

## Identification of the Reasons for Examination Malpractice among Student Nurses in Nursing Institutions in Imo State

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### Abstract

This research work was carried out to investigate the reasons for examination malpractice among students and teachers in the nine nursing institutions Imo State. Examination malpractice is a nagging problem afflicting the education industry in Nigeria. The study was carried out using a descriptive cross sectional survey research design. The population of the study includes the sample size for the study is 386 nursing students and 151 nursing lecturers in the various institutions of nursing in Imo State determined using Taro Yamane formula and selected using stratified, simple random and convenience sampling techniques. The majority of the nursing students highly agreed that lack of seriousness (2.84), craze for certificate (2.54), poor study habits (2.84), inadequate examination preparation (2.75), moral laxity (2.81) are reasons for examination malpractice in schools. The researchers recommended among others that School administration of various nursing schools should set up strong control and monitoring systems for detecting various forms of examination malpractice in different examination halls.

**Keywords:** *reasons, examination malpractice, student nurses, nursing institutions*

### Introduction

The success of an education system depends upon the effectiveness of its examination system as it is a fundamental component of teaching learning process. Examinations are arranged to evaluate the academic achievement of students and to know whether they have achieved a standard of academic learning and knowledge).<sup>1</sup> Examinations are considered the basis for promotion to higher classes; a source of motivation for learners for better studies; a basis for prediction about students' future education and job aptitudes.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, examination serves as a source for the assessment of students' achievement level and assists the teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and learning methods for future improvement.<sup>3</sup> Examination is the most practical and useful way to determine the extent to which the students have achieved the instructional objectives in particular course of study as planned. Examination will be valid, trustworthy and free of examinations malpractices for it to assess the academic achievement of students in an excellent and effective way. Examination serves as an instrument for decision-making and it always creates apprehension, uneasiness and anxiety in the heart of students and some other stakeholders. Teachers have been variously accused of abating examination malpractice.<sup>4</sup> Often times, teachers

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find it difficult to report cases of cheating for fear that students or their parents will confront them.<sup>5</sup> In order to avoid such confrontation, some teachers always overlook incidents of academic dishonesty by students. At times, they may prefer to leave the examination hall for a while or read a newspaper when they are supposed to be supervising the pupils.

## **Research Method**

### **Research Design**

A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was adopted for this study.

### **Area of Study**

This study on examination malpractice among students and teachers in nursing institutions in Imo State was carried out using the public, mission and private nursing institutions in Imo State.

### **Population of the Study**

The target population of student nurses are 2,836 which were gotten from the secretaries of the schools. These comprised of 865 nursing students in the Department of Nursing Science Imo State University (IMSU) Orlu, 432 in Imo State College of Nursing (ICON), 281 students in College of Nursing Sciences Emekuku (CONEM), 259 students in College of Nursing Sciences Amaigbo (CONSA), 266 in College of Nursing Science Mbano (CONSM), 237 in College of Nursing Science UmuloghoObowo (CONSULO), 128 in Merit College of Nursing Orlu (MCONSO), 121 in Princess College of Nursing Science MgbirichiOhajiEgbema (PCONSM), 247 in Ezeala College of Nursing Science (ECONS). A total of 209 teachers are in the schools.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

Multi stage sampling technique was used to select a sample of 284 respondents for the study. Firstly, stratified sampling technique was used to divide the target population into Ten (10) strata which comprises of Nine (9) nursing institutions and teachers formed a stratum. Secondly, Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique was used to select five (5) strata (institutions) for the study which gave every member of the target population equal chance of being chosen for the study.

Finally, convenience sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling technique was used to select a sample of 284 respondents for the study as every member of the target population may not be available during the time of the study which may be as a result of holidays or any other factors. These prompted the researcher to use convenience sampling technique.

Sample size was determined using Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = Sample size

N = population size

1 = Constant

e = Level of significance which is 0.05

Thus, the sample size of the students is 386 (10% attrition rate inclusive). This is 13.6% of the students population. The sample size for the teachers with 10% attrition rate is 151; this makes 72.2% the teachers population.

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### Inclusion criteria

- Must be a nursing student in Imo state.
- Must be a teacher in a nursing institution in Imo State
- Must be readily present at the time of the study
- Must have the willingness to participate in the study.

### Exclusion Criteria

- Student nurses outside Imo state who are indigenes of Imo state
- Unwilling nursing students and teachers

### Method of Data Collection

The researcher administered the instrument through five research assistants who were selected from Imo State and are familiar with the research environment. The research assistants were briefed on how to assist respondents for the purpose of the study. The five assistants helped in covering the 9 nursing institutions in Imo State. The researcher and her assistants did On- the- spot administration and retrieval of the instruments from respondents. In this process the researcher solicited for the cooperation of the school management and the students. Instructions were given on how to complete the questionnaire in order to safeguard errors due to misunderstanding of the questions. Respondents were encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire on the spot.

### Method of Data Analysis

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean which are descriptive statistics were used to answer research question 1 – 3 while regression analysis was used to test the stated hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. All the statistical analyses will be performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22.0.

### Ethical consideration

In order to conform to the ethical and legal standards of a scientific investigation, the relevant authorities of Nursing institutions used scrutinized the research work properly before granting permission for questionnaire administration. The participants had a thorough explanation of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The participants were assured of confidentiality of any information given.

### Results

**Table 1: Reasons for examination malpractice**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Lack of seriousness	157	115	10	104	2.84	Agree
2	Craze for certificate	52	198	42	94	2.54	Agree
3	Poor study habit	157	115	10	104	2.84	Agree
4	Ill health	80	31	189	86	2.27	Disagree
5	Poor remuneration	37	73	156	120	2.06	Disagree
6	Inadequate preparation for exams	104	167	31	84	2.75	Agree
7	Moral laxity and disrespect to rules and regulations	134	99	100	53	2.81	Agree
8	Poor teaching style	60	180	46	100	2.51	Agree

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9	Invigilators being lenient to indulging students	167	135	20	64	3.05	Agree
10	Yearly repetition of questions	40	46	149	151	1.93	Disagree
11	Inadequate number of qualified teachers	37	73	156	120	2.06	Disagree
12	Lack of punishment for defaulters	88	71	100	127	2.31	Disagree
13	Poor invigilation	52	198	42	94	2.54	Agree
14	Fear of failure	198	94	52	42	3.16	Agree
15	Conspiracy/collusion	60	180	46	100	2.51	Agree
	<b>Cumulative mean</b>					<b>2.54</b>	

Data on table 1 show the students' mean responses on the reasons for examination malpractice. Items 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14 and 15 have their mean scores above 2.50 (the mean mark). This implies that majority of the students agree that lack of seriousness (2.84), craze for certificate (2.54), poor study habits (2.84), inadequate examination preparation (2.75), moral laxity (2.81), poor teaching style (2.51), leniency towards indulging students (3.05), poor invigilation (2.54), fear of failure (3.16) and conspiracy (2.51) are reasons for examination malpractice. Meanwhile majority do not agree that ill health (2.27), poor remuneration (2.06), yearly repetition of questions (1.93), inadequate number of qualified lecturers (2.06) and lack of punishment for defaulters (2.31) are reasons for examination malpractice in nursing institutions.

## Discussion

The majority of the nursing students highly agree that lack of seriousness (2.84), craze for certificate (2.54), poor study habits (2.84), inadequate examination preparation (2.75), moral laxity (2.81), poor teaching style (2.51), leniency towards indulging students (3.05), poor invigilation (2.54), fear of failure (3.16) and conspiracy (2.51) are reasons for examination malpractice. Meanwhile majority do not agree that ill health (2.27), poor remuneration (2.06), yearly repetition of questions (1.93), inadequate number of qualified lecturers (2.06) and lack of punishment for defaulters (2.31) are reasons for examination malpractice in nursing institutions.

This finding is supported by the findings of Wilayat <sup>6</sup> who in a study on the causes, effects and solutions to examination malpractice in Ovia South West LGA of Edo state revealed that students regularly cheat in examinations as a result of poor preparation for examinations, craze for success and certificate and collusion among students and teachers.

Also supporting this finding are the findings of Ogunkoya <sup>7</sup> who in a study on perceived causes and solutions to examination malpractice in Asa LGA of Kwara state revealed that students cheat in examinations as a result of poor teaching method from teachers, poor study habits and fear of failure.

## Conclusion

Examination malpractice is a hydra headed monster which has eaten deep in the fabric of the education system. The nursing institutions are not left out. Students have become characterised with lazy attitudes towards study and learning which in turn leads to different forms of examination malpractice among the students.

## Reference

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