

PREDICTIVE DETERMINANTS OF TEACHERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES ON STUDENTS' EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE TENDENCY IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated predictive determinant of teachers' psychological variables on students' examination malpractice tendency in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Three research questions and corresponding three null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlation research design. The population of the study comprised all the 8916 teaching staff of the 933 basic schools in the 23 L.G.A of Rivers State. The sample size is 240 teachers. Stratified random sampling technique using 50% of the 23 L.G.As give 12 L.G.As with 446 public schools with 4808 teachers. Moreso, stratified random sampling technique using 5% of the 446 schools gave 240 public school teachers. Two self-designed non-cognitive instruments titled "Selected Psychological Variable Scale" (SPVS) and "Examination Malpractice Tendency Scale" (EMTS) were used for data collection. Face and content validities were determined by experts. Cronbach alpha was used to establish reliability coefficient of SPVS at 0.89 and EMTS at 0.77 respectively. Linear regression was used for data analysis using Statistical Packages in Social Sciences (SPSS). Attitude, self-concept and locus of control of teacher significantly predicts students examination malpractice tendency among JSSI students in Rivers State, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that school administrators should identify those teachers with negative attitude towards teaching for proper counselling by the school counsellors.

Keywords: Psychological variables (attitude, self-concept and locus of control) and examination malpractice tendency.

INTRODUCTION

Examination is a yardstick to measure students' performance and achievement based on specifically defined objectives. Examination could be internal, external or both as the case may be. The internal examinations conducted in our secondary schools today are: continuous assessment tests, terminal, annual or promotional examination. The external examinations are on the other hand, conducted by West African Examination Council and National Examination Council respectively. The examinations conducted by these examination bodies ranged from admission/entrance examinations to certificate examinations. Since examination whether oral, written or both is almost the only way of eliciting the extent required objective is learnt, or the extent one possesses required aptitude, attitude or intelligence in a particular area of interest, it ought to be done with every form of carefulness in order to remove intending irregularities.

Irregularities in any examination conducted will end up giving an error score of the examinees instead of the through scores thereby misrepresenting the ability level of the students. Examination malpractice could stem from the students, teachers, external invigilators, or mercenary hired from within. When there are irregularities in the school systems in examination conduct or in the marking process, it is called examination malpractice. Maduka in Wisdom Forward Nigeria Ltd (2010) saw examination as a way to ascertain how much of a subject matter in a particular field of study the candidate has mastered.

Examination malpractice could be seen as an act of aiding and abating irregularities in the examination processes. The processes are from the period of setting the examination, administration and marking of the scripts. The most commonly practiced examination malpractices in our secondary schools are through the use of handsets, impersonation, snatching and smuggling in of answer papers, dictation of answers by invigilators or examiners, solving of question on the board in the case of essay examination, and swapping of answers booklets after examination. In corroboration to the examination malpractice techniques are the ones identified by Yakubu (2005) that students jot in their pants, breasts, shoes, text messages, storing information in calculators etc. The attendant effect of getting certificate or promotion through examination is the act of promoting one to a level of confusion and incompetence. The most likely characteristics on someone who received certificate or promotion as a result of examination are seen in the eloquence flaunted in spoken language, writing skills, behaviour presentation and work-people management. Examination malpractice is capable of ruining the future of somebody or an organization. Wisdom Forward Nigeria Ltd (2010:1) outlined the following as the disadvantages of examination malpractices in secondary schools to include:

- Not being able to defend the certificate (failure in job performance)
- Perpetual condemnation of the conscience
- Possibility of unfulfilled dreams and vision, if the student is rusticated from school or terminated at the working place.
- Spillover effect borne by parents and other relatives of culprits.
- Lack of ability to study or work hard in their studies.

The disadvantages associated with examination malpractice are not to be reckoned with, but distracts arduous academic activities in the schools. To this end, the schools should make their classrooms conducive enough in order to discourage examination malpractices. No wonder The Daily Times Editorial in Yakubu (2005) advised that the improvement and expansion of infrastructure in schools, proper funding and improvements in teachers' remuneration and conditions of services will reduce examination malpractices in Nigeria. The improvement in teaching strategy is a milestone to the extermination of examination malpractices in our secondary schools. In addition to this, Schneider, Gruman, & Coutts (2012, p. 196) suggest that improving student's performance can be implemented by changing teaching strategies within the classroom. Once the teaching strategies are effectively implemented, an average student will be able to acquire enough knowledge that will boost his/her confidence to write well in an examination without any form of dependence.

Attitude could be seen as a behavioural expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction toward a person, place, thing or event. Person's negative or positive disposition towards a phenomenon could be tagged an attitude. Psychology Glossary (2016) saw an attitude as affective feelings of liking or disliking towards an object (which can be basically anything) that has an influence on behaviour. Kiragu in Kurgat and Gordon (2014) notes that the success of a

teacher in classroom teaching ought to be evidenced, not only by professional records but also by student acquisition of skills as set out in the subject syllabus. This goes a long way to depict the fact that, if the students' success will be majorly tied and assessed on one student to many assessors using practical approaches to issues other than the normal examination that they take, then examination malpractice will definitely become the thing of the past. Cartwright (2012) opined that many things have shown to have an impact in student's performance in the classroom. In the same understanding, Schneider, Gruman and Coutts (2012) submitted that a desired outcome may not occur due to an individual's inability to carry out the intended behaviour. Schneider, Gruman, and Coutts, 2012, (p. 196) however advised that the teacher must be willing to change in order to initiate an effective program. Vasuadevan (2013) found out that teachers' attitude and teachers' commitment positively and significantly influence the students' proficiency in English Language. What this entails is that way and manner the teachers behave in the school will not only enhance students performance but has attendant positive or negative effect on examination malpractice.

Locus of control is the place that we attribute sources or failure is a given responsibility. When the place of failure or success is attributed to external factors, it is tagged external locus of control. Meaning that chief in control of behaviour that lead to failure or success is external. On the other hand, when the basis of success or failure stemmed from inside of the individual, it is called internal locus of control. Rottter in Umukoro (2014) has it that locus of control is the way we attribute the sources of factors controlling our behaviour, actions, achievement or failure. Self concept as seen by Schneider, Gruman and Coutts (2012) reported that self-concept is feeling, attitude and perceptions that students hold about their academic ability.

Statement of the Problem

Examination malpractice has been a monster in the educational system. It has been on wide spread majorly from the period of EXPO 1977 till date. Some students' abilities have become a mirage when it comes to getting their actual scores as a result of the infiltration of error scores. The tendency to cheat in an examination is a better option to lackadaisical disposition to hard work where examination malpractice becomes a norm. The rate by which the teachers' are directly involved in examination malpractice is calling for urgent state and national attention. Some of the teachers may have involved themselves in this ugly and unaccepted act due to the fact that they befriend their students or try to cover up their incompetence. The quality of graduates from our secondary schools is in the hands of failure, disorganization, grammatical plunders and serious jobbers in the society. Hence the researcher is bordered on the psychological variables that can predict students' examination malpractice tendency.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to establish to predictive determinants of psychological variables on examination malpractice tendency in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically put, the study sought to:

- 1) Find out the predictive determinant of attitude on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- 2) Ascertain the predictive determinant of locus of control on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

- 3) Investigate the predictive determinant of self-concept on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- 1) What is the predictive determinant of attitude on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- 2) What is the predictive determinant of locus of control on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- 3) What is the predictive determinant of self-concept on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level.

- 1) Attitude is not a significant predictive determinant of examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- 2) Locus of control is not a significant predictive determinant of examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
- 3) Self-concept is not a significant predictive determinant of examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlation research design. The population of the study comprised all the 8916 teaching staff of the 933 basic schools in the 23 L.G.A of Rivers State. The sample size is 240 teachers. Stratified random sampling technique using 50% of the 23 L.G.As give 12 L.G.As with 446 public schools with 4808 teachers. More, stratified random sampling technique using 5% of the 446 schools gave 240 public school teachers. Two self-designed non-cognitive instruments titled “Selected Psychological Variable Scale” (SPVS) and “Examination Malpractice Tendency Scale” (EMTS) were used for data collection. Face and content validities were determined by experts. Cronbach alpha was used to establish reliability coefficient of SPVS at 0.89 and EMTS at 0.77 respectively. Linear regression was used for data analysis using Statistical Packages in Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS

The results of findings of the study are presented as shown below.

Research Question One

What is the predictive determinant of attitude on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school (JSSI) students in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 1a: Model summary of attitude as a predictive determinant of examination malpractice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.523 ^a	.273	.271	1.24479

Table 1a shows that R value is .523, $R^2=.273$ and coefficient of determinism of 27.3%. This shows that attitude contribute only 27.3% of examination malpractice tendency in Rivers State while 72.7% is contributed by some other factors.

Hypothesis One

Attitude is not a significant predictive determinant of examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 1b: t-test associated with linear regression of attitude on examination malpractice tendency

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	17.583	1.859		9.458	.000
Attitude	.524	.050	.523	10.426	.000

Table 1b has it that with degree of freedom of 289, the t-test value is 10.426. $t(10.426)$, $df(289)$, $p<0.000$. The calculated probability value of 0.05 is greater than the critical value of 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant contribution of attitude on examination malpractice in JSS I in Rivers State. $Y = AB + X$. $Y = 17.583 + 0.524$.

Research Question Two

What is the predictive determinant of locus of control on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 2a: Model summary of locus as a predictive determinant of examination malpractice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.226	.051	.041	5.80871

a. Predictors: (Constant), locus of control

Table 2a revealed that the coefficient of determinism of locus of control on examination malpractice tendency is (R^2) 0.051. This implies that locus of control accounts for up to 5.1% of the tendency to examination malpractice of JSSI students in basic schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two

Locus of control is not a significant predictive determinant of examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school (JSSI) students in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2b: t-test associated with linear regression of locus of control on examination malpractice tendency

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	28.520	2.080		13.709	.000
Attitude	.227	.056	.232	4.055	.000

Table 2b shows that with the degree of freedom of 248, the t calculated value is 4.055. $t(4.055)$, $df(289)$, $p > .000$. The t-test associated with linear regression showed that p critical value of 0.05 is greater than the calculated significant value of 0.000. By implication, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, locus of control is a significant determinant of examination malpractice tendency in basic schools in Rivers, State. $Y = AB + X^2$. $Y = 28.520 + 0.227$

Research Question Three

What is the predictive determinant of self-concept on examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 3a: Model summary of self-concept as a predictive determinant of examination malpractice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.247 ^a	.061	.059	1.15909

Table 3a shows that R value is .247, $R^2 = .061$ and coefficient of determinism of 6.1%. This shows that self-concept contributes only 6.1% of examination malpractice tendency in JSS secondary schools in Rivers State while 93.9% is contributed by some other factors.

Hypothesis Three

Self-concept is not a significant predictive determinant of examination malpractice tendency of junior secondary school teachers in junior secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	14.248	1.561		10.655	.000
Self-concept	.052	.042	.247	13.026	.000

Table 3b has it that with degree of freedom of 289, the t-test value is 13.026. $t(13.026)$, $df(289)$, $p > 0.000$. The calculated probability value of 0.05 is greater than the critical value of 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is a significant contribution of self-concept on teachers' examination malpractice tendency in JSSI secondary schools in Rivers State. $Y = AB + X$. $Y = 40.723 + .052$.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussions of findings are provided thus:

Attitude and Examination Malpractice Tendency

It was found out that there is a significant contribution of attitude on examination malpractice in JSS I in Rivers State. $Y = AB + X$. $Y = 17.583 + 0.524$. the findings agrees with the definition of attitude given by Psychology Glossary (2016) as an affective feelings of liking or disliking towards an object (which can be basically anything) that has an influence on behaviour.

Locus of Control and Examination Malpractice Tendency

It was revealed that locus of control is a significant determinant of examination malpractice tendency in basic schools in Rivers, State. $Y = AB + X^2$. $Y = 28.520 + 0.227$. Since Rottter in Umukoro (2014) saw locus of control as the way we attribute the sources of factors controlling our behaviour, actions, achievement or failure. Therefore, it goes a way to suggest that students in the same manner believes that since some of their teachers' behaviour is aiding examination malpractice then the success in an examination is irrespective of the source.

Self-concept and Examination Malpractice Tendency

It was discovered that there is a significant contribution of self-concept on teachers' examination malpractice tendency in JSSI secondary schools in Rivers State. $Y = AB + X$. $Y = 40.723 + .052$. If students' perceptions' of teachers' ability and behaviour is very low, they tend to develop methods to excel first in any given examination. This assertion is just embedded in the definition given by Schneider, Gruman and Coutts (2012) that self-concept is feeling, attitude and perceptions that students hold about their academic ability

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the tendency of students to cheat in an examination is to a great extent dependent on teachers' psychological disposition in the classroom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that:

- 1) School administrators should identify those teachers with negative attitude towards teaching for proper counselling by the school counsellors.
- 2) The teachers should let the students understand on time that the onus to perform falls on them irrespective of the teachers teaching ability.
- 3) Teachers should have positive perceptions on their personality not to indulge in teaching malpractice

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