Is a situation whereby students pretend to be sick during an examination in order to gain the Examiner's sympathy while marking.

**E-Cheating.** Is the habit of students engaging ICT devices to indulge in examination malpractices.

The introduction of the Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) in Nigeria has revolutionised examination malpractices in all tiers of our school system.

A lot of academic information is now stored in these electronic gadgets for direct use in examination halls or for onward transfer via Short Message Service (SMS) to other students in any other part(s) of the country.

[Assam \(2009\)](#) revealed a worrisome dimension of this act by asserting that female students actually hide their phones, which contain answers to questions being examined in their under-wears and when confronted by the Invigilators, they claimed they were only adjusting their sanitary towels to make it firm.

Indicating the level of its escalation in Nigeria, JAMB confiscated one thousand nine hundred and forty-eight (1, 948) mobile phones in 2007 with evidence of prepared answers sent through SMS. The figure increased to three thousand and thirty-nine (3,039) in 2008 (IT Realms online, 2009).

There is also undue assistance by supervisors/invigilators when examination is in process, matriculated Students taking examination for other students and forged GCE results. These acts were detected by vigilant and loyal officials in spite of the high degree of sophistication in used in by –passing regulations and procedures to commit the crimes.

Scientific Calculators that are capable of retrieving data stored, performing symbolic mathematical manipulation, integration and differentiation have also been caught with students in examination hall ([Assam, 2009](#)).

The level of Sophistication of the forms used in committing the offenses and determination with which they are persistently committed give some concern.

In another development, pocket organisers, hand-held computers, laptop computers, electronic writing pads, calculators with typewriter-like keypads known as QWERTY, calculators with graphical display, calculators that make noise or talk, have equally been associated with examination fraud in developed countries ([Assam, 2009](#)).

A new dimension of examination malpractice has been added in the name of **Special Centres or miracle centres**. These Centres that are supposed to take care of candidates with special purpose are now **Centres of Examination Malpractices**.

## 7. What Are The Traces of Intended Malpractices?

[Odukuye \(2008\)](#) explained that examination malpractice will be noticeable when students lack adequate knowledge of the subject being examined. Consequently, such students will not be able to exert confidence during a given examination. Noticeable traces or acts of intended malpractices will start to emerge when:

- Students spend time trying to copy formulae, examples or definitions on pieces of materials that she/he hopes to supply into such examination hall.
- Students will be trying to pre-determine where to sit during such examination.
- Students become extra careful and kind to those she/he feels can render some assistance during the examination.
- During a given examination the student will be noticeably restless. She/he will be looking sideways or behind for any kind of help.
- During and after the examination, such a student will be trying to entice the Invigilator, Examiner or anybody related to them.

## 8. What are the Causal Factors of Examination Malpractices?

Many deeply rooted underlying factors have been reported to be the causes of examination malpractices in our schools. Fear and anxiety are pressures which 'push' students to want to do well and this usually lead to all forms of examination malpractices ([Alhassan, 1991](#); [Ipaye, 1982](#)). As [Paul-Cookey \(2001\)](#) puts it, this emphasis on examination has caused indescribable anxiety, shock and nervousness in students and their parents. Laziness and inadequate preparation for examination are also identified as important causal factors of examination malpractice. This confirms the saying that, 'he who fails to prepare, prepares to fail', and since many students who failed in preparation are bent on passing at all cost; cheating becomes their only option.

Some other causes of examination malpractices as enunciated by scholars like [Ipaye \(1982\)](#), [Alhassan \(1991\)](#), [Adekale \(1993\)](#), and [Olasehinde \(1993\)](#) are attributed to the following group of factors as indicated in [Table 1](#):

**Table-1.** Causal Factors of Examination Malpractices.

---

1.	<b>Society-Related Factors:</b>
	a) Undue emphasis on Certificates*
	b) Poor staffing of schools
	c) Laxity in prosecuting offenders
	d) Inadequate funding
2.	<b>Institution-Related Factors:</b>
	a) Too difficult examination questions
	b) Poor invigilation
	c) Lack of conducive examination environment
3.	<b>Teacher-Related Factors:</b>
	a) Teacher's threat to fail students
	b) Lack of commitment on the part of teachers
	c) Anxiety caused by non-completion of the syllabus
	d) Leakages through teachers
	e) Un-stimulating course materials
	f) Strikes that often interrupt the school programme
4.	<b>Learner-Related Factors:</b>
	a) The fear of failure*
	b) Inadequate preparation
	c) Desire to meet societal expectations
	d) Lack of confidence in one's ability
5.	<b>Group-Related Factors:</b>
	a) Parents/Guardians
	b) Examination Officials
	c) Examining Board Computer Operators
	d) Law Enforcement Agents

---

**Sources:** [Ipaye \(1982\)](#); [Alhassan \(1991\)](#); [Adekale \(1993\)](#), and [Olasehinde \(1993\)](#).

It is imperative to emphasise that in most of the studies conducted on examination malpractices in schools, researchers agree that the two (2) greatest causal factors (\*) of malpractices were **the fear of failure** and **too much emphasis which the Government and Society attached to** paper qualifications. In this connection, Former President Olusegun Obasanjo stated of the perpetrators of examination malpractices:

They see education as a means of meal ticket, getting a job and so must acquire the paper qualifications by hook or crook. We must change that perception or orientation so that they will appreciate the intrinsic value of education which is the total development of the individual to be able to make meaningful contribution to the family, community and nation (<http://www.nairaland.com>).

### 9. What Are The Effects Of Examination Malpractices?

Some of the effects of examination malpractices as highlighted by [Alhassan \(1991\)](#) and [Oyetunde \(2004\)](#) are:

1. It gives a false impression of the amount of knowledge, understanding or skills possessed by students. This is dangerous because examinations are a means of assuring the public that candidates certified by institutions and examination bodies as having done well in their examinations are of the quality and competence reflected in their certificates.
2. It defeats the basis of objective comparison between and among candidates. The examination is an instrument of objective comparison between the competing candidates with respect to their mastery of what have been jointly taught to them. That is, examinations are often used for ranking and selection purposes. In this regard, examination malpractice makes the selection of the best for a particular position or level difficult. This makes a mockery of excellence and standard and sends the signal that honesty does not pay.
3. It breeds mediocrity and enthrones laziness and stupidity, thereby discouraging hard work, which is the foundation of growth and progress.
4. It fosters self-deception as those who engage in examination malpractices cannot correctly and objectively assess their competence.
5. It is a violation of the law of Almighty God and a reproach to individual's families and a nation.

6. It places education and evaluation on a very precarious foundation and creates a picture of a nation growing on falsehood.
7. It retards the development of a nation. That is, it can create a nation of consumers and not producers.
8. It breeds criminals, “fraudsters” and killers. We can imagine the havoc that fake medical doctors can cause to people and nation.
9. It frustrates the use of examination for educational reforms, as it will be difficult for the administrators of education to know the extent to which the objectives of education are being served.
10. It erodes public confidence in examinations and the entire educational system.
11. It causes confusion and disorientation for the society and employers of labour.

## 10. What is Ethics?

“Ethics” has a Greek origin, *ethica*, from *ethos*, that is “character” or “custom”. Thus, ethics can be defined as laid down guidelines, rules and regulations, code or conduct or principle of behaviour based upon the ideas of morality to which a group or an organisation agrees to regulate their behaviour. For the purpose of this paper, we are viewing ethics in terms of expected behaviour before, during and after examinations. As has been argued elsewhere (Alhassan, 2011) ethical behaviour is behaviour that is morally accepted as “good” and “right” as opposed to “bad” and “wrong”.

As noted by Thomas Derry of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and quoted in the Examination Ethics Project (EEP) survey (2004) report, students who steal their ways to higher offices through examination malpractice would not find it difficult to engage in corrupt practices when they are employed.

## 11. What is Examination Ethics?

According to Liman (1996) examination ethics are moral principles laid down for the conduct of examinations. It is the moral correctness of an examination. Examination ethics is the correct conduct and behaviour which should underpin an examination system such that it gives validity and authenticity to the certification resulting from there (Onyechere, 1996).

For the avoidance of doubt, examination ethics is about all the right actions and attitudes expected of not only the candidates/students, but also, of all the stakeholders before, during and after examination; it does not matter whether it is internal or external examination, oral or written or practical examination.

Every examination body, be it the WAEC, NECO or JAMB, the National Business and Technical Education Board (NABTEB) and others, from the primary to the tertiary levels, has its own examination regulations. In tertiary institutions, examination rules and regulations are published in the Students Information Handbook. Therefore, examination ethics is not about candidates/students alone. It is also about examination bodies, educational institutions, educational administrators, teachers, and supporting staff (Computer Operators, Administrative Assistants, Security Men/Women and so on. The Examinations Ethics Project (2003) argues that without ethics, ‘education stands naked without character and learning’. In this regard, the concern of this paper is that academic attainments should be based on performance that reflects true knowledge, skills and abilities, and not on any other clandestine manoeuvres.

## 12. Consequences of Examination Misconduct in Some Universities

Examination malpractices speak for our morality as a Nation and we may become the laughing stock of a wider intellectual community if the trend is not arrested.

The University of Ibadan expelled eighty (80) students and one (1) Postgraduate student of the Department of Physics who brought into the examination hall a scientific calculator on which relevant materials for the Physics 784 examination were inscribed (<http://mobilefacebook.com>).

The University of Lagos expelled one-hundred and twenty-five (125), rusticated one-hundred and ninety-eight (198) students for examinations misconducts (<http://mobilefacebook.com>).

The Enugu State University of Science & Technology expelled ten (10) students and further expelled four (4), for being masterminds in impersonation of students during examinations (<http://www.students.com.ng/enugu>).

The Lagos State University suspended twenty five (25) students over examinations misconducts (<http://mobilefacebook.com>).

The Federal University, Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State, expelled two (2) students over examination malpractices ([www.yohaig.ng](http://www.yohaig.ng)).

One hundred and nine (109) students were expelled while one hundred and twenty-six (126) were rusticated by the Delta State University for examination misconduct ([newsinformationschools.com](http://newsinformationschools.com)).

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, one (1) Academic Staff was dismissed from service at the Umaru Musa Yaradua University on the ground of examination malpractice ([saharareporters.com.2010/03/23.resc...](http://saharareporters.com.2010/03/23.resc...)).

The Senate of Umaru Musa Yar’adua University, Katsina at their 65<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting considered and approved the report of the Central Misconduct Committee on the examination misconduct cases during the First Semester of the 2014/2015 Session and expelled thirty-one (31) students. Seventeen (17) of the expelled

students were from the Faculty of Education, seven (7) from Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences, Five (5) from Faculty of Humanities, Two (2) from Faculty of Social and Management Sciences while the rusticated student was from the Faculty of Education (studentsforumng.com). Below are the pictures of forms of cheating techniques used by the students:





Source: [picturesinumarumusayaraduauniversiyuexaminationmalpractice.com](http://picturesinumarumusayaraduauniversiyuexaminationmalpractice.com).

University of Abuja expelled fifty-four (54) students over examination malpractice ([www.nigeriaschool.com.ng/uniabuja-e](http://www.nigeriaschool.com.ng/uniabuja-e)).

Kogi State University expelled sixty-eight (68) students for examination malpractices ([www.pmnewsnigeria.com/tag](http://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/tag)).

Ebonyi State University expelled one hundred and forty-seven (147) students for examination malpractice (<http://www.students.com.ng/ebonyi>).

Kwara State University expelled twenty-eight (28) students over examination misconduct ([www.unilorin.info/fullnews](http://www.unilorin.info/fullnews)).

Babcock University, Ilisa, Ogun State, suspended fourteen (14) students for one (1) year because they **'Dubbed'** Assignment ([netflave.blogspot.com/2012/03...wtf...b...](http://netflave.blogspot.com/2012/03...wtf...b...)).

On February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the Ekiti State University expelled two hundred (200) students and a Lecturer over examination misconduct ([www.informationng.com](http://www.informationng.com)).

On March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 the Ekiti State University expelled fifty (50) students of the Part-Time Programme over examination malpractices ([www.nigeriaschool.com.ng](http://www.nigeriaschool.com.ng)).

University of Calabar expelled nine (9) students and suspended indefinitely two (2) students for examination malpractice with effect from 2014/2015 Academic Session (<http://nigerianscholars.com/2016/01...>).

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Federal University of Technology, Minna, expelled five (5) students over examination malpractices ([www.nigeriaschool.com.ng/futminna-n](http://www.nigeriaschool.com.ng/futminna-n)).

At the Federal University Gusau, the University Examination Monitoring Committee (EMC) reported nineteen (19) cases of examination malpractices during the 2015/16 First semester examinations with corresponding sanctions of rustications for two (2) semesters Examination Monitoring Committee (EMC) (2016).

In Sule Lamido University (SLU), the Students' Disciplinary Committee (SDC) is responsible for dealing with all cases of examination misconduct. If any student is suspected to have committed examination misconduct and found guilty after due investigations, the Committee may recommend to the Senate any of the following penalties against the respective offences.

In SLU, at the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting of the Senate on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2015, the report on Three (3) cases of Examination Misconduct by two (2) students from the SDC were considered and the expulsion of two (2) students and rustication of one (1) were approved.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Senate held on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2016 considered the recommendation contained in the Report of the (SDC) on cases of Examination Misconduct during the First Semester, 2015/2016 Examination that involved five (5) students and approved the expulsion of Three (3) students, rustication of one (1) student from the University for one Academic Session and the cancellation of the results of MTH121 for two (2) students.



**Table-2.** List of offences and penalties.

S/NO	Offences	Penalties
1.	Introduction of material(s) not relevant to the course being examined.	Written warning.
2.	Writing on question paper	Written warning.
3.	Submission of answer script without signing out of the examination	Written warning.
4.	Copying from a colleague without his knowledge (Giraffing)	Cancellation of paper
5.	Speaking or conversation or charting or possession of cell-phone (GSM), Computers, sophisticated calculators during examination in spite of instruction written or verbal by the invigilator.	Cancellation of paper
6.	Collaborated copying i.e copying from another candidate with his knowledge.	Rustication of the candidates involved for one (1) academic session.
7.	Acts of insubordination or insolence to the invigilator other than assault.	Rustication for one (1) academic session.
8.	Introduction of material(s) relevant to the course being examined.	Rustication for one (1) academic session.
9.	Exchanging answer scripts or question papers containing relevant materials and/or jotting during examination.	Rustication for one (1) academic session for candidates involved.
10.	Smuggling of unused answer script in or out of Examination Hall.	Rustication for one (1) academic session.
11.	Refusal to surrender or destroying incriminating evidence of examination malpractice.	Rustication for one (1) academic session.
12.	Involved in two previous examination misconducts with penalties less than Rustication.	Rustication for one (1) academic session.
13.	Fighting/assaulting another student in the Examination Hall.	Expulsion from the University.
14.	Impersonating: writing for another candidates; exchanging of examination numbers or names on answer script; intentional use of someone else's examination number; hiring mercenary to write examination by candidate.	Expulsion from the University.
15.	Smuggling of used answer script in or out of Examination Hall.	Expulsion from the University.
16.	Any attempt; successful or not to: remove submitted examination script with extraneous ones after the examination, either in part or in whole; alter, add or delete any written materials in the submitted answer script after examination; destroy submitted examination scripts or materials by any method.	Expulsion from the University.
17.	Assaulting an invigilator or any other authorised person in the Examination Hall or premises.	Expulsion from the University.
18.	Involvement of examination leakage.	Expulsion from the University.
19.	Forging any document relevant to the examination, including I.D. card.	Expulsion from the University.
20.	Introduction and use of relevant unauthorised materials e.g copying from books, papers, mobile phones, tablets, and listening to pre-recorded answer.	Expulsion from the University.

**Source:** [Sule Lamido University Students' Handbook \(2015\)](#).

The 19<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Senate held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 considered the recommendation contained in the Report of the SDC on cases of Examination Misconduct during the Second Semester 2015/2016 Examinations involving three (3) students and approved the rustication of three (3) students from the University for one (1) year, cancellation of the results of ISL 132 & HAU 232, and the expulsion of two (2) students( Senate Secretariat).

At the 346<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Senate of Bayero University, Kano, on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 eleven (11) and one (1) students were expelled and rusticated, respectively, over examinations malpractices (myschoolgist.com.ng).

In addition, getting involved in examination malpractice results to indiscipline and laziness; creates wasted life, frustration and agony; brings shame and disgrace to one's family and the country; generates fake and forgery of identity; reduces the value and standard of the country and creates a lawless and disordered society.

### **13. What Were The Efforts Made To Curb Examination Malpractices?**

The rate and constancy of examination malpractices at all levels of education have assumed such frightening proportion that some harsh decisions like **cancellation** of examination results and **expulsion** of culprits have been taken to curb this odious behaviour. The WAEC has, since its inception, devised and reviewed its strategies for curbing examination malpractice. Some of the efforts of the Council include:

1. **Public Enlightenment:** The current awareness in the country today of the evils of examination malpractice is attributable to the campaign launched formally by WAEC in 1984. The campaign has indirectly given birth to recent Examination Ethics crusade in the country.
2. **Information to Candidates:** The Council publishes in book form and also on its websites the rules and regulations guiding its examinations. These give details of the various offences and the sanctions applicable to them.
3. **Sensitisation of Government/Stakeholders:** The Council, as a matter of policy, avails the Government and Stakeholders of decisions on reported cases of malpractice by its appropriate Committees.
4. **Sanctions:** The Council promptly sanctions candidates caught cheating in its examinations and reports teachers and other operatives to their employers for appropriate sanctions. Any staff of the Council found to have been involved in examination malpractice/irregularity is regarded as a **security risk** and is summarily dismissed.
5. **Embossment of Certificates:** The Council introduced photo-embossed certificates to reduce the incidence of impersonation in its examinations. Use of Security Bags for the collection of security materials, Mounting of Anti-Malpractices Billboards, In-House Security Measures, Daily delivery of Examination materials by senior officers of the Council and Swapping of Examination Centre Supervisors are other strategies put in place by the Council to curb examination malpractice ([www.inquiresjournal.com](http://www.inquiresjournal.com)). The Nigerian Government, in order to curtail the trends of examination malpractices in schools and tertiary institutions made some laws, which include:
  - i) Decree 27 of 1973 on the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) which prescribe 2 years jails of offenders.
  - ii) Decree 33 of 1999 which prescribed 21 years jail term for any offender.

It is important to note that all penal codes made by the Military have not been implemented. No offender on record is known to have been tried under any of the decrees. It has been observed that the decrees are too draconian, un-reformative and hence, unenforceable. These imply the need to curb examination malpractices through some other ways.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) was established by the Federal Military Government Decree No. 16 of 1985 that is *Education (National Minimum Standard and Establishment of Institutions)* to "lay-down minimum standards for all Universities and other institutions of higher learning in the Federation" (Adamu, 1994).

On 16<sup>th</sup> of March, 2005, the NUC made a formal declaration of War Against Sorting (WAS) in Nigerian Universities with a battle cry of '**Sort and be Damned**'. The commission had defined **Sorting** as a practice where a lazy or academically deficient student sorts himself/herself out with the teacher or other persons in authority in the university with a view to securing favours that will wipe out such deficiency. When a student switches to the sorting mode, he/she trade a commodity for academic favours. This commodity is primarily money, gift items or sex. The teacher may be sorted out for better grades, while the administrator is sorted for admission or doctored transcripts. Sorting is a nickname for academic corruption. Today, corruption is eating away at the heart of the nation. People are now more concern about the acquisition of wealth, power and influence with total disregard for justice, fair-play, morality and integrity. The declaration was followed up by a system wide sensitisation and public awareness on the phenomenon. Students and parents were sensitised to their rights. Universities were required to set up efforts at **investigation, discipline, and publicity** of success stories on quarterly basis. That action yielded the desired results. The incidents reduced to the barest minimum.

Of recent, the Commission observed the resurfacing of reported cases of Grade Sorting on university campuses with grievous consequences on the students in particular and the delivery of quality university education in Nigeria and in general. The universities are advised to set up a Committee or Task Force on '**War on Grade Sorting**' (WGS) with the sole objective of eradicating, social and academic vices in Nigerian university campuses. ([nuc.edu.ng](http://nuc.edu.ng)).

On May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) organised a Retreat in Gombe State University to address examination malpractices. It was the first meeting of its kind in the history of

NANS existence meant to expose the ills and dangers of examination malpractices, which to a great extent, accounts for the dwindling quality of school leavers, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels (pulse.ng.student.nans-students-associa...) & (allnigerianschools.com,2016/05/19,stu...).

#### **14. What Are The Solutions To Examination Malpractices?**

Experts on Behaviour Management (Alhassan, 2006; Awanbor, 2006; Jekayinfa, 2007; Onokerhoraye, 1993). have written that in order to put an end to the persistent menace of examination malpractices in our institutions, the followings have specific roles to play: parents, teachers, society, government, students, and the school administrators.

**The Parents:** The parents should not lend any support to their wards to engage in any sort of examination malpractice. They should not give money to their children either to buy examination papers or to appoint examination contractors. Parents should provide their wards with abundant home supervision and training by good examples and models of excellence which will enable them to pass through stress and difficult situations.

**The Teachers:** The teachers should guide students to develop a healthy self-concept which would help them to form a right disposition to life. This would help them to modify their attitudes against any act of behaviour. The teachers being indispensable in the process of education should possess the attributes of endurance, diligence and honesty and be able to impact such attributes to the students. There is need to teach values so that students can know in advance, the actions they can take in any given situation. Value education involves “education for character” and for “moral values”. It is the teaching of respect and responsibility to citizens for good character development and for the wealth of the nation.

As Dike (2005) puts it, ‘respect and responsibility are two fundamental moral values’ that a society should teach its citizens’. Other values are honesty, fairness, self-discipline, compassion, empathy, prudence and other democratic values. In addition, rule of law, due process, equality of opportunity, checks and balances and democratic decision making are ‘procedural values’.

Value education should be planned for by the curriculum developers so that the teaching of respect, responsibility and other moral values like honesty should be in the nation’s school curricular for good character development. It is also imperative for educators to create value-based atmosphere in which all students can feel respected, valued, understood, loved and safe; to utilise their own rich heritage while integrating values into everyday activities and the curriculum. Students should be made aware of possible penalties and sanctions against people who depart from the cherished values of the society.

Immoral behaviours, such as examination malpractice, could be prevented by moral education if students are led to appreciate the effects of one’s choices on others. Teachers can achieve this desirable moral attitude in learners if they make effort to link their lessons/lectures to moral thinking activities. But it should be noted that the best strategies which teachers can employ to achieve effective moral education is to serve as models to the learners.

Teachers should take the task of invigilation during examination very seriously. Examinations should be invigilated in the very proper ways they are to be done. Teachers should also be sincere to their consciences in the way they teach. Teachers should do real teaching instead of dictating notes, forcing students to buy handouts and not going to class to teach. Yet, when the period of examination approaches, they give areas of concentration to the students. This is not good at all. Teachers should note that meaningful learning takes place only when students engage in the subject matter for its own sake rather than the need to pass examination.

**The Government:** Much emphasis should not be laid on paper qualifications to offer menial jobs. Enough teachers of various grades and categories should be enhanced through appropriate salary and allowances in order to motivate them for diligent, effective and functional deliverance of educational process. Sufficient classrooms, laboratories, well equipped libraries and other learning materials should be provided in schools.

**The Society:** The society should have another look at her value orientation and disposition to life. The society must shift emphasis from acquisition of wealth and certificates. Dignity of labour should be honoured and creativity and ingenuity should be recognised. The use of intrinsic reward for well-behaved students should be encouraged as a means of motivation for good conduct both in the school and in the society.

**The Students:** Students should avoid laziness, gross indiscipline and other anti-social behaviours. They should on their part attend classes regularly, study individually and in groups, prepare well for and pass examinations by themselves. All these can be done by developing good and well planned study habit. The (University Students’ Handbook, 2015) has a Chapter on **Time Management and Study Skills**

In addition, Bojuwoye (1993) asserted that successful performance in school comes not as a result of luck or fate, but as a result of internally controlled desire to work for some standard of excellence through careful planning, development of appropriate skills and through perseverance. Students should take note of these.

**The School Authorities:** They should provide enough invigilators for each examination. Sitting arrangements in the examination hall should be organised in a way to eliminate proximity-induced cheating.

For example, (i) students writing different examinations could sit at alternative rows (ii) not more than three (3) students should sit on a bench and (iii) adequate gaps should be created between the benches.

### **15. Adoption of Computer Based Examination**

Recent experience has shown that it is a lot more difficult to cheat in a computer based examination because forms such as copying, answer booklet swapping, question leakage and bribery of examiners are greatly reduced if not completely eliminated.

### **16. The Role of the Counsellor**

Examination misconduct has some social and psychological dimensions, which the Counsellor should address with holistic interventions. The school Counsellor by virtue of his/her training is well equipped to guide students towards achieving optimal behaviour during the conduct of examinations. This can be achieved through maintenance of effective communication network between Counsellors and students, Counsellors and teachers, and school Counsellors and significant others; giving impromptu talks to individuals and groups of students on the expected behaviour before and during examinations.

It is necessary and very important for the Sule Lamido University Counselling Services at the Student Affairs Division to offer **Examination Anxiety Support (EAS)** to students affected by examination anxieties. Many students feel the pressure intensely and have difficulty working well and producing work that reflects their knowledge and abilities. Discussing such situations and the ways that students tend to respond to them, can make the whole process more manageable.

### **17. What Else Must Institutions Do?**

It is important for our institutions to embrace **integrity** on a sustainable basis. Integrity means being transparent and trustworthy in words and deeds. It has to do with honesty and self-discipline in all spheres of life including the University system (Olasehinde-Williams, 2005). The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) considers mass cheating in an examination as an indictment on the integrity of the examination (ESA/Education Sector Analysis, 2003)

Values associated with integrity includes **honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility** (Centre for Academic Integrity, 2005). They are non-cognitive and are sometimes described as Emotional Intelligence since they refer to 'abilities, competencies and skills which influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures' (Bar-on, 1996).

In this connection, it is important and relevant to emphasise the **Core Values** of the SULE LAMIDO UNIVERSITY: i) **Dedication**, ii) **Entrepreneurship**, iii) **Collaboration**, iv) **Fairness**, v) **Integrity**, vi) **Transparency**, and vii) **Responsibility** (University Students' Handbook, 2015). A University environment that fosters integrity is one which encourages transparent relationship and where every member (Administration, Staff, and Students) has obligations and expectations in sustaining integrity (Marzean, 2010) in all facets of University life.

### **18. Conclusion**

Examination is an important aspect of the education process in the world and as far as Nigeria is concerned. Examination not only serves as a feedback for the trainer to ascertain the level of knowledge acquisition but also serves as a measure of knowledge retention by the trainee.

The paper identified noticeable acts of intended malpractice, a number of behaviours that are actually exhibited by students during examination(s) to cheat, and the causal factors of examination malpractices. Evidence abound of increasing incidents of examination malpractices by students at schools and universities, which conflict with the core purpose of education - the training of the mind and character for the acquisition of theoretical and practical skills.

The wave of the malpractices should not be blamed on the students alone. Students work under intense pressure and under stressful conditions imposed on them by the society, their parents/guardians and the school environment in which they learn. Society places a very high premium on the possession of certificates as against the acquisition of skills and some students with the active collusion of their parents, will stop at nothing in their drive to obtain information that would enable them to pass their examinations effortlessly.

The effects of examination malpractices were enumerated and consequences of examination misconducts in some schools and universities were highlighted. Efforts made by the WAEC, successive governments, the NUC, and NANS to curb examination malpractices were examined. Examination ethics enthrone the regard for the rules, regulations, codes of conduct, expectations and moral principles governing the conduct of tests, measurements, assessments and the evaluation system. Finally, what the stakeholders can do towards eradicating examination malpractice which destroys human resources development was explained.

### **References**

Aboki, T. S. (2000). Cheating in higher schools. *Schools and Society*, 99, 96-102.

- Adamu, A. U. (1994). Reform and Adaptation in Nigerian university curricula, Living on a credit line. Lewiston (pp. 1960-1992). New York: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Adekale, A. (1993). Incidence and causes of examination malpractices among students of the University of Ilorin. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Foundations*, 4(1), 46-57.
- Adesina, T. O. (2006). Causes and consequences of students' crises in public Universities in Nigeria. *Educational Research and Review*, 4(4), 158-165.
- Ajaja, O. P. (2010). Three years of post UME screening, influence on science education students achievement. *International Journal of Education Science*, 2(1), 29-40.
- Alhassan, A. B. (1991). *Examinations: Does teacher expectation affects students performance?* Paper presented at the Faculty of Education, Paper Presented at the 7th Annual Conference of the Association of Educational Psychologists (NAEP), 24th – 28th March. ABU, Zaria.
- Alhassan, A. B. (2006). Psychology of learning. *Lagos: The Regent for National Open University of Nigeria, Lagos.*
- Alhassan, A. B. (2011). *Concise modern dictionary of educational psychology*. Zaria, Nigeria: Tamaza Publishing Company.
- Assam, N. (2009). Mobile phone and examination malpractices.IT Realms on Line. Retrieved from: <http://www.itrealms.com.ng/mobile-phonesandexam-malpractices-htmp>.
- Awanbor, D. (2006). *Crisis of examination misconduct in Nigeria's tertiary institutions*. University of Benin: Faculty of Education.
- Banwo, D. (2006). Students' crisis in Universities. *Khazar Journal of Humanities*, 3(2), 87-98.
- Bar-on, Z. (1996). Principles of academic integrity. *Change, May/June*, 10-15.
- Bojuwoye, T. D. (1993). Curbing examination malpractices in schools daily times August 3rd. Centre for Academic Integrity. *Integrity Update: The News Letter for Members and Friends of College Relations, Illinois, Oakton Community, USA.*
- Capper, J. (1996). Testing to learn: Learning to test. *Network, Delaware: International Reading.*
- Centre for Academic Integrity. (2005). *Integrity Update: The News Letter for Members and Friends of College Relations, Illinois, Oakton Community, USA.*
- Dike, S. R. (2005). Examination malpractice at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. *Journal of Liberal Studies*, 7(2), 81-92.
- ESA/Education Sector Analysis. (2003). *Pre-diagnostic bibliography collation on studies proposed for the Nigerian education sector analysis*. Abuja: Education Sector Analysis & UNESCO.
- Examination Monitoring Committee (EMC). (2016). A report on examination activities of Federal University Gusau, submitted to the Vice chancellor.
- Federal Ministry of Education. (2004). News Letter. 2(1).
- Holmess, T. S., & Lauwerys, R. J. (1969). *Measurement and evaluation in teaching*. New York: Harcourt Brace Inc.
- Ipaye, B. (1982). *Continuous assessment in schools*. University of Ilorin Press.
- Jekayinfa, A. A. (2007). Examination malpractice in Nigerian schools' In C.S. Oke, A.A. Jekayinfa& A.O. Fagunwa, *Sociology of Education* (pp. 139-149). Oyo: Tobistic Publishing Ventures.
- Liman, M. T. (1996). *Promoting examination ethics*. Nigeria: An Examination Ethics Publication.
- Maduabon, M. A. (2001). *Examination malpractice in Nigeria's education system*. Paper presented at the Perspectives and possibilities in P.N. Lassa & J. A. Aghenta, Proceedings of the 16th Annual Congress of the NAE.
- Marzean, B. (2010). Why different responses to academic integrity do and don't work. Millersville University Academic Integrity. Retrieved from: <http://www.homefuse.net/bcheck/reviewed16.htm>.
- Odukuye, M. O. (2008). *Examination malpractice and the poor knowledge of English language as basic constraints in educational development in Nigeria. Faculty of Science*. Asaba Campus: Delta State University.
- Olasehinde-Williams, O. (2005). Institutionalising academic integrity in Nigerian Universities: Psychological perspectives of morality and motivation. *Journal of Sociology and Education in Africa*, 4(2), 152-166.
- Olasehinde, F. A. O. (1993). Cheating in examinations in the University of Ilorin: Styles, causes and remedies. *NIJEF*, 4(1), 10-18.
- Onokerhoraye, A. G. (1993). An address on examination malpractice. In T. Maduka (Ed.) *Examination Malpractice: Causes, Implications, and Remedies*, Faculty of Education (pp. 3-4). Benin: University of Benin.
- Onyechere, I. (1996). N66bn lost to exam fraud in 10 years. The punch News Paper, Monday, August 30th. pp: 8.
- Oyetunde, O. T. (2004). *Examination and education standards*. In. O.T. Oyetunde, A.Y. Mallum, & C.A.
- Paul-Cookey, N. R. A. (2001). A critique of continuous assessment in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. *Department of Educational Psychology, University of Port Harcourt.*
- Samuel, I. (1995). Examination malpractices, admissions and JAMB. *Weekend Third Eye.*
- Solake, R. O. (1997). *Administration of higher education*. Lagos: Sunray Press.
- Sule Lamido University Students' Handbook. (2015). *Published by student affairs division*. Kafin Hausa, Jigawa State: Office of the Vice Chancellor.
- The Examinations Ethics Project. (2003). *Education with learning and character*. Lagos: Author.
- University Students' Handbook. (2015). *Published by student affairs division*. Kafin Hausa, Jigawa State: Office of the Vice Chancellor.