

Predictive influence of Students' Age, Sex and Test Anxiety on Examination Malpractices among Secondary School Students in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This research investigates the predictive influence of Students' Age, Sex and Test Anxiety on Examination Malpractices among Secondary School Students in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The research design used for this study was survey design of the descriptive type of research. The sample size of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents was selected as respondents for the study using random sampling technique. The respondents were drawn from five (5) secondary schools within secondary schools in Ado-Ekiti Local Government Area of Ekiti State Nigeria. Three research questions were raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument for the study was self-designed questionnaire. The instrument was subjected to validity and reliability mechanism. The data collected were analysed using Chi-Square (X^2) statistical analysis package. The results of the analyses showed that age did not predict students' involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools. Sex of secondary school students did not determine their involvement in examination malpractices. Test anxiety serves as predictor of students' involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools. The age of secondary school students was significant in predicting students test anxiety in secondary school students. The rate of examination malpractice was more among the male students than female secondary school students. Based on the findings, conclusions and appropriate recommendations were made.

Keywords: Age, sex, test anxiety, examination malpractices, secondary schools

Introduction

Examination is a major instrument used for the evaluation of learners' achievement. Alutu & Aluedu (2006), defined examination as a formal test of somebody's knowledge or ability in a particular subject, especially by means of answering questions or practical

exercise in other to measure how much knowledge a student in an institution of learning has acquired after exposing such a student to a definite course of instruction. Examination on a broad perspective is an instrument for testing, assessing, evaluating and accreditation, of which the outcome of such judgment is used for diagnosing, placement, guidance, certification among others. Examination can be internal or external. Examinations could be oral, written or both.

Oredein (2008) asserted that public examinations, also known as external examinations are conducted on behalf of the state and open to all those who meet defined entry criteria within the society. They are administered by external bodies (evaluation agencies) and include examinations used to select those wishing to enter government service, state schools, and other educational institutions. Such examination bodies include West African Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), National Business and Technical Education Board (NABTEB) and so on. The rationale for adopting public examinations is in the realization of the fact that public examinations provide adequate basis for qualifying students' abilities, and also the exertion of control over the attainment of the curricula across schools. However, public examinations are different from school examination, which are more or less internal or school-based, in which case the teachers are directly involved in the assessment of their students. Examples of schools examinations include continuous assessment, terminal and promotion examinations e.t.c.

Public examination therefore seems to be the most popular parameter by which society judges the product of its educational system. This is because performances in public examinations are now used as a prerequisite for admission into other levels of schooling, job placement, awards of certificate and diploma. According to Joshua (2008), one can therefore use examination to categorize students into high and low abilities. Those with high abilities are giving preference above those with low abilities, which of course the low abilities would also desire. As such, in a bid to demonstrate high abilities, they go into all kinds of vices, and one of such vices is examination malpractice.

The Examination Malpractice Act (1999) defined examination malpractice as any act of omission or commission by a person who in anticipation of, before, during or after any examination fraudulently secure any unfair advantage for himself or any other person in such a manner that contravenes the rules and regulations to the extent of undermining the validity, reliability, authenticity of the examination and ultimately the integrity of the certificate issued. Alutu & Aluedu (2006) stated that examination malpractice is any irregular behavior exhibited by a candidate or anybody charged with the conduct of examination before, during, or after the examination that contravenes the rules and regulations governing the conduct of such examination.

There are many factors that served a determinant that cause examination malpractices among secondary schools students. Oredein (2008) asserted that the variables of age, sex and test anxiety of students largely influence their behaviour especially during examinations. And that these variables correlate to certain degree and cannot be separated from examination malpractices. To a considerable extent age of the learner determines the variation in the speed at which he learns and at the rate at which he engages in examination malpractices. Sex of the learner is also a factor that need to be considered when examine examination malpractices. Oredein (2008) reported that girls find it easy to inscribe information on any part of their body like thighs, baby pampers, purses and palms than their male counterpart. Apart from this, test anxiety among students is another variable that lead to examination malpractices. Many students failed to read when others are reading, some were busy playing games or watching TV when they suppose to read and this leads to fear of failure when they are about to write examination.

According to Ibrahim (2004) academic success usually depends upon students' ability to adapt to academic situation. And students who feel competent will not be much threatened by stressful academic demands but to one's surprise, students are generally anxious over examination, which invariably leads some of them to engage in examination malpractice. One of the objectives of education in Nigeria is to prepare the youth to become self sufficient in order to meet the nation's manpower requirements. Schools need to conduct examinations purposely to assess the cognitive ability of the student. It follows then that examination is very paramount in the placement of students. Olisama (2003) opined that when a student receives or acquires foreign aid in an attempt to pass examination, it is called examination malpractice. Examination malpractice is any wrong doing before, during or after any examination. Examination malpractice is an illegal means that students use to pass examinations.

The various dimensions of examination malpractice includes bringing of foreign materials into the examination hall, colliding with supervisors to cheat, receiving help from other candidates, impersonation, insult or assault on examination officials, electronically assisted malpractices, mass cheating, and changing of scores by examiners for candidates.

Sex, according to Cambridge Dictionary is the state of being a male or female. Different views exist as to which sex involves most in examination malpractices. Omotore (2011) stated that more males engage in examination malpractices than the females. The absence of significant difference between the anxiety levels of male and female most especially prior to examination could be attributed to many factors. Both students must have familiarized themselves with the academic environment and the females, thinking that they can always find themselves through by any means, write on parts of their body with the aim of engaging in examination malpractice. Boys have been found to partake in examination malpractice especially when they have fear of failing in difficult subjects. Based on this finding, sex as a variable will receive serious attention as predictor of examination malpractice.

Age, in education, is a level of development equivalent to that of an average person of a particular age. The variable of age in combination with biological, cognitive, affective and psychological dimensions upon students' examination malpractice seems to be one of the main factors determining students' participation in examination malpractice.

Test anxiety is another major factor that leads students to engage in examination malpractices. Olusade (2003) defines anxiety as the chronic fear that occurs when a threatened event is in the offing but is unpredictable. It is the exams designed to objectively measure the academic aptitude of students from varying social backgrounds and with different educational experience. Test anxiety therefore to the fear a student exhibits before, during or after writing a test. According to Ibrahim (2004) several factors account for test anxiety among secondary school students leading some of them into examination malpractices.

Examination is very important in evaluating students learning outcome and their cognitive ability. Examination over the years has become the major yardstick in determining the academic achievement level of students in secondary schools and other level of education in Nigeria. But the status of examination has been mauled by the high rate level of examination malpractices among the students of secondary schools all across Nigeria. Many scholars have put up many variables and factors as being responsible for the menace in the academic development of Nigeria.

The age, sex of the students and test anxiety have their telling effect on the anti-social behaviours of examination malpractices in our secondary schools. And this can be attributed to the admission of students into secondary school against the age of 10 as stipulated by the Ministry of Education. Today students at the age of 8 or 9 years have been given admission

into secondary schools and many of them are not mature enough to withstand the nature and standard of examination in secondary schools. More also, it is observed by the researcher that sex of students is a very significant variable that determines the rampaging rate of examination malpractices among secondary schools students. The researcher observed that as much as research has been conducted on examination malpractice, there is scanty information on how age and sex predict examination malpractices.

Base on this view, the researcher is of the opinion that age of the students is one of the fundamental challenges militating against students' performance in secondary school examination in Ado local government area of Ekiti State. Furthermore, the sex of learner's is observed to be the basic problems militating against teaching and learning in most of the secondary schools especially in Ado local government area of Ekiti State. Sex of the students are perceive as a strong students variable that can maximize or minimize the students performance in any school subject. Thus, the researcher perceived sex of students as a factor that predicts examination malpractices among students. Test anxiety among students of secondary schools can be attributed to the poor level of preparedness of students for examination, truancy in school, missing of class and perception of the students that examination malpractices is not an offense that can be punished. Although, there exist a lot of research on test anxiety but variable in combination with age and sex are yet to be fully researched. It is against this background that the researcher was stimulated to investigate the age, sex and test anxiety as predictors of examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

Research Questions

The research will answer the question:

1. Does age predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State?
2. Does sex predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State?
3. Does test anxiety predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State?

Literature Review

Concept of examination malpractices

Ahmed (2010), examination malpractice is any act of wrongdoing or neglect that contravenes the rules and regulations of acceptable practice before, during and after an examination by any reason. Nowadays, it is not uncommon to hear people discuss examination malpractice as if it is a custom. Perpetrators of this social menace view it as an act which everybody partakes in, hence it is generally acceptable. Therefore, it is not impossible these days to see students with distinction in the west African Examination Certificate (WAEC) Senior School certificate Examination (SSCE), General certificate in Education (GCE) or the equivalent or even first class and second class upper in the universities who cannot defend the certificate. The reason behind it is nothing but examination malpractice which has sucked deep into virtually all levels of the education system. These acts are unbecoming and need to be curtailed. It is a disease; it calls for the attention of all and sundry.

Nwahunanye (2004) posited that some years back, the decision to attend secondary school was in itself a crucial vocational choice. Secondary school education has as one of its objectives; to provide education of higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background. National Policy on Education (2004) section 5 sub – section 22 (a)

lamented „the extent to which these objectives are being achieved in teaching and learning in secondary schools as in every other level of education is usually appraised or evaluated through examination“. It is also impossible for one to obtain an academic certificate after passing through an institution without being evaluated. The reverse is also the case due to the way some of our undergraduates see the pursuit of good academic certificate as a do or die affair.

During examination periods, students prepare for the examination in different ways. Some read a month before the examination. Some still prefer using the night before the examination to write down points which they would take into the examination hall. These are mostly the category of students who do not see any reason to prepare for the exercise but rely on “expo” to succeed. In the examination halls, the perpetrators of this unwholesome act operate in divergent ways as they want to make good grades and reap where they did not sow. Examination misconduct in the hall can take the form of giraffing / peeping from another person’s examination papers, writing on the palms, desks and piece of papers, smuggling of examination halls and so on and so forth. Outside the halls, the misconduct can take the shape of sorting of the already written examinations either through the teachers or their agents. This cankerworm has eaten deep into the fabrics of the Nigerian educational system; thereby, rending our educational institutions hopeless. They are so unbecoming that if nothing is done and no time too, our secondary school education and other levels of education will be mess.

Commenting on the issue of examination misconduct, Sumnoh (2010), remarks that government is the major cause of examination malpractice. He said that if teachers were well paid, they would see no reason to aid or be involved in examination malpractice. One is not saying here that high salary and allowances will totally stop examination malpractice, it will help to curb it. However, it is pointless dragging the argument as to who is responsible for the cases of examination malpractice in our secondary schools. It is equally illogical to think that one particular group, whether students, teachers, government or the society can solve the problem of examination misconduct in our secondary schools.

Age of students and examination malpractices among secondary schools

The age concept has recently emerged in various fields among others, gerontological, psychological, futurological, demographic, legal, political and cultural contexts as an interest of research. Diversity studies have included age among race, gender, creed, ethnicity, background, education, function, and personality differences (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). At the same time, while a vast amount of organizational studies have covered almost every angle of the leadership theme (Åhman, 2003), the concept of age has largely been ignored. The almost untouched area of the conceptualisation of age, and as a consequence of it, the discursive perception of a leader as well as his/her capabilities needs to be explored and unmasked further. The poor and declining academic performance of students in Nigerian schools owing to examination malpractice is becoming so alarming that the achievement of the set goals of teaching in secondary school for sustainability and development is endangered. Okafor (1999) maintained that there is a recurring story of poor academic performance in secondary schools subject.

Examination malpractice is one of the common social ills threatening the educational sector at all levels and the fact that it is found among the students in secondary school is even more worrisome. Denga & Denga (1998) affirmed that examination malpractice is thriving in all level of schools. Examination plays several important roles in the teaching-learning process. It is a necessary incentive to study, a means of getting feedback and a yard-stick for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional delivery, selection, placement, and for employment. The concept of age has become the main yardstick that is being used to give admission to students into secondary schools and higher institutions of learning, for giving

job and even in the political settings in Nigeria. At the high school level, Scales (2005) measured student level of developmental assets', (positive relationships, opportunities, skills, values and self-perceptions) and its relationship to academic achievement. In this study, seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students with more increased developmental asset had higher GPAs in tenth through twelfth grade than those with less assets.

Nowadays, examination is widely used as a medium for promotion in many parastatals. But when the proper use of examination is abused by both the examinees, the examiners and the entire populace, a question may then arise as to what is the relationship between examination malpractice and students' academic performance in secondary schools. Age, in education, is a level of development equivalent to that of an average person of a particular age. As already noted, the variable of age in combination with biological, cognitive, affective and psychological dimensions upon students' examination malpractice seems to be one of the main factors determining students' participation in examination malpractice. Amamize (2003) observed that maturation of the learner and exposure to different situations is a determining factor whether the student will involve himself or herself in examination malpractice. However, it still remains open to question whether a particular age group is more prone to examination malpractice. In some respect, all age group engage in examination malpractice and this is where the research will focus attention. Age is a human attribute that has long been taken for granted.

Examination malpractice is therefore induced by grading pressure at least as much as that of individual character failure (Newberger, 2000). Berliner (2008) affirmed that the pressure to score well on a single test is so intense that it leads to nefarious practices such as cheating on the test. Parents also play a very important role in students' behaviour and academic performance in the school. Most often, some students fail in their duty to provide necessary materials that will enable their children to learn and when the children are not performing up to expectations, the parents turn around to pressurize the students, blame the teachers or resort to fraudulent means to help the children pass examination.

Considering the problem of examination malpractices, the rate at which students faint or fall sick during examination, and many other anxiety related problems in schools, it becomes necessary to find out the age and sex of the students and look at their anxiety levels (Omotore, 2011).

Sex as predictor of examination malpractices among secondary schools

Sex, according to Cambridge Dictionary is the state of being a male or female. Different views exist as to which sex involves most in examination malpractices. Lobel & Levanon (1988) argue that more males engage in examination malpractices than the females while Leming (1980) believes that there are more female involvement in examination malpractice than male.

The absence of significant difference between the anxiety levels of males and female most especially prior to examination could be attributed to many factors. Both students must have familiarized themselves with the academic environment and the females, thinking that they can always find themselves through by any means, write on parts of their body with the aim of engaging in examination malpractice. Boys have been found to partake in examination malpractice especially when they have fear of failing in difficult subjects. Based on this finding, sex as a variable will receive serious attention as predictor of examination malpractices. Nigeria, like many other nations of the world, has a strong faith in education as the key to economic progress, political stability, social transformation, as well as scientific and technological development (Olayinka & Akande, 2006). Education, according to Emaikwu (2012), is expected to train the mind of its recipients for effective performances. It equips the individual with the information necessary for high level of human functioning. The

school is seen as the most formal agency for cultivating necessary skills, knowledge and values as enunciated by the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in the NPE. The school achieves this through constant evaluation and assessment carried out during examinations.

Examination malpractice is so wide spread that no sex or religion seems to be exempted. There are studies according to Omotere (2011) that attached sex of the learner as a factor for examination malpractices. The male and female students as well as the Christian and Muslim students fraught it. Omotere (2011) noted that different views exist as to which sex involves more in examination malpractice. Ordinarily one expects that since examination malpractice is evil, Christian and Muslim students are not supposed to be involved, aid or abet it but they do with impunity. Many Christian and Muslim students have previously been found guilty of examination malpractices in many schools and colleges in Nigeria including this very institution under study, why? May be, these students have insufficient knowledge of the rules and regulations guiding examinations, nature of examination offences and also the penalties. This is why this study sought information on the “Knowledge of students about these rules, the behaviors that are considered wrong in examination and the penalties for these offences using gender and religion as variables.

The effects of Test Anxiety on Examination Malpractices among secondary schools

Low performance of students in exams especially external exam is no longer news in Nigeria. Over the years, stakeholders in this field having been working tirelessly to remedy the ugly phenomena unfortunately, their effort is yet to yield any significant impact. On the part of the students, lack of interest, love for money or what is known as get rich quick syndrome were identified. Unfortunately, none of them was able to see exam anxiety. At times, students will read very well yet he or she will perform poorly in exam simply because of tension. Exam itself causes anxiety to some students (Nelson, 2001). Studies have shown that exam anxiety makes a student to forget all that he or she studied (Nelson 2002). Clear understanding of features of anxiety is enough proof to its effect on remembering. Anxiety causes muscle tension which makes the brain to be unrelaxed thereby causing forgetfulness.

Anxiety is complex and mysterious. The more you learn about it, the more baffling it seems. It is a negative mood state that is characterized by bodily symptoms of physical tension and apprehension about the future (Durand & Barlow 2002). It can also be seen as a subjective sense of unease, a set of behaviours (such as looking worried, anxious or fidgeting) or a physiological response originating in the brain and reflecting on elevated heart rate and muscle tension.

During anxiety reactions or response, the heart, lungs, and other parts of the body work faster. The brain also releases the emergence (stress) hormone adrenaline and cortisol (Obidigbo, 2008). People who experience this disorder usually report being unhappy and their behaviour is maladaptive. In school, some students experience some kind of anxiety disorder within their stay in school, (Nelson, 2002) and the most common is examination anxiety. Examination anxiety may manifest among students through admission of wrong or series of unwarranted fear, rapid breathing, through meticulous cautions (Nelson, 2002).

A close watch on some students, one may see them dropping things like books, rulers and bags on the ground, which some will hit their legs on tables, chairs etc. All these are believed to be manifestations of examination anxiety (Wind, 2000). This has also Lead to the reduction in our standard of education, for instance, some of the secondary school students, who are too anxious about examination will fail an exam and to avoid this frustration, which will affect the student image or regulation, they will resort to examination malpractice (Cheating) in order to scale through. Not because they are unintelligent, or that they did not prepare well for the exam, but because they are afraid to fail the exam. The manifestation of examination anxiety differs, depending on the individual, students and the subjects, some

students may enjoy calculations and dislike or avoid any subject that involves a lot of grammar or writing, while others may enjoy subjects with a lot of grammar and writing, and hate calculations.

Methodology

The survey design of the descriptive type of research was used for this study. The area of the study was Ado local government area of Ekiti State.

The population of the study consisted of all public secondary school students in Ado Ekiti Local Government Area of Ekiti State. There are ten public secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

The sample size of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents was used for the study. The respondents were the students from public senior secondary schools class II and III (SSS 2 and SSS 3) in Ado local government area of Ekiti State. There are ten (10) public secondary schools in Ado local government area of Ekiti state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select five (5) secondary schools in the local government. The simple random sampling technique was also used to select thirty (30) students from each of the selected schools to make a total of 150 respondents.

The research instrument used for this study was a self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire used for collecting the responses of the respondents was a 25-items instrument which was designed to answer the research questions of the study. There are five variables in the study and each of the variables generated five items. The questionnaire had two Sections. Section A was used to elicit information on the demographic data of the respondents such as name of school, age, sex, class. While section B was used to elicit information on the research variables. The questionnaire was of Likert format of response: "SA, A, D, SD" answer. Where SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.

The instrument was subjected to validity and reliability mechanism. The instrument used by the researcher was scrutinized for face content and construct validities by specialists and experts in measurement and evaluation. The instrument was finally adjudged to be good relative to face, content and construct validities.

The reliability of the instrument was established using split half method. The researcher administered the instrument to thirty (30) respondents who did not form part of the final respondents that were used for this study. The questionnaire items were divided into odd and even numbers. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data gathered in order to determine the value of (r) at 0.05 level of significance. After, computation the reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained which shows good reliability.

The questionnaires were administered on the students by the researcher with the help of two (2) trained research assistants and were collected back immediately.

The data collected were analysed using Chi-Square (X^2) statistical analysis package.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1

Does age predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State?

Table 1: Chi-Square Analysis of data on the Age of students as prediction of involvement in examination malpractice among secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

| S/N | ITEMS | X^2_{-Cal} | X^2_{-tab} | df | Remark |
|-----|---|--------------|--------------|----|--------|
| 1 | Students who are below recommended years of secondary schools involve much in examination malpractices. | 5.67 | 7.82 | 3 | * |
| 2 | Age influence students involvement in examination malpractices. | | | | |
| 3 | Students who are beyond the ages of 18years are afraid of failure and do not want students younger than them to laugh at them, thus they take to examination malpractice. | | | | |
| 4 | Age of students influence the students performance in school subject. | | | | |
| 5 | The higher the age of students, the more the occurrence of examination malpractices among them. | | | | |

$P < 0.05$, * = Significant

Table 1 shows that x^2 -calculated was 5.67 and x^2 - critical was 7.82 in research question one. Showing that x^2 -calculated is less than x^2 -table value at 0.05 and $df = 3$ (i.e.. $x^2_{-Cal} < x^2_{-tab}$). The result is not significant; this implies that age was not a predictor of students' involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

Research Question

Does sex predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State?

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis of data on the Sex of students as prediction of involvement in examination malpractice among secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

| S/N | ITEMS | X^2_{-Cal} | X^2_{-tab} | df | Remark |
|-----|---|--------------|--------------|----|--------|
| 1 | Male students involve in examination malpractices than female students. | | | | |
| 2 | Female students are afraid of being caught in examination than male students. | | | | |
| 3 | Female students thought that they can always | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|-------|------|---|---|
| | find way through examination by any means. | 4. 23 | 7.82 | 3 | * |
| 4 | Male students partake in examination malpractice because they have fear of failing in difficult subjects than female students. | | | | |
| 5 | Male students ill-preparedness is the reason for their involvement in examination malpractices. | | | | |

P < 0.05 , * = Significant

Table 2 shows that χ^2 -calculated was 4.23 and χ^2 - critical was 7.82 in research question two. Showing that χ^2 -calculated is less than χ^2 -table value at 0.05 and $df = 3$ (i.e.. $\chi^2_{-Cal} < \chi^2_{-tab}$). The result is not significant; this implies that sex of students was not a predictor of students' involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

Research Question 3

Does test anxiety predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State?

Table 3: Chi-Square Analysis of data on the students' Anxiety as prediction of involvement in examination malpractice among secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

| S/N | ITEMS | χ^2_{-Cal} | χ^2_{-tab} | df | Remark |
|-----|---|-----------------|-----------------|----|--------|
| 1 | Poor preparation by students for examination entices them to exam malpractice. | 12.67 | 7.82 | 3 | * |
| 2 | Exam anxiety makes a student to forget all that he or she studied. | | | | |
| 3 | Examination anxiety may manifest among students through admission of series of unwarranted fear. | | | | |
| 4 | Fear of parents' punishment stimulates students to take to examination malpractice. | | | | |
| 5 | Students low self-reliance during test makes them take examination malpractice as the only option to success. | | | | |

P < 0.05 , * = Significant

Table 3 shows that χ^2 -calculated was 12.67 and χ^2 - critical was 7.82 in research question three. Showing that χ^2 -calculated is greater than χ^2 -table value at 0.05 and $df = 3$ (i.e.. $\chi^2_{-Cal} > \chi^2_{-tab}$). The result is significant; this implies that test anxiety predicted involvement of students in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State.

Discussion of findings

The research Question 1 which stated that 'does age predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State' was answered and the result of finding revealed that age was not a predictor of involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. The finding of the study contradicted the finding of Amamize (2003) who observed that maturation of the learner and exposure to different situations is a determining factor whether the student will involve himself or herself in examination malpractice. Age, in education, is a level of development equivalent to that of an

average person of a particular age. The variable of age in combination with biological, cognitive, affective and psychological dimensions upon students' examination malpractice seems to be one of the main factors determining students' participation in examination malpractice. But the finding from this study showed that age of students affects their level of maturity but not as a predictor for involvement in examination malpractices.

The finding of the study revealed that sex did not predict involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Based on the result of finding of the study, the finding of the study contradicted the finding of Omotere (2011) who attached sex of the learner as a factor for examination malpractices. Omotere (2011) noted that different views exist as to which sex involves more in examination malpractice. The absence of significant difference between the anxiety levels of males and female most especially prior to examination could be attributed to many factors. Lobel & Levanon (1988) argued that more males engage in examination malpractices than the females while Leming (1980) believes that there are more female involvement in examination malpractice than male. Thus, the finding of the study revealed that both male and female students equally involved in examination malpractices.

The result of findings from this study revealed that test anxiety predicted involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. The finding of the study agreed with the finding of Nelson (2001) when he asserted that examination itself causes anxiety to some students. Anxiety causes muscle tension which makes the brain to be unrelaxed thereby causing forgetfulness. During anxiety reactions or response, the heart, lungs, and other parts of the body work faster. According to Obidigbo (2008), he stated that the brain also releases the emergence (stress) hormone adrenaline and cortisol. Anxiety of students occurred as a result of ill preparedness of students for examination, playing away of leisure time, truancy from class and many more factors.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

1. Age did not predict students' involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools.
2. Sex of secondary school students did not determine their involvement in examination malpractices.
3. Test anxiety served as predictor of students' involvement in examination malpractices among secondary schools.
4. The age of secondary school students was significant in predicting students test anxiety in secondary school students.
5. The rate of examination malpractice was more among the male students than female secondary school students.

Recommendations

The researcher recommended the following as ways to tackle the problem of examination malpractice:

1. Students at all age should be with fear of punishment that may befall them if they engage in examination malpractices and this should be used to create fear in their heart.
2. Both male and female secondary school students should be given equal treatment so as not to give undue advantage for any sex to involve in examination malpractices.

3. Teachers, parents and school authorities should ensure that students are always prepared adequately and effectively to write examination through proper and active monitoring towards the reading and study of their subject.
4. (i) Parents should let students attain the recommended age of 10years before they are given admission to secondary schools.
(ii) Teachers and school authorities should always make use of age of the students as prerequisite for admission into secondary schools.
5. School management should put in more and extra effort into curbing of indiscipline act among the male secondary school students so as to reduce the high rate of examination malpractices.

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