
The Games Students Play: A Transactional Analysis Perspective of Examination Malpractice

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Abstract: *The study explored the nature and causes of examination malpractice in Nigerian Universities from a transactional analysis perspective. The menace of examination malpractice in Nigerian Universities has reached an alarming proportion such that all stakeholders ought to make concerted effort to uproot this cankerworm that has eaten deep into the root and fabric of our educational system. The pervasive nature of the problem of examination malpractice is exhibited by such unethical behavior as copying from other students, begging lecturers for assistance, carrying foreign relevant materials into the examination hall, electronic dubbing and even parents going to beg for marks on behalf of their children. The study used both the primary and secondary sources of data collection. The data collected were subjected to analysis using simple percentages. Chi-square distribution was employed to test the hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed that a positive change in the attitude and behavior of the students would have a significant effect in reducing or eradicating the problem of examination malpractice in Nigerian Universities. Based on these findings, the study recommended training in Transactional Analysis to help bring about the needed change by the students. It is also recommended that all stakeholders, the government, - management of Educational Institutions, lecturers and parents of students should play active roles in bringing about the needed change.*

Keywords: *Transactional Analysis, Examination Malpractice, Ego States, Psychological Position*

1. Introduction

Examination malpractice which is an act of breaking the law or the rules of examination by students in order to gain some advantage has consistently remained a bane of Nigerian educational system. This problem is so endemic and pervasive that it permeates almost all states of the country and all levels of education. The examination system has degenerated to an extent that its validity and reliability are questionable. However, we believe that examination still remain the pivotal point around which the whole system of education revolves and the success or failure of the system of examination is indeed an indicator of the success or failure of our system of education. The consequences of examination malpractice to any nation are multifarious and it therefore raises the question of ambivalence. According to Ijaiya (2001), examination malpractice indicates a declining quality of education. This implies that the quality of education in Nigeria is low and it portends great danger for our national development. Should we allow this anomaly to continue? Since examination malpractice has become a stigma in our educational system there is need for all stakeholders to rise up and confront this problem frontally so that it can be totally eradicated. The study attempts an exploration of the causes and nature of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities, from the transactional analysis perspective. Strategies for eliminating or reducing the level of examination malpractice in our higher institutions are also recommended.

1.1 Research Problem

The menace of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities has reached an alarming proportion such that all stakeholders ought to make concerted effort to uproot this cankerworm that has eaten deep into the roots and fabric of our educational system. Despite the fact that all universities in Nigeria have rules and regulations guiding the conduct of examination and they also have examination malpractice committees that try offenders and recommend different degrees of punishment including expulsion, the practice of examination malpractice continues unabated. Is it that this problem has no solution? It is believe that examination malpractice is an attitudinal and behavioral problem. As a result, efforts aimed at solving this problem, should be focused on changing the negative attitude and behavior of students that make them commit examination malpractice. Basic to this change in attitude and behavior of the students is (i) an understanding of the reasons why they behave the way they do. (ii) What experiences and influences have shaped whom they are (iii) what values and beliefs are important to them (iv) what are the triggers that prompt them to commit examination malpractice and (v) what drives them and pushes their buttons. This

study focuses on an exploration of the causes and nature of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities from a transactional analysis perspective.

1.2 Research Objectives

The major objective of this paper is to explore the nature of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities from a transactional analysis perspective. Other objectives of this study are:

1. To examine the causes of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities from a transactional analysis perspective
2. To suggest and recommend strategies for eradicating or reducing the level of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Transactional Analysis

Transactional Analysis is both a system for defining and analyzing what transpires between people when they attempt to communicate. Berne (1964) developed the original theory of Transactional Analysis. He postulated that a personality is constituted of three ego states. The three ego states are the Parent, Adult and Child – each with an important function. The Parent ego state represents all the attitudes and behavior that we have copied from our parents and parent substitutes. As Berne (1964) observed, regardless of whether the parent is rebuking, nurturing and punitive or consoling, the parent is still an authority and command. Awareness of our parent gives us more choice over what we do.

The adult ego state can deal rationally and objectively with reality. Unless a person has adult self-awareness, he or she may behave inappropriately from the parent or child ego state. But when the adult serves as the executive, a person takes full responsibility for the thoughts, feelings and behavior of all the three ego states (Dusay, 1972). Learning to make decisions, seeing them through, changing them when appropriate, and moving on to the next problem are signs of a winner, of an autonomous person (James and Jongward, 1976).

The Child ego State is made up of the little boy or girl we once were. It is our inner world of feeling and experience. According to Berne (1972), there are three parts to the child; the natural child, the little professor and the adapted child. The natural child is affectionate, impulsive; sensuous and does what comes “Naturally”. However, the natural child is also fearful, self-indulgent, self centered, and aggressive. A healthy happy person expresses the Natural Child appropriately every day. The Adult and the Little Professor make a good team. The adapted child is the one who modifies his behavior under the parental influence. He behaves as father or mother wanted him to behave, compliantly or pre-cautiously, for example, he adapts by withdrawing or whinnying. A person can feel, smell, touch, speak, look, and act from each ego state. Sometimes these ego states harmonize, sometimes they are in conflict. Some people respond more from one ego state than the others.

2.1.1 Transactions

Anything that happens between people will involve a transaction between their various ego states. All transactions can be classified as complementary or parallel, crossed or ulterior. A complementary transaction occurs when the message sent gets the predicted response from the other person. For example, an Adult stimulus ideally elicits an Adult response. But if the Adult stimulus gets a Child or Parent response, a crossed transaction takes place. Loffredo, (2004) observed that as long as the transaction is parallel; dialogue or transactions can go on indefinitely. But real communication is short-circuited whenever crossed transaction occurs. Crossed transactions are a frequent source of pain between people.

Berne (1964), maintained that the most complex type of transaction is the ulterior transaction. When an ulterior message is sent, it is often disguised in a socially acceptable way. For example, if a car salesperson says to a customer, “This is our finest sports car, but it may be too racy for you”, he or she is sending a message that can be heard by either the customer's Adult ego state or Child ego state. If the customer's Adult hears, the response may be “Yes, you're, right considering the requirements of my job”. “If the customer's Child hears, the response may be; “I'll take it any way. It's just what I want”. All games have an ulterior transaction.

2.1.2 Life Positions

The way we feel about ourselves and others determines to a large extent the kinds of transactions we make with other people, the kinds of stroke we give and seek and the kinds of games we play. Harries (1969) postulated that the psychological positions we take about our own worth and the worth of others basically fall into four patterns. The first is the winner's position, but even winners may occasionally have feelings that resemble the other three.

The first position: "I'm OK, You're OK" is potentially a mentally healthy position. If realistic people with this position about themselves and others can solve their problems constructively, they accept the significance of other people and feel, "Life is worth living". The second position: "I'm OK, You're not-OK" is taken by people who feel victimized, or persecuted. They blame others for their miseries. They feel, "Your life is not worth much". The third position: I'm not-OK; You're OK is common to persons who feel powerless in comparison with others. They feel, "My life is not worth much". The fourth position: "I'm not-OK, You're not-OK" is taken by people who lose interest in living. In extreme cases, they commit suicide and/or homicide. They feel, "Life isn't worth living at all. According to Transactional Analysts Harris (1961), Albano (1974), Jongward (1976), the strength of the life positions probably accounts for a great deal of our difficulty in relating to others.

2.1.3 Life Scripts

In the life of every individual, the dramatic life events, the roles that are learned, rehearsed, and acted out, are originally determined by a "Script". A script is like a blueprint for a life plan. This life plan is based on a person's self-concept developed by interacting with circumstances and significant authority figures. For example, a little boy who learns to think of himself as stupid later begins to act stupid. He may fail in school and become a job loser. According to Karpman (1968), the dramatic script roles we play can be recognized as the **Persecutor**, the **Victim**, or the **Rescuer**. A prosecutor sets unnecessarily strict limits on behavior or enforces rules with brutality. A Victim feels poor me and seems unjustly persecuted. A Rescuer, under the guise of being helpful, keeps others dependent. Every person from time to time plays the part of Persecutor, Victim or Rescuer, sometimes switching from one role to another. For example, a person who acts like a victim may make others feels guilty, thus prosecuting them.

2.2 Games Students Play

In Transactional Analysis a game is a recurring set of complementary transactions often repetitious and superficially plausible, but with an ulterior motive, a series of moves with a snare of gimmick (Berne 1966). The essential feature of each game is the culmination of pay-off for the person who initiated the game. The payoff does not come in cash or high numerical tabulations. The payoff is in feelings, and this can come in many forms – anger, increased distrust, disappointment, vengeance and heightened sense of superiority or inferiority, to name a few. Students may use their feeling to get sympathy from lecturers or fellow students, to hurt them further, to close or widen the psychological distance between them.

According to Albano (1974), all games however, represent an attempt to avoid honest, open transaction. Student involvement in examination malpractice can be likened to transactional analysis psychological games. Students play these games to gain undue advantage by manipulating the rules of examination. In this section we use Transactional Analysis to analyze the nature and type of examination malpractice committed by university students.

2.2.1 Types of Games

2.2.1.1 Copying From the Original (CFO)

The prevalence of Examination Malpractice among students in the university is demonstrated in the Game we call copying from the original (CFO). This game is played by majority of students who lack self confidence and have no faith in their ability to pass. Their psychological life position is I'm not ok – you're ok or I'm not ok – you're ok. The basic thing is that they define themselves as not ok. This Game can be played from the parent Ego State of the student who might have observed other students cheat in Examination and go scot-free, or those who have cheated at lower levels (i.e in secondary school) before getting to the university. The act of cheating in examination is tape recorded into their brain and they do it anytime they have the opportunity.

The first step or move in this game is for the student to copy materials they believe is relevant to the examination. The next move is for them to smuggle the material into the examination centre or hall. Finally when they get into the examination hall with the foreign material, they copy from it if the invigilator is not very observant, thereby committing examination malpractice. If they are successful their payoff is a heightened sense of superiority. However if they are caught the payoff is disappointment and a feeling of inferiority. The motive for playing this game is to pass by all means.

From our observation there are numerous ways in which students who play the CFO game smuggle unauthorized materials into the examination hall. The foreign material can be smuggled into the examination hall concealed in; the Brazier of the student (female); inside the shoes of the students; inside the head-tie or Hijab; inside buttoned Neck collars of male students; inside the belt of both male and female students; inside four figure tables; writing on toilet paper; writing on handkerchief; inside student's pockets, etc

2.2.1.2 Electronic Dubbing

A variation of the above game is played by those who receive answers through text messages with the connivance of some other persons outside the examination Hall. We refer to this type of cheating in game parlance as “Electronic dubbing”. Included here also are those who store relevant information in their phone into the Hall. An advance version of electronic dubbing is browsing the internet for answers right inside the Hall.

2.2.1.3 Giraffing

This is another very common game played by students who commit examination malpractice. From our observation, no matter how strict or vigilant an invigilator is, it is most often very difficult to prevent “Giraffe” players from playing their games. When they are at it, it seem as if their neck becomes elastic and elongated with their eye balls rolling from one side to the other, copying from those who are close to them. Some students are so perfect at this game that they can copy from somebody who sits two rows in front of them. Some students play this Giraffing game impulsively such that the only way an invigilator can stop them is to tie their neck, which is not possible. To many students, this is a game of survival. They want to pass by all means despite their lack of preparation. Some adept and compulsive players of Giraffing do copy just from anybody close to them that is writing. They don't care whether what the person is writing is relevant or not.

2.2.1.4 Expo

The Game of “EXPO” is played by students who go about looking for ways and means of seeing the examination questions before the examination is taken. They do this by bribing or befriending secretaries who type examination questions. The adept players of the “EXPO” game move from one lecturer's office to another asking for areas of concentration. If by chance they get any area of concentration, they use the information as a lead in playing the game we call “copying from the Original”. We have heard the story of a lecturer who leaked his questions to his girlfriend who leaked the questions to her student boyfriend who subsequently photocopied and sold copies of those questions to his own friends. On the day of the examination, those who got the Expo went to the examination Hall with prepared answers and they were caught. The lecturer subsequently lost his job and the EXPO players were expelled from the school. All examination malpractice games are bad and they always culminate in sadness and sorrow for those who are caught. In this game like every other game you cannot win all the time. Every day, they say is for the thief, but one day is for the owner.

2.2.1.5 Follow Up (Beggy – Beggy) Or Sorting

The game we call “Follow Up” (Beggy – Beggy) or “Sorting” is played from the child Ego state of the student who tries to hook the lecturers nurturing parent ego state. The students here use their little professor (part of their child ego state) to manipulate their lecturers to help or assist them with higher grades than they merit. While at this game the students give lots of stories or reasons for seeking help ranging from “oh I lost my father and I travelled home”, “I have been sick for quite some time”, “I was sick during the examination”, “I am having family problems”, “my parents are divorced”, “I am having spiritual problems such that when I read it evaporates from my head in the examination Hall”.

To an aware observer, all these are lame excuses and pretext to hook the lecturer into their examination malpractice game. Since this game cannot succeed without the consent of the lecturer, it can be stopped or easily prevented from being played by the lecturer refusing to yield to their plea. This game as we observed is played mostly by students who lack self confidence and have no faith in their ability to pass. Surprisingly some brilliant students do play this game too. One can rightly say that those who play this game of Beggy – Beggy will graduate with “B.Sc or B.A (Beggy – Beggy)” while those who indulge in the game of copying from the original or Giraffing will graduate with B.Sc or B.A (copy – copy)”, if they are lucky not to be caught.

2.2.1.6 Rub Your Back – You Rub My Back

The game of I RUB YOUR BACK – YOU RUB MY BACK is played by students whose psychological life position is I'M not OK – You're OK. They parade and frequent lecturers offices, running errands for the lecturers. Some go as far as buying gifts, recharge card etc, for lecturers. They do these with the hope that the eyes that see each other during the day cannot forget each other during the night. It is their believe that when they rub the lecturer's back by (buying gifts, and frequent visits and running errands) the lecturer should reciprocate by passing them if they fail or give them higher scores than they deserve. The danger of this game to the players is that most lecturers may refuse to reciprocate. This game is very easy to stop as long as the lecturers refuse to play.

2.2.1.7 Abrakadabra

The game of ABRAKADABRA is played by students who want to bamboozle the lecturers and pass their examination, without writing the examination by themselves. They beg or hire people to write their examination for them. We have observed a great number of times when imposters are apprehended in examination halls and they took to their heels. Why would a student register for an examination if he is not ready to read and do the examination by himself? Those students who play this game are not unaware of the penalty for this type of crime, but they believe that they are smart and will not be caught. At this juncture, let us ask one pertinent question: of what value is a certificate if the person graduates by playing any or all of the above stated games as his survival strategy? Such certificate, according to us, is not worth more than the sheet of paper upon which it is written. To play this game, the imposter and the student exchange pictures on the examination card. The passport photograph of the imposter would be on the examination card, bearing the registration number of the criminal student.

Another variation of the game of Abrakadabra (the more you see the less you understand) is that the student and the imposter could both be together in the same hall writing the examination. The trick is that the registered student will right a wrong registration number on his answer booklet while the imposter writes the student's correct registration number. Most often such criminal students would just while away the time in the examination hall writing nothing or writing nonsense, while the imposter writes his examination for him.

2.3 Transactional Analysis of Causes of Examination Malpractice

2.3.1 I'm Not Ok you're Ok

Many students have defined themselves negatively. They do not have faith in themselves and no faith in their ability to pass examination on their own. As a result they devise all sort of means which they believe will help them to pass examination. In essence they feel they are not Ok as students, they need the help of lecturers or their fellow students to pass their examination. In this group, you find those who go from office to office begging lecturers to help them. This group of students also try to make themselves ok in the examination hall by looking at the work of other students who sit close to them. These students whose psychological life position is I'm not ok – you're ok play the criminal game called GIRAFFING, COPYING FROM THE ORIGINAL, STUPID, etc. they always play the role of victim in the Kappan Triangle. If they eventually graduate using this method their degree to me is nothing but B.A or B.Sc “Beggy – Beggy”

2.3.2 I'm not Ok - You're not Ok

Students who adopt this psychological life position are very difficult to deal with. They neither place any value on themselves nor others including their lecturers. This is a pathological position. They may commit other serious crimes apart from examination malpractice. Majority of this group of students join cults and indulge in drug and alcohol. They can maim, inflict harm or even kill other students. This group of students hardly obeys examination rules and regulations. When caught cheating in the examination hall they easily turn violent. There are situations where you find a student insulting or even trying to fight with an invigilator in the examination hall. They do not care about the consequences of their action because of their life positions. They are losers.

2.3.3 I'm Ok you're not Ok

Students in this life position feel like he or she is Ok while others are not Ok. This type of student could be very brilliant and hardworking but yet commit or engage in examination malpractice. They play the role of rescuers while in the examination hall. They open their answer booklets for other students to copy. They may write answers on their questions papers and transfer to others thereby colluding to cheat.

However, we observed that many of the students who play the role of rescuer are students who have low self-worth and consequently look for other people problems – so that they can find solution and thus bolster their own sense of self-esteem and importance. Many of these students who try to rescue others in the examination hall do not know the answers themselves. But most often they pretend to others that they are Ok and sometimes even prompt others to copy from them. Maybe their philosophy is that if they are going to fail, they will not fail alone. How do you explain a situation where a lecturer marks about ten answer scripts and find the same answer for a particular question but yet all wrong. This shows that the RESCUER they copied from does not know the correct answer himself. This practice is so pervasive that sometimes when you invigilate an examination, you find many students copying from just anybody around them who is writing.

There was a particular case of a student copying from a mad student who has just returned from a mental home. The madman, who has not been in school for over a year, entered the examination hall and started writing, a student was found copying from the madman. This shows that out of desperation they just copy from anybody who is writing because they have defined themselves negatively.

2.3.4 I'm Ok you're Ok

This is a psychologically healthy position taken by students who define themselves and others positively. They believe they and others are worthwhile. This group of students believes they are Ok and that the lecturers are Ok. They do not play any negative self destructive game. They do not engage in examination malpractice. They are always serious and hardworking. They focus their attention on their studies and manage their time effectively. They attend lectures regularly and submit their assignment on time. They may not graduate with a first class, but they are winners. Students who are able to change their life position to I'm Ok, you're Ok will be free from harmful games of examination malpractice.

2.4 Application of Transactional Analysis Strategies to Curb Examination Malpractice

From the beginning of its inception by Eric Berne, (1960) Transactional Analysis was designed as a contractual, cognitive (“Adult” centered), behavioral (transactional) group therapy. The premise was that if people become aware of their transactional behavior, in particular, their games and the underlying script, they would be able to modify their lives in a positive direction. Consequently, a very important therapeutic function was to provide “permission” to sustain the change against social and internal pressures to maintain the status quo. The implication of the permission transaction is that students need guidance and counseling on the need to redefine their loser scripts to winner scripts. Knowledge of Transactional Analysis could help students understand themselves, know why they get involved in examination malpractice change those things about their life that are unfulfilling, unrewarding, and even tragic to their life script for a winner script. The knowledge of Transactional Analysis will help them change from a NOT Ok position to an Ok position. The students should be trained to use their adult Ego State as the executive part of their personality. This is the rational decision making part of the personality that can make a student assert his self confidence in writing examination. Using the Adult Ego State, a student learns how to listen

and ask questions when he does not understand any concept discussed in class. To manage his time effectively, a student has to adopt his Adult Ego state a greater percentage of the time. This will enable him to focus and direct his energy towards his academic pursuits.

The student adopting his Adult and Natural child Ego State as well as the little professor uses a questioning and listening process to help him get the best out of his lecturer. A good understating of the topics discussed during lectures places a student on a higher pedestal in readiness for examination.

The intuitive power and creativity of the little professor will, on the other hand add significance to the relationship between a student and the lecturers. The little professor may help a student to; intuitively sense the causes of a long standing problem before all the data is in; Find new and creative approaches and solutions to problems; Participate actively in the class discussion; Soothe over difficult examination situations and avoid getting into a crossed transaction with his lecturer or colleague. According to James and Jongword (1971), the adult and the little professor make a good team. Adopting the Adult Ego State and the little professor a student can solve any problem.

3. Research Methodology

The study used a combination of questionnaire and interview methods to gather relevant information on the study. 300 questionnaires were administered on randomly selected students of University of Abuja, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Nassarawa State University Keffi (100 questionnaires per University). The universities were selected on the basis of convenience. A total of 270 questionnaires were filled and returned by the respondents giving a response rate of 90percent. The responses in the returned questionnaires were scrutinized for completeness and errors. At the end of the exercise 260 passed the test and were therefore admitted for analysis. The questionnaire administered was followed by telephone interviews with some of the respondents who were required to supply more details. Data analysis was both descriptive and inferential. Simple percentages and chi-square distribution were employed in the analysis.

4. Results and Discussions

This section deals with the analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire respondents. For the purpose of clarity, simple percentages and chi-square distribution were employed in the analysis.

Table 1: Have you ever been engaged in one or more unethical actions during examination in the past year?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	180	69.23
No	80	30.77
Total	260	100.00

Source: Questionnaire Administered, 2014

In the above table, out of 260 respondents, 180 (69.23%) said that they had engaged in one or more unethical actions during examination in the past year. The remaining 80 (30.77%) respondents claimed they had never engaged in any unethical actions. The respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not they were aware that such unethical actions constitute examination malpractice and all those who indicated that they had engaged in unethical actions, also indicated that they were aware that such actions constitute examination malpractice. However, they also claimed they believed they would not be caught.

Many types of examination malpractice are committed by students in the university. As revealed in table 3, the most common type or method of examination malpractice involved Giraffing-copying from other students with or without their knowledge, (47.7%), begging fellow students for assistance in the examination hall (30.8%), begging lecturers for assistance in the examination hall (11.5%), Smuggling foreign materials into the examination hall (7.7%), Electronic Dubing (2.3%). This is a confirmation of the fact that acts of unethical practices that constitute examination malpractice actually exist in many universities in Nigeria.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the most frequently used method of Examination Malpractice

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Begging fellow students for assistance in the Examination hall.	80	30.8
Begging lecturers for assistance after writing the examination; (sorting)	30	11.5
Giraffing – Secretly copying from other students with or without their knowledge.	124	47.70
Smuggling foreign (unauthorized) materials into the examination hall	20	7.7
Impersonation – Asking someone else to write exam for you.	-	-
Electronic dubbing – storing relevant materials inside the phone or calculator or browsing the internet for answers inside the examination hall.	6	2.30
	260	100

Source: Questionnaire administered, 2014

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents on the Causes of Examination Malpractice

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Influence of friends	40	15.4
Expectation of others and parental influence	10	3.8
Past experience	10	3.8
Lack of adequate punishment for culprits of examination malpractice	100	38.5
Sitting arrangement	20	7.7
Poor invigilation	20	7.7
Societal values (The level of corruption in the society)	60	23.1
	260	100

Source: Questionnaire administered, 2014

The respondents were asked to indicate the major causes of examination malpractice and their responses are as shown in table 3. As table 3 reveals, 100 (38.5%) of the respondents indicated that lack of adequate punishment for culprits of examination malpractice is a major cause or reason why so many other students engage in the act of examination malpractice. Application of stringent and timely punishment for culprits of examination malpractice would serve as a deterrent to would be offenders. 60 (23.1%) of the respondents stated that the rot and decay in our societal values is a major cause of examination malpractice. Examination malpractice is a moral dilemma and until our values are corrected, nothing much will be achieved by fighting the scourge. As revealed by table 3, other causes of examination malpractice includes, influence of friends 15.4%, sitting arrangement 7.7%, poor invigilation 7.7%, past experience 3.8% expectation of others and parental influence 3.8%. It can be inferred from the analysis above that lack of adequate and timely punishment for culprits of examination malpractice and our decadent and degenerate societal values are the major causes of examination malpractice. However, all the other factors listed are equally very important because these factors have all worked together to push examination malpractice to the present catastrophic level.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on factors that trigger students to commit Examination malpractice

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of self confidence	160	61.5
Inadequate preparation	60	23.1
Nature of examination questions	20	7.7
Fear of failure	12	4.6
Drugs and Alcohol	8	3.1
	260	100

Source: Questionnaire administered, 2014

Apart from the general causes of examination malpractice the respondents were asked to indicate the factors that prompt or trigger them to commit examination malpractice. Their responses are as shown in table 4 above. 160 (61.5%) of the 260 respondents indicated that lack of self confidence is the major factor that pushes or triggers them to commit examination malpractice. 23.1% of the respondents claimed that inadequate preparation used to trigger them to commit examination malpractice. According to 7.7% of the respondents it is the nature of examination questions that use to trigger them. These group of students claimed that when questions are too hard or “out of syllabus” they have no option than to do whatever they can to pass the examination. Fear of failure is another factor that triggers students to commit examination malpractice as claimed by 4.6% of the respondents. The remaining 3.1% of the respondents indicated that the use of Drugs and Alcohol pushed them to commit examination malpractice.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondent on the effects of Behavioral and Attitudinal change on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	176	67.7
Agreed	44	16.9
Disagreed	15	5.8
Strongly agreed	25	9.6
	260	100

Source: Questionnaire administered, 2014

As table 5 reveals 67.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that behavioural and attitudinal change by the students will have a positive effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice. This is not surprising since as we argued before, examination malpractice is a behavioural and attitudinal problem whose solution requires a positive change in behavior and attitude of the students.16.9% of the respondents agreed that behavioural and attitudinal change by the students will have a positive effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice. However, 5.8% of the respondents disagreed and 9.6% strongly disagreed. The information in table 5 is tested using chi-square distribution

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

The only hypothesis tested in this paper is to find out whether a positive change in the behavior and attitude of students will have a positive and significant effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice:

Ho: A positive change in the behaviour and attitude of the students will have a negative effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice

Hi: A positive change in the behaviour and attitude of the students will have a positive effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents according to gender on the effect of behavioural and attitudinal change by the students on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice

OPTION	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
Male	100	30	8	2	140
Female	76	14	7	23	120
Total	176	44	15	25	260

Source: Questionnaire Administered, 2014

Note: SA = Strongly Agreed, A – Agreed, D – Disagreed, SD – Strongly Disagreed

Table 6 is the observed value of the responses of the respondents according to gender. To obtain the expected frequency we use the formula

$$Fe = \frac{\text{Row Total} \times \text{Column Total}}{\text{Grand total}}$$

Table 7: Contingency Table (from table 6)

Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(Fo-fe) ²	(Fo-fe) ² /fe
100	94.77	5.23	27.3529	0.2886
30	23.69	6.31	39.8161	1.6807
8	8.08	-0.08	0.0064	0.0007
2	13.46	-11.46	131.3316	9.7571
76	81.23	-5.23	27.3529	0.3599
14	20.31	-6.31	39.8161	1.9604
7	6.92	0.08	0.0064	0.0009
23	11.53	11.47	131.5609	11.4103
				X²c = 25.4586

Table 7 compares the observed frequency of the respondents and the expected frequency. From the table, the X^2_c calculated = 25.4586. We compare this with X^2 tabulated at 5% level of significance and 3 degrees of freedom. Hence at 5% level of significance and 3 degrees of freedom the critical value of $X^2 = 7.815$. Since X^2 calculated is greater than X^2 tabulated we reject the Null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that a positive change in the behaviour and attitude of the students will have a positive effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice.

4.2 Summary of Major Findings

The findings of this study can be summarized as follows:

The pervasive and endemic nature of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities is exhibited in the different techniques and methods used by students to cheat and commit illegal unethical practices during examinations. Copying from other students (Giraffing) is so rampant that students no more consider it as an act of examination malpractice. 69.23% of the students surveyed said that they had engaged in one or more unethical and/or illegal action during examinations during the past year.

The most frequently used method of examination malpractice involved copying from other students 47.7%, begging fellow students for assistance in the examination hall 30.8%, begging lecturers for assistance after writing the examination 11.51%, smuggling foreign materials into the examination hall 7.7% and electronic dubbing 2.30%. However, we are aware that the above listed methods of examination malpractice are not exhaustive but it gives an indication of the nature of the problem. The study revealed that lack of adequate and timely punishment for culprits of examination malpractice is a major cause of the pervasive nature of examination malpractice.

We also observed that examination malpractice is a moral dilemma and until our values are corrected, nothing much will be achieved by fighting the scourge. Examination malpractice is found in this study, to be a reflection of our decadent and degenerate societal values. The high level of corruption in almost all sectors of our society has become prevalent in our tertiary institutions. As revealed by the study, other causes of examination malpractice include influence of friends, expectation of others, parental influence, poor sitting arrangements and poor invigilation.

Apart from the general causes of examination malpractice, we found in this study that there are other factors that prompt or trigger the students to commit examination malpractice. Lack of self confidence which is a negative definition of self and a general feeling of Not Ok by the students has been the greatest factor that triggers students to commit examination malpractice as claimed by 61.5% of the respondents. Other triggering factors include inadequate preparation, nature of examination questions, fear of failure, drugs and alcohol. The result of the hypothesis tested revealed that a positive change in the behaviour and attitude of students will have a positive effect on reducing or eradicating examination malpractice

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

In this paper an attempt has been made to explore the causes and nature of examination malpractice in Nigerian Universities from Transactional Analysis perspective. Reducing or eradicating examination malpractice requires individual students understanding of the reason why they behave the way they do,

and what trigger them to commit examination malpractice. This will assist them to change their negative attitude and behaviour. Training in Transactional Analysis will help to bring about the desired change in the students. However, all hands must be on deck to eradicate this problem of examination malpractice. The government, the educational institutions, the lecturers and the parents of the students must play their respective roles to put an end to this social malaise in Nigerian universities.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made:

1. There is a need for a change in the negative attitude and behaviour of students that make them commit examination malpractice.
2. Training in Transactional Analysis is recommended as a practical and useful tool that can help the students bring out the needed positive behavioural and attitudinal change.
3. Transactional Analysis should be introduced into the curriculum of all secondary schools and tertiary institutions. A knowledge of Transactional Analysis will assist the students in self analysis and an understanding of the reasons why they behave the way they do. (ii) what experience and influences have shaped whom they are (iii) what values and beliefs are important to them, (iv) what are the triggering factors that prompt them to commit examination malpractice and. (v) What harmful games they play that need to be stopped.
4. The management of the tertiary institutions should be more serious in the application of strict and commensurate punishment to the culprits of examination malpractice. The punishment should be very strict and the application should be timely so as to serve as a deterrent to other would be offenders.
5. Examination should be undertaken in large halls where there is sufficient space for proper sitting arrangement, as examination malpractice cannot be prevented in an overcrowded hall.
6. Invigilators should be more serious and more vigilant and should strictly apply the rules and regulations guiding the conduct of examination. Non academic staff members who are capable of accepting bribe from students should not be allowed to vigilate.
7. Parents should impact positive values of honesty, discipline, integrity and hard work on their children so that they will be good ambassadors of their family. Parents should also avoid engaging in corrupt practices which their children could copy and practice in school.
8. Lecturers should be forthright and refuse to play any of the examination malpractice games with the students. They should not allow their reputation to be dragged into the mud.

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