DOI: https://doi.org/10.67203/jerd.2025.lg26uo24

ASSESSMENT OF STRATEGIES USED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF EXAMINATION MISCONDUCT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

[*]John Oluyemi EGBEBI, Surajo Ahmed MAGAJI, Rukaiya Saad AHMED, and Sakirat Abiodun MUSTAPHA

Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum, Educational Administration and Planning Section, Faculty of Education, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria
[*]Corresponding Author: Joegbebi@abu.edu.ng; 08033447559

Abstract

This study was carried out to assess "Strategies used in management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria". To serve as a guide, two (2) specific objectives, two (2) research questions and two (2) hypotheses were formulated for the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of this study was 74,178 respondents, comprising 362 principals, 7,250 teachers, and 66,566 students in the 362 public senior secondary schools in Kaduna State. The researcher adopted the Research Advisor (2006) to determine the sample size of 14 principals, 106 teachers, and 262 students. Making a total of 382 samples that were used for the study. The instrument used was - structured questionnaire titled "Assessment of strategies used in management of examination misconduct (ASUMEM)". This instrument was designed to collect relevant data from principals, teachers, and students from public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. However, the instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor and experts in the field. Similarly, a pilot test was conducted that yielded a reliability score of 0.785. The hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at a 0.05 level of significance. However, descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used for research questions, while the information collected through the questionnaire was analysed using the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS version 26). The results showed that the motivational Strategy was very effective in the management of examination misconduct in Secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. It was also revealed that the classroom sitting arrangement strategy is fairly effective in managing examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna state, Nigeria. The study recommends that the Kaduna state ministry of education should develop a collaborative framework for implementing motivational strategies by engaging principals, teachers, and students (school prefects); and more infrastructure should be provided in all examination centres to give room for spacious seating arrangements that will guarantee effective supervision during examinations. In conclusion, the findings of the study highlighted substantial success through strategies used in the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Strategies, Management, Examination Misconduct, Secondary Schools, Kaduna State

Introduction

Examination is the systematic procedure of testing and judging by a standard. It is the means of assessing the level of performance and achievement of students at any level of education. The only way by which students can meaningfully contribute to national development, nation building and technological advancement now and in the future is by doing well in their academics. The yardstick that determines this is by examination, and this has been jeopardised by examination misconduct.

Examination misconduct is a situation in which candidates in an examination are given undue advantages before, during or after the examination so that the candidates win cheap success thereafter. It is any irregular action taken by examinees, examiners or any other persons associated with an examination, whether before, during or after, that gives undue advantage to certain individuals. With this, the sanctity of the examination is broken or violated. This act of examination misconduct indicates danger to our nation in all aspects of life: socially, politically, economically and religiously.

Examination misconduct is very alarming in the developing countries of Africa. Boakye (2015) lamented that in Ghana, it was obvious that examination malpractice was gradually turning out to be normal in that society and in the nation as a whole. The fact is that the value attached to the certificate outweighs the value of knowledge and experience. The level of pursuing the certificate in the country by all means involves even parents in this illicit act. According to Meshack (2019), parents, teachers, supervisors and even school managers were directly involved in examination malpractices.

It is common knowledge that Nigeria as a country witnesses' series of examination misconducts, because examinations have become a major yardstick for measuring academic performance and certificates. The over-dependence on qualification for employment and further education has led struggled by individuals struggling to acquire a certificate through various means of examination misconduct. No wonder the academic certificates being issued to graduates in Nigeria are no more valuable than pieces of paper, according to the view of most foreigners.

Bearing in mind that examinations in Nigeria are either internal or external, Kaduna State secondary schools also conducted both examinations. The cases of examination misconduct have been identified in various schools, ranging from copying, handwriting materials and textbooks, among others, that have been recovered from the examination hall. Also, impersonation, cheating, bringing a prepared answer sheet, unethical use of academic resources, fabrication of results and showing disregard for academic regulations. All these are regarded as academic misbehaviours. According to Tinibu (2017), examination misconduct is academic dishonesty or academic fraud, which involves any type of cheating on the part of either students or staff during an examination.

Nnam and Inah (2015) observed that every examination season witnesses the emergence of new and indigenous ways of teaching. Although examination misconduct is mostly common in external examinations, such as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and National Examination Council-Senior School Certificate Examination (NECO-SSCE). Likewise, in the Nigerian school system, there are cases of examination misconduct during class tests and at the end of term or promotion examinations.

Education is an instrument for National Development, and one of the goals of education in Nigeria is to develop an individual to become morally sound, patriotic and an effective citizen (NPE, 2014). Engaging in examination misconduct negates the philosophy of education, and this usually leads to the cancellation of results, which means a great waste of resources to the individual and society. Examination misconduct in our schools constitutes one of the major problems facing the educational system today.

The devastation created by examination misconduct is colossal and recurrent, hence the need for strategies to manage this misconduct. Some of these strategies management used during the actual examination include: increasing the number of invigilators and supervisors to meet the population of the examinees; examination officers, principals and vice principals paying visits to the examination hall to observe what goes on there; students being thoroughly searched by invigilators before they enter the examination hall (Ukpabi, 2015).

Other measures include adequate sitting arrangements for students; support of the law enforcement agents, like the police; proper time keeping by the invigilators; societal re-engineering and re-orientation to revamp moral values have been suggested and tried in some schools through counsellors. Duvie and Eluwa (2016) suggested building large examination halls that could accommodate more students and also create adequate space between candidates.

Statement of the Problem

The cases of examination misconduct have been a problem affecting the quality of education all over the world, which has a negative effect on the development of a nation. Examination misconduct still prevails in most of our secondary schools despite all the efforts made by professionals in the educational sector and policymakers. Observations and reports of the examination body revealed that a high percentage of secondary school students indulged in examination misconduct. The reason could be a result of the level of moral decay in the society where students engaged in unethical examination behaviours as the only means of achieving academic success. It could also be associated with the societal value system and a high regard for paper qualifications rather than practical ability. Likewise, many students engaged in examination misconduct

because of fear of failure, some were involved because of a lack of self-confidence, while the rest may want to please their parents and their peer group. The effects of this unethical behaviour have led to cancellation and seizure of examination results, school dropout, anti-social behaviours and others. In general, the situation has really caused a lot of setbacks in our economy, politics, development and social life, which prompted the management of secondary schools in Nigeria to develop strategies for management in order to curb examination misconduct in our various secondary schools. Based on this premise, the study aims to identify and assess the strategies used in the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria, from the point of view of principals, teachers and students.

Objectives

The major objective of this research is to assess the strategies used in the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State. The specific objectives were to:

1. Assess motivational strategy on the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.
2. Determine the classroom sitting arrangement strategy for the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered:

1. What are the motivational strategies for the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria?
2. In what ways classroom sitting arrangement strategy assist in the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested:

Ho_1 There is no significant difference in the opinions of the principals, teachers and students on motivational strategy on the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Ho_2 There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents on the classroom sitting arrangement strategy on the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design (Akorede et al., 2023). Two specific objectives, two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated as a guide. The population of the study was 74,178, consisting of all the principals, teachers and students in all the public senior secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The population size for principals was 362, teachers 7,250 and students 66,566 in the 362 public senior secondary schools in Kaduna State. A total of 382 respondents were selected as a sample for the study. The decision was guided by the research advisor's (2006) tables of sample selection. The sample consisted of 14 principals, 106 teachers and 262 students. The researcher used a random sampling technique to select 5 local governments in Kaduna State. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire, which was designed based on issues raised in chapter one, while Five (5) five-point Likert scale was designed for the ranking of data. The instrument was validated by the researcher’s supervisors and other experts. A pilot study was conducted in two public secondary schools in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State to test the ability of the instrument to measure what it was designed to measure. The questionnaire was subjected to a test of reliability at 0.05, with 0.85 from the instrument using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The instrument was distributed to respondents by face to face-to-face method. The data collected were analysed using descriptive analysis. Percentage and frequencies were used to answer research questions, while the postulated hypotheses were analysed using the statistical tool of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the motivational strategies for the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Opinion of the respondents on motivational strategy on the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

S/N	Item Statement	Respondents	Response Categories						
			Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total
			(F	%)	(F	%)	(F	%)	
1	Giving prizes/ awards to students who performed excellently in school exams prevents examination misconduct	Principals	9	64.29	1	7.14	4	28.57	14
		Teachers	61	57.55	8	7.55	37	34.91	106
		Students	217	82.82	3	1.15	42	16.03	262
2	Recognised and reinforced Examination officers and security agents who showed outstanding service during and after the examination curb examination misconduct	Principals	9	64.29	1	7.14	4	28.57	14
		Teachers	60	56.60	7	6.60	39	36.79	106
		Students	206	78.63	5	1.91	51	19.47	262
3	Paying attention to the welfare and needs of principals and teachers reduces the incidence of examination misconduct	Principals	9	64.29	1	7.14	4	28.57	14
		Teachers	61	57.55	6	5.66	39	36.79	106
		Students	218	83.21	5	1.91	39	14.89	262
4	Regular and prompt payment of teachers 'salaries reduces the rate of misconduct	Principals	10	71.43	1	7.14	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	69	65.09	6	5.66	31	29.25	106
		Students	183	69.85	7	2.67	72	27.48	262
5	Allowing students who do not engage in misconduct to be school prefects curbs exam misconduct	Principals	9	64.29	0	0.00	5	35.71	14
		Teachers	68	64.15	5	4.72	33	31.13	106
		Students	219	83.59	6	2.29	37	14.12	262
6	Allowing students who do not engage in misconduct to represent the school in school competitions	Principals	11	78.57	0	0.00	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	77	72.64	7	6.60	22	20.75	106
		Students	216	82.44	3	1.15	43	16.41	262
7	Recognising the best performing school and students by the government minimises examination misconduct	Principals	9	64.29	1	7.14	4	28.57	14
		Teachers	87	82.08	3	2.83	16	15.09	106
		Students	200	76.34	9	3.44	53	20.23	262
8	Reinforcement of well-behaved students reduces the rate of examination misconduct	Principals	8	57.14	0	0.00	6	42.86	14
		Teachers	83	78.30	1	0.94	22	20.75	106
		Students	147	56.11	8	3.05	107	40.84	262
9	Communication of students' progress in schools to parents prevents examination misconduct	Principals	8	57.14	2	14.29	4	28.57	14
		Teachers	74	69.81	8	7.55	24	22.64	106
		Students	179	68.32	17	6.49	66	25.19	262
10	The provision of a favourable working environment reduces examination misconduct	Principals	10	71.43	1	7.14	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	76	71.70	1	0.94	29	27.36	106
		Students	156	59.54	14	5.34	92	35.11	262

Table 1 shows the analysis of principals, teachers and students' opinions on motivational strategies in managing examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna state. The table revealed that the motivational strategy was effective in managing examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State because all the question items 1-10 used to answer research question 1 had more than 50% benchmarks for agreement. The result shows they are affirmative.

Research Question Two: In what ways classroom sitting arrangement strategy assist in the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Opinion of the respondents on classroom sitting arrangement as a strategy for the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	Respondents	Response Categories						
			Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total
			(F	%)	(F	%)	(F	%)	
11	A good examination environment and proper conduct reduce examination misconduct.	Principals	11	78.57	0	0	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	90	84.91	11	10.38	5	4.72	106
		Students	177	67.56	3	1.15	82	31.29	262
12	Spacing out students well in the examination hall minimises examination misconduct.	Principals	11	78.57	0	0	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	80	75.47	12	11.32	14	13.21	106
		Students	165	62.98	7	2.67	90	34.35	262
13	Providing convenience within the examination hall prevents examination misconduct	Principals	5	35.71	2	14.29	7	50	14
		Teachers	25	23.58	7	6.60	74	69.81	106
		Students	94	35.88	6	2.29	162	61.83	262
14	Avoiding overcrowded examination halls minimises examination misconduct	Principals	11	78.57	0	0.00	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	69	65.09	12	11.32	25	23.58	106
		Students	175	66.79	0	0.00	87	33.21	262
15	The allocation of seats by the examiners prevents examination misconduct	Principals	11	78.57	0	0.00	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	82	77.36	13	12.26	11	10.38	106
		Students	175	66.79	0	0.00	87	33.21	262
16	Monitoring Students sitting by the windows minimises examination misconduct	Principals	11	78.57	0	0.00	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	81	76.42	12	11.32	13	12.26	106
		Students	175	66.79	8	3.05	79	30.15	262
17	Netting the examination windows prevents examination misconduct	Principals	13	92.86	0	0.00	1	7.143	14
		Teachers	74	69.81	7	6.60	25	23.58	106
		Students	175	66.79	0	0.00	87	33.21	262
18	Checking students' desks/drawers before the commencement of the examination prevents misconduct	Principals	12	85.71	0	0.00	2	14.29	14
		Teachers	72	67.92	15	14.15	19	17.92	106
		Students	175	66.79	0	0.00	87	33.21	262
19	Provision of adequate seating for the examination prevents examination misconduct	Principals	12	85.71	0	0.00	2	14.29	14
		Teachers	90	84.91	11	10.38	5	4.72	106
		Students	175	66.79	0	0.00	87	33.21	262
20	When seats are spaced to allow for the free movement of the invigilators prevents examination misconduct	Principals	10	35.71	1	7.14	3	21.43	14
		Teachers	70	66.04	10	9.43	26	24.53	106
		Students	175	66.79	0	0.00	87	33.21	262

Table 2 shows the analysis of principals, teachers and students' opinions on classroom sitting arrangement strategy in the management of examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Question items 11-20 were used to answer research question 2, and the result indicated that the classroom sitting arrangement was effective in managing examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna state. This is because they have more than 50% which is the benchmark for agreement. Therefore, the result shows they are affirmative.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the principals, teachers and students on motivational strategy on the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the opinions of the principals, teachers and students on motivational strategy on the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Status	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	2.036	2	1.018	2.790	.063
Within Groups	138.333	379	.365		
Total	140.370	381			

Table 3 shows that the significance level (p-value) associated with the F-statistic was .063, which is greater than the significance threshold of 0.05. Thus, based on the data and analysis performed, the result suggests that the groups do not have statistically different opinions on motivational strategy on the management of examination misconduct at the 0.05 significance level. Similarly, the implication was that since the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents on classroom sitting arrangement as a strategy for the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the opinions of the respondents on classroom sitting arrangement as a strategy for the management of examination misconduct.

Status	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	15.187	2	7.593	7.194	.001
Within Groups	400.039	379	1.056		
Total	415.226	381			

The result in Table 4 presented the significance level (p-value) associated with the F-statistic was (.001) smaller when compared with the 0.05 alpha level of significance, signifying that the differences between the groups' opinions on the classroom sitting arrangement as a strategy for the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna state are statistically significant. However, the implication was that given the smaller p-value (.001), the

null hypothesis was rejected. Similarly, the statistically significant result suggests that there are absolute differences in opinions among the respondents.

Table 5: Summary of Scheffe's Multiple Comparison test on the opinions of the respondents on classroom sitting arrangement as a strategy for the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Respondents	N	Mean
Principal	14	40.14
Teachers	106	36.53
Students	262	32.89

As shown by Table 5, the mean score of principals, 40.14, was found to be higher than that of teachers, 36.53, implying that the differences between the two respondents were significant. However, the mean score of students, 32.89, was found to be lower than that of principals and teachers, implying that the difference between them was significant.

Discussions of the Findings

Findings from the study revealed that the motivational strategy was effective in managing examination misconduct in secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria. Thus, based on the data and analysis performed, the result suggested that the groups do not have statistically different opinions on motivational strategy in managing examination misconduct, and the null hypothesis was accepted. It was revealed that paying attention to the welfare and needs of principals and teachers, regular and prompt payment of teachers' salaries, allowing students who do not engage in misconduct to represent the school in school competitions, reinforcement of well-behaved students, and communicating students' school progress to parents prevent examination misconduct. Thus, these findings indicated the wide acceptability of the suggested items. The finding agrees with the study of Akunne, Chibo-Obasi &Iwobi (2021) that motivational strategies are effective for curbing examination malpractice among secondary schools in Nigeria.

In response to research question two, the findings revealed that classroom sitting arrangements as a strategy are fairly effective in the management of examination misconduct in public secondary schools in Kaduna State. Nigeria. It was indicated that there are certain differences between the groups' opinions, and the null

hypothesis was rejected. This was in line with Makaula (2018) that the government is to blame for not creating a conducive and favourable teaching and learning environment and for failing to reinforce the teaching ethics, which have resulted in teachers behaving irresponsibly. However, it was revealed that a good examination environment and proper conduct, spacing out students well in the examination hall, avoiding overcrowded examination halls, allocation of seats by the examiners, monitoring students sitting by the windows, netting the examination windows, checking students' desks/drawers before commencement of examination, and Provision of adequate seating for the examination prevent examination misconduct.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher concluded that:

1. Motivational strategy exhibited no significant differences in opinions among the three groups, indicating a consensus agreement on the assessment of its effectiveness.
2. Classroom sitting arrangement as a strategy exhibited significant differences, emphasising the necessity for a prompt evaluation of its impact.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Kaduna State Ministry of Education should develop a collaborative framework for implementing motivational strategies by engaging principals, teachers, and students (school prefects) in the planning and execution stages of examination.
2. More infrastructure should be provided in all examination centres to give room for spacious seating arrangements that will guarantee effective supervision during examinations.

References

Akorede, S. N., Isiaq, A. T., & Akorede, A. A. (2023). Assessment of cholera preventive practices among residents of Samaru Community, Sabon-Gari, Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Unnes Journal of Public Health, 12*(1), 46-52. https://doi.org/10.15294/ujph.v12i1.55178

Akunne, L. I., Chigbo-Obasi, T. U., & Iwogbe, E. C. (2021). Perceived strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students in Nigeria.

Boakye, J. A. (2015). *Examination malpractice and solutions*. https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Examination-Malpractice-and-Solutions-37

Duvie, A. N., & Eluwa, B. O. (2016). Assessment of the management strategies for curbing examination malpractices in secondary schools in Abia State, Nigeria. *European Journal of Education Studies, 2*.

Tinibu, S. (2017). *Examination malpractice: Causes, effects and solutions in Nigeria*. https://www.legit.ng

Makaula, F. B. (2018). Perceived causes and methods of examination malpractice in the system: A case study of secondary schools in the South East Education Division (SEED). *Journal of Education and Practice, 6*(20), 1–7.

Meshack, A. M., Maurice, K. K., & Johannes, N. N. (2019). Assessment of mitigation strategies used in the management of examination malpractices by universities in Mount Kenya Region. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies, 6*(2).

Nnam, M. U., & Inah, A. F. (2015). Empirical investigation into the causes, forms and consequences of examination malpractice in Nigerian institutions of higher learning. *International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences, 2*(1), 52–62.

National Policy on Education. (2014). *NPE: National policy on education*. Federal Ministry of Education.

Onuka, A. O., & Durowoju, E. O. (2013). Stakeholders' role in curbing examination malpractice in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economy, Management and Social Sciences, 2*(6), 342–348.

Ukpabi, M. (2015). *Examination malpractice: Causes, effects and solutions*. https://michaelukpabi.wordpress.com/2015/01/05/examination-malpractice-causes-effects-and-solution-of-examination-malpractice