

The connection to educational leadership education essay

[Education](#)



Chapter One Introduction Nigeria's people and government see education as an instrument for national development (NPE 1977, 1981, 1998 & 2005). Education has been identified as one of the effective tools for cultural, social, economic and political development of a nation (Osa-Edoh & Agbonghale, 2005). According to Edobor & Ohanmu (2005), its functions of teaching, research, and public service are often pursued with a view to satisfying the goal of manpower development for the wider society. Similarly, education is the most important investment for making progress toward the international social development goals adapted by the Nigerian government (Makubuya, 2002). The value and functionality of any educational system lie in its ability to actualize the goals of education (Olatunbosun, 2009). Thus the government's development and reform agenda should rely on education as a tool (UNESCO, 2006). Nigeria's educational policy requires the national education curriculum to offer an equal opportunity for all citizens to progress and unite the country. The national school system should, therefore, be applicable to all and the progress level determined by the inherent ability of the learners (Nigerian Academy of Education, 2005). Effective school systems should have efficient mechanisms to measure and guide every individual's direction throughout the education process and eventually into the job market. The effectiveness of a school system can be measured by its ability to offer this guidance with no bias (Okebukola, 2005). Efforts to have the learners' knowledge, skills and ability scrutinized with the aim of offering educational direction has resulted in the adoption of examination processes in schools. In any educational system, the examination process makes the difference as far as quality education is concerned. Hence any action that

undermines examination poses a threat to the validity and reliability of examination results and certification (Olatunbosun, 2009). According to Osagiede (2005), examination is the process of evaluating the extent to which education has taken place in an individual. In addition, examination measures the extent to which the individual's personality, values and attitudes have developed and how much skill and knowledge have been acquired by the same person. Oluwatelure (2008) saw examination as one important activity of the academic community which falls within the scope of the concept of curriculum. The Oxford dictionary (2010) defined examination as " a practice in which the mental capacity of a learner on a given subject is tested to ascertain the existence of the skills learnt." Omoregie (2005) said examination is a tool in the educational system; an evaluation of the actual performance against the expected. Accordingly, the only way to know if what is taught is actually understood is to give some tests. Examination is used for the purpose of selection, placement, certification, and promotion (Iredia, 2002). Examination results act as guidance in important education practices such as promotions and entry into the job market. Therefore meaningful examination procedures are significant in shaping social and economic developmental aspects for a country. Any interference that can lead to inaccurate and unreliable examination results can therefore have devastating effects on the personnel resources and consequently the economy of a country (Unachukwu & Onunkwo, 2006). Such acts that attempt to manipulate the outcome of the examination to give a wrong picture of the learner effectively render the entire learning and teaching process useless. Lower achieving learners would want to enjoy the same

preferences as those with high scores in examination. This attitude may lead to all manner of education vices including examination malpractices (Ojerinde 2006 & WAEC Report, 2005). Malpractice can be defined as any deliberate act of wrongdoing contrary to the rules of the examination, designed to give a candidate an unfair advantage (World Bank Group, 2005). According to Nwahunanya (2008), examination malpractices are the actions that are geared towards enabling a learner to register satisfactory scores in an examination without engaging his or her independent skills and/or knowledge in that particular examination. Awanbor (2005a), noted that examination malpractice includes all unusual practices that give a candidate an easy path to gain a grade or a set of grades that are obviously above the candidate's mental ability or his/her state of readiness for that particular paper at that particular time. Therefore it can be concluded that whenever any of the rules that govern the process of examination are not followed by either the candidates or other stakeholders that are involved in the process, an examination malpractice has occurred (Omole, 2006). Umar (2004) maintained that the biggest avenue for examination malpractice were secondary schools. Background of the Study Examination malpractice is a social evil that can damage society to the extent of possibly leading to a failed state. It has very serious economic, political and social consequences (Olatunbosun, 2009). In the last ten years alone, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) nullified the results of 814, 699 candidates in its May/June examinations (Aminu, 2006). Considering the cost of buying examination forms alone, this amount is a waste of about 2.5 billion naira (\$16.7m) (Olatunbosun, 2009). Edobor & Ohannu (2005) traced the cause of

the problem of examination malpractice to the prevailing value system. According to them, money consciousness inherent in Nigerians has led youths in schools to cheat and to prefer shortcuts of getting certified rather than studying hard to acquire knowledge. As noted by Omoluabi & Uzoka (2006), the value system in Nigeria has broken down completely and so adults and youths alike act without moral scruples. This is one reason why examination malpractice still thrives despite its grave consequences on the social, political and economic structure of the nation. Corroborating, Fabunmi (2006) said that the collapse of the value system in the mid-70s led to various vices. Similarly, Ihejirika (2005) said it was the corollary of the takeover of schools by the Government. According to Jonathan (2005), the government of Nigeria took over all private schools in 1967 which resulted in the collapse of the whole educational system within the shortest possible time. Expanding, Fagbemi (2006) said that the take-over of missionary schools by the Federal government of Nigeria deprived the students of moral and religious instructions available in those schools. They became vulnerable to all sorts of evil tendencies, cheating at examinations, buying live examination questions, impersonating and copying. As a way of solving the problem of examination malpractice, Fagbemi (2005) suggested the re-establishment of moral and ethical values. Badmus (2006), Awanbor (2005), Nwadiani (2005), Okafor (2006), Ayuba (2006), Azare (2006), and Aminu (2006), identified school programs, teaching-learning environment, the teacher, the student, the overvalue of certificates, decadence in the Nigerian society, and parental support as some factors responsible for examination malpractice in the Nigerian educational system. In the past, school teachers

in Nigeria interacted with their students much more intimately at the school and the society levels (Ukeje, 2005). The teachers made efforts to learn more about their students' family background and acted as their parents while at school. A family-school bond was therefore very strong and parents were able to reinforce teachers' efforts at ensuring that the required education standards were adhered to in all its aspects. Parents, teachers and the society at large cooperated to ensure that education objectives were met and the talents of the gifted students were tapped appropriately (Ukeje, 2005). After the emergence of the Universal Primary Education, that was formally launched on September 30, 1999, all children of school age were compulsorily required to attend school. This caused a sudden surge of the number of students in schools which greatly outnumbered the available teachers and school facilities (Shonekan, 2007). Mass enrollment of students continued without corresponding intake of new teachers. This scenario made it difficult for the maintenance of the traditional parents-teachers cooperation, leaving each party to work independently. This robs students of what would have strengthened them academically; thus making them more vulnerable to examination malpractice. In addition, the learning and teaching process in the schools became difficult due to the large number of students assigned to each teacher. These consequently lowered the education standards across the country. At about this time, the country's focus was turning more to the paper qualification of graduates rather than the practical skills that they possessed. As a result, students started devising ways of showing proof of 'excellent qualification' which could be attained even in a poor learning and teaching environment (Fagbemi, 2008). As the work of

teachers became more and more difficult in delivering the expected results, they joined their students in a web of examination malpractice that later turned into a dangerous dragon that is difficult to silence (Omolewa, 2006). Examination malpractice in Nigeria has become very complicated. It was reported that some parents purchased question papers from examination bodies or bank officials. Examinees have been known to make multiple registrations. There have even been incidents of female examinees inserting their pictures in their answer scripts with self-addressed envelopes, implying a willing invitation to examiners (Nwahunanya, 2004). All these are indicative of the fact that examination malpractice which is one of the greatest problems in the conduct of examinations in Nigeria has assumed monumental dimensions (Osagiede, 2005). Ajao (2007) observed that examination malpractice is no longer a matter of indiscretion involving students. It has metamorphosed into organized crime controlled by syndicates with links in Ministries of Education and Public examination bodies. He further intimated the shocking revelation that the street value of revenue from examination fraud rose to 25 billion Naira (\$16. 7m) in 2006. This is a wake-up call for the Government and all stakeholders in education.

Statement of the Problem

The last two decades in Nigeria have witnessed an alarming rate of increase in incidents of examination misconduct (Olatunbosun, 2009). Evidence abounds of increasing involvement in examination malpractice by students, teachers, and parents (Vanguard, 2005). The incidents of examination malpractice are common everywhere in Nigeria and every examination season witnesses the emergence of new and ingenious ways of cheating (Olatunbosun, 2009). According to Cizek (2003),

examination malpractice is everywhere in colleges and universities. The alarming rate of its increase in Nigeria calls for novel ways to address the situation (Azuka, Alutu & Aluede, 2006). Orbih (2006) stated that examination malpractice is inversely proportional to rapid deterioration of our moral values. He added that there is need to address the problem at the source through a process of moral re-armament. This viewpoint that sees the problem as a moral issue is reminiscent of transformative education. Obikezie (2003) posited that transformative education entails creating something new or different through the remolding or reconfiguration of the constituent element of the old. Studies have been conducted on the meaning, causes and solutions to examination malpractice but there is dearth of research in the area of students' perception of examination malpractice (Iyamu, 2005). It is against this background that this research is investigating the perception of 12th grade students regarding examination malpractice in Christian and non-Christian private schools in Nigeria.

Connection to Educational Leadership Educational leaders are concerned about examination malpractice in Nigeria because of its far-reaching consequences on the education sector and the Nigerian economy. Oloyede (2006) intimated that the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), a body charged with the conduct of Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) in Nigeria cancelled an average of 10 percent of Post Primary exit examinations on the basis of examination malpractice between 1996 and 2005. In the same vein, Fabunmi (2006 p. 3) said that the Registrar of Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board raised an alarm over the incidence of examination malpractice in the university matriculation examination. In the year 2005,

17. 6% candidates had their results cancelled by the Board as against 5. 93% in the year 2004. There is need, therefore, to ensure that educational leadership is carefully selected so that the progress of the sector and that of the national economy are not compromised. There have been tendencies of haphazard political appointments of the leadership in the education sector without consideration for relevant qualification (Obanya, 2005). Such leaders may not possess the appropriate education ethics and may not understand the magnitude of the schools' compromise on the standards required by the law. According to (Obanya, 2005), the management of private schools should have the input of leaders with education background to ensure that important learning and teaching procedures are professionally monitored. These measures ensure that quality learning is achieved and reduces the temptations of cheating in examinations on the part of the students that can sometimes be fueled by unpreparedness (Obe, 2008). Purpose of the Research The purpose of the research was to investigate Christian private school students' perceptions of examination malpractice compared to that of their counterparts in non-Christian private schools in Nigeria in order to determine the role Christian education program plays in the elimination of examination malpractice. Research Questions Does the perception of students in Christian schools regarding examination malpractice differ from that of their counterparts in non-Christian private schools? Does the availability of qualified teachers in Christian schools influence the perception of students regarding examination malpractice? Does the availability of qualified teachers in non-Christian private schools influence the perception of students regarding examination malpractice? Assumptions It was assumed

that students participating in this study answered the survey questions honestly. Bias The potential bias of this study was the researcher's viewpoint that Christian schools do not cheat in examinations. This researcher is an employee of a private Christian school and currently serving as the Head of a large Christian school system in Nigeria. Additionally, this researcher believes in the biblical mandate conveyed in Proverbs 22: 6, which requires that children should be given a Christian upbringing and education. Scope of the Study/Limitation This study sought to investigate the perception of 12th grade students about examination malpractice as delineated in the statement of the problem. In summary, the study intended to investigate the postulation that moral beliefs have a strong impact on whether a person engages in academic dishonesty (Lambert, 2003) as borne out by the account of Orbih (2006) who saw examination malpractice as the corollary of the rapid deterioration of our moral values. The study was limited to these two categories of secondary schools in Nigeria for purposes of comparison in order to be able to ascertain the extent to which the moral content of Christian school education can influence students to shun examination malpractice. The study investigated if there was a tally between the perceptions of the subjects of the study regarding the selected variables as variables can be used to predict this kind of behavior (Ercegovac & Richardson, 2004). Definition of Terms Examination Malpractice: Any deliberate act of wrongdoing contrary to the rules of the examination, designed to give an unfair advantage (World Bank, 2005). Private Schools: An institution of learning that is fully independent of the government/bureaucratic red tapes in its governance and financing (Fadipe,

2007). Christian Private School: Faith-based institutions that are established on Christian virtues and are affiliated with a Christian church or agency (Fadipe, 2007). Non-Christian Private School: A school that is neither established on Christian virtues nor affiliated to a Church or agency (Fadipe, 2007). 12th Grade Students: These students are known in the Nigerian context as SS 3 students or Senior School Certificate students. The Senior School Certificate is issued by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO) (World Education News and Reviews (WENR) 2004). Qualified Teacher: Any teacher who has the minimum teaching qualification to teach in a secondary school in Nigeria. According to Teacher Registration Council Year Book (2002), the minimum teaching qualification approved by the National Policy on Education is the Nigeria Certificate in Education. Overview of the Design and Methodology of the Study The research design was a quantitative analysis study described by Gay and Airasian (2003) as a method based on the collection and analysis of numerical data usually obtained from questionnaires, tests, checklists and other formal paper-and-pencil. This quantitative study attempted to determine the perceptions of certificate class students about examination malpractice. The participants for this study were students in the 12th grade level (Certificate classes) from five Christian schools and seven non-Christian private schools in Nigeria selected through stratified random sampling. To assess perception of students towards examination malpractice, the researcher adapted the Nigerian University Students' Attitude to Examination Malpractice questionnaire consisting of 24 items (Ola-Obe, 1992, Alutu, 2003). The Adapted Questionnaire reconstructed for use in

Nigerian schools consists of 30 items. The data was analyzed using frequency counts that were converted to percentages on the dimension of the occurrence of cheating behavior as well as a test of difference of proportion, so that a comparison could be made between the perception of students in Christian and non-Christian private schools about examination malpractice. SummaryChapter one introduced the purpose for investigating the perception of certificate class students in Christian and non-Christian private schools in Nigeria about examination malpractice. It provided an introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, overview of the design and methodology of the study, basic assumptions, scope of the study/limitation, bias of the researcher, definition of terms, and a summary. The purpose of Chapter two was to review the literature available concerning examination malpractice. It examined all the relevant dimensions of the current literature in examination malpractice especially as they affected the variables of the study. Chapter three surveyed the methodology of the study including the questionnaire's population sample, permission of participation, design, validity and reliability, research analysis and review technique. Chapter four supplied the results of the study, while chapter five presented a summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study, as well as recommendations for further studies.