

Relationship Between Examination Malpractice and Undergraduates University Education Development in South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates university education in South-South geo-political zone in Nigeria. Correlational design was adopted. The population of the study consisted of 27,119 undergraduates in three universities in the South-South geo-political zone in Nigeria. A sample size of 443 students' representing (1.73%) of the total population was selected through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The instrument utilized for data collection in the study was a questionnaire tagged: Examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education questionnaire (EMUUEQ) with ten (10) items. The validity of the instrument was carried out by the supervisor of the study and two experts in the departments of counseling and educational psychology and educational management of Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. The reliability coefficient values of the instrument internal consistencies were obtained with the utilization of Cronbach's Alpha method. The reliability coefficient values stood at .783 and .812 for examination malpractice and undergraduates university education respectively. The data were analyzed with the application of simple percentage analysis, model summary of simple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) analysis for the demographic data, research question and hypothesis respectively with the support of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The study concludes that examination malpractice has significant relationship with undergraduates' university education. In alignment with the conclusion, it was recommended that, students' should not involve themselves in an examination malpractice as a result of its potentials to highly support their involvement in cult related activities in the university system.

Keywords: Examination malpractice, undergraduates' university education

Introduction

The designation of 'cult' conventionally pertains to societal collectives delineated by their profoundly religious, philosophical, or spiritual convictions centered on a specific persona, entity, or objective. These collectives frequently employ cunning psychological methodologies to acquire and manipulate followers (such as employing coercive recruitment strategies) and are frequently distinguished by socially aberrant customs or innovative ideologies. The range of membership sizes spans from a modest number of local constituents to vast international entities boasting millions of members. Molagun (2003), defined cult as a religious group often based on immediate emotional experience rather than on thorough ideology of most world religions. According to the esteemed Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005, pg. 357), the term "cult" is elucidated as denoting a diminutive assemblage of individuals who espouse fervent religious convictions, while remaining detached from any recognized or established religious institution.

Their activities usually include maiming, threatening of life of student and lecturers, drug abuse, extortion, destruction of life and properties, rape, armed robbery, organizing secret meetings, killing of students and lecturers, truancy, examination malpractice and many others. Activities relating to cult are therefore, acts of cult carried out by undergraduates in our universities for the aim of achieving certain unmerited goals such as high scores and grades, positions, protection, security, and many others.

However, cult related activities seem to be the most intractable of all the factors militating against undergraduate education in our universities today. Involvement in the act of terrorism, secret meetings, threat to life activities and wonton of destruction of life and property perpetrated by university undergraduate have become grave social concern in and outside the university system. The situation is rapidly assuming alarming and wilder proportion and has spread to secondary schools and sadly, some primary schools in the country. The involvement of undergraduate in cult related activities have raised various issues in their university education in Nigeria.

Prominent of these issues include examination malpractice such as cheating, bribing, smuggling foreign materials into the examination room, giraffing, impersonation, prior knowledge, conspiracy, external assistance and many others have caused expulsion loss of employment, and low self-esteem to undergraduates. The individuals who evaded capture and subsequent retribution find themselves incapable of justifying the acquisition of certificates, let alone fulfilling their responsibilities within their designated positions (Onyibe, Um & Ibina, 2015). The involvement of undergraduates in examination malpractice has caused the educational system to be faulted and as such students could not achieve greater degree of discipline, diligence and moral love for others. Examination malpractice can be succinctly characterized as a purposeful transgression that runs counter to the established regulations governing official examinations. It bestows upon a candidate an inequitable advantage. In a scholarly context, it is imperative to acknowledge that academic misconduct encompasses any illicit behaviour perpetrated by a solitary student, instructors, mentors, or invigilators, either preceding, during, or subsequent to an examination, which flagrantly violates the established guidelines and regulations governing the proper conduct of said examinations (Lambert, 2003).

As per the scholarly work of Jimoh (2009), it is posited that the perpetration of examination malpractice engenders an indelible erosion of one's credibility. A nation that garners infamy due to its engagement in examination malpractice inevitably suffers a significant erosion of its international standing and credibility. The insinuation posits that any documentation or certifications originating from said nation shall be met with skepticism, much like the present circumstances surrounding Nigeria. The educational institutions of said country are regrettably

bereft of vitality when it comes to fostering international collaboration in the realm of education. According to Ada (2004), it can be posited that due to the prevalence of malfeasance within academic institutions, the outcomes of examinations often present a distorted representation of the prevailing circumstances. Consequently, a significant proportion of individuals who have completed their educational journey are unable to substantiate the grades they have attained through rigorous examination. The prevalence of examination malpractice within the universities situated in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria has resulted in an unfortunate predicament. This predicament entails the impossibility of utilizing formal examinations as a reliable means of assessing the candidates' aptitude for assimilating, reproducing, and applying knowledge.

Education serves as a discernible modality through which society initiates its nascent members into complete integration. It serves as the fundamental framework for the assimilation of erudition, competencies, propensities, and principles requisite for efficacious existence within the societal milieu (Yolokwe, 2018). Due to this phenomenon, education bestows upon individuals the necessary personal aptitudes for both sustenance and active participation in the advancement of society (Nwagwe, 2005; Akeusola, Viatonu, & Asikhia, 2012). In a parallel vein, the National Policy on Education (1981) effectively delineates the trajectory of Nigerian universities, directing their efforts towards the attainment of the subsequent objectives: the procurement, cultivation, and instillation of the appropriate value system necessary for the sustenance of both the people and society; the enhancement of people's cognitive faculties to comprehend and esteem their surroundings; the acquisition of both corporeal and cerebral proficiencies, thereby enabling individuals to evolve into productive constituents of the community; and the attainment of an impartial perspective on both the domestic and global milieus. Henceforth, the universities in Nigeria are established with the noble objective of providing enrolled students with a comprehensive and high-caliber education, enabling them to effectively navigate any given milieu and ultimately cultivate enhanced productivity, self-fulfillment, and self-actualization. Nigerian universities have been meticulously designed to effectively accomplish the aforementioned objectives by means of imparting knowledge, conducting extensive research, and disseminating both existing and novel information, particularly through the medium of publication. Furthermore, these institutions are committed to providing valuable services that promote community engagement and facilitate the professional development of individuals, thereby cultivating a skilled workforce at both intermediate and advanced levels (Odu, 2013). Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that the educational systems in Nigeria, particularly the esteemed universities, have become excessively fixated on pursuing quantitative expansion, thereby neglecting the crucial aspect of fostering complementary development in terms of educational quality (Nwaka, 2000). Efforts aimed at fostering higher education and enhancing the caliber of university instruction to effectively address the demands of an ever-evolving milieu is frequently impeded by insufficient fiscal means and suboptimal allocation of funds. The proliferation of higher education institutions in Nigeria has resulted in a dearth of financial resources, leading to a scarcity of well-maintained physical infrastructure, deficient laboratory facilities, and inadequately equipped libraries (Akintayo, 2008).

Furthermore, it is vital to note that the deterioration of the university education system in Nigeria can be attributed to the presence of leadership indiscipline and the undermining of institutional autonomy, thereby resulting in the gradual erosion of academic freedom (Oludayo, 2015). The lack of discipline and ethics shown by some university officials who rose to prominence in the field of university governance from 1970 until the present era is a clear indication of leadership

inadequacy within Nigerian universities. As per the scholarly findings of Akintayo (2019), one can discern the manifestation of these phenomena through the conspicuous prevalence of admission racketeering, scandals, instances of bribery and corruption, victimization, sexual harassment perpetrated against female students, the proliferation of both male and female cult factions, the persistent occurrence of rape, engagement in female prostitution, the adoption of indecent attire and solicitation for undue advantages, and the practice of homo The prevailing circumstances that exert a significant influence on the undergraduate populace within Nigerian universities encompass a multitude of salient factors. Upon conducting a preliminary examination of Nigerian universities, it becomes evident that a multitude of factors exert influence on the educational experiences of undergraduate students.

As posited by Ali, Zubair, and Fahad (2013), an array of student-related factors exert influence on the educational trajectory of undergraduates. These factors encompass inadequate exertion, a dearth of self-motivation, a predilection for specific modes of learning, prior and contemporary academic accomplishments, the academic disposition of the student, and the educational background of the student's antecedent institution. Udoh (2011) makes reference to the multifaceted issue of examination malpractice, suboptimal study habits, the impact of peer influence, absenteeism, and the dearth of self-assurance. In the scholarly work of Newsberger (2003), an enumeration of the various elements that exert influence upon the educational experiences of undergraduates was provided. These factors encompassed the realms of substance abuse, specifically drug and alcohol consumption, as well as criminal activities, psychiatric or familial challenges of a severe nature, and the manifestation of indiscipline among students. Odumbe (2012) has posited that the prominent determinants impinging upon the quality of undergraduate university education encompass absenteeism, study habits, indiscipline, and cultism. According to the scholarly work conducted by Ukwai, Lucy, Chibuzo, and Underlikwo (2013), it has been postulated that the consumption of alcoholic beverages and their associated derivatives exerts a discernible influence on the educational pursuits of undergraduate students. According to the findings of Isahku (2017), it has been observed that the attitudes of students towards the process of learning, as well as their utilization of social media platforms, exert a significant influence on the quality of undergraduate education in Ghana.

Examination malpractice can be elucidated as a conscious act of transgression that runs counter to the established regulations governing official examinations. It confers an inequitable advantage on a candidate. In essence, academic malpractice encompasses any illicit action perpetrated by a student, educator, mentor, or invigilator, whether prior to, during, or subsequent to an examination, with the aim of acquiring unmerited accolades or grades. Any illicit conduct displayed by a candidate or any individual entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing examinations, whether it be prior to, during, or subsequent to the examination, that violates the established rules and regulations governing the administration of said examinations (Lambert, 2003) According to a report by

In 2004, UNESCO observed that educational systems faced a wide range of difficulties, particularly in relation to the prevalence of examination malpractices in both schools and universities. The report further elucidated that instances of academic dishonesty commence at the primary education level, predominantly instigated by educators within this stratum, and progressively disseminate to secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Within the realm of academia, it is not uncommon for individuals who have previously engaged in illicit examination practices during their formative years to perceive such actions as their sole means of navigating

the rigorous demands of assessments without detection. The assessment outcome often presents a distorted representation of the current situation, thereby leading to instances where certain individuals who have completed their education are unable to adequately justify the grades they have achieved in their examinations (UNESCO, 2004).

According to Umar's (2004) findings, it can be observed that within the Nigerian educational context, the act of engaging in academic dishonesty, specifically cheating during examinations, has become a prevalent and regular occurrence among students. Numerous educational institutions in Nigeria can be attributed, at least in part, to their culpability for fostering an environment wherein students' academic achievements take precedence over the meticulous cultivation of pedagogical guidance. As a result, these establishments unintentionally assisted and encouraged the spread of illegal exam practices, which had a negative effect on undergraduates' access to tertiary education. The lack of qualified teachers, the scarcity of pedagogical resources like audiovisual aids, literary materials, and scientific equipment, as well as the inadequate pay given to lecturers, supervisors, and invigilators, all served to exacerbate the situation. Given the prevailing circumstances, the only viable course of action that remained was to provide assistance to pupils and students in their endeavours to circumvent academic integrity, thereby ensuring their successful completion of examinations and subsequent acquisition of financial resources. The behaviour that was seen showed up in a number of ways, such as: assuming fake identities; bringing in unnecessary items like books and computers; replacing answer sheets with pre-written manuscripts; stealing, changing, and appropriating written works; working together illegally during exams, which involves copying; and planning a systematic scheme of dishonest

As elucidated in the preceding discourse, the phenomenon of examination malpractice manifests itself in various guises, all of which unequivocally contravene and undermine the fundamental objectives of examinations. As per the scholarly work of Ejiogu (2001), it is evident that a prevailing state of moral decay, coupled with the excessive value attributed to accomplishments and credentials within Nigerian society, has given rise to a concerning phenomenon of examination fraud in recent years. The prevailing tendency to excessively rely on educational certificates as a gauge of an individual's intellectual acumen and aptitude has engendered a frenzied pursuit of such credentials by the majority of individuals. The educational prospects of vulnerable students, primarily hailing from rural regions, were significantly compromised due to their inability to procure the necessary resources, such as financial means, to access examination support. Consequently, their inability to extricate themselves from the clutches of destitution became apparent.

According to Ejiogu (2001), individuals who were found to be engaging in dishonest practices during the examination were promptly disqualified and subsequently barred from participating in any further examinations for duration of two years. In the event that a candidate had previously authored any written material during the examination, the outcomes thereof were rendered null and void. Furthermore, it is worth noting that a candidate could potentially face legal prosecution and, upon being proven guilty, would be subject to the possibility of being convicted and subsequently facing penalties such as fines, imprisonment, or a combination of both. Notwithstanding the implementation of these measures aimed at curbing the pernicious phenomenon, the occurrences of examination malpractices persistently wreaked havoc. Despite the implementation of various measures, it is imperative to acknowledge that the efficacy of a given method may be transient due to the astuteness exhibited by candidates in circumventing any endeavour aimed at curbing malfeasance. Umar (2004) posits that the prevalence of examination malpractices in Nigeria has significantly undermined the credibility of public examination bodies,

casting doubt upon the authenticity and reliability of the certificates obtained through such means. The circumstances deteriorated to such a degree that individuals began to hold a disdainful view towards academic credentials, as the genuine aptitude of those who possessed them could not be accurately deduced from the examination scores upon which they were predicated. In the Ghanaian context, Anan (2010) expounded upon the prevalence of examination malpractices, which have regrettably resulted in subpar academic achievements. This disconcerting trend can be primarily attributed to candidates' apprehension of failure, dearth of self-assurance, indolence, insufficient groundwork, and, most significantly, their incapacity to effectively engage with their educational pursuits. Astute scholars have honed their skills in the art of surreptitious academic practices within the confines of examination chambers. Certain stratagems utilized within this particular modus operandi encompassed the act of offering inducements, surreptitiously introducing extraneous resources into the examination chambers, such as premeditated annotations inscribed upon one's palms and thighs (particularly for female individuals), and within textbooks or literary works pertaining to subjects such as literature. Moreover, candidates would employ an assortment of artifices, including a game of concealment and discovery, as well as contrivances engineered to facilitate their success in the examinations, thereby circumventing the necessity of relying solely upon their own aptitude and acumen (Anan, 2010). The deleterious impact of examination malpractice on the pursuit of higher education by undergraduates is a matter of grave concern, not only for the affected institutions of learning but also for the broader communities and the nation as a whole. The ramifications of dismissal, termination, the loss of one's position, and the subsequent erosion of self-assurance have engendered a considerable degree of humiliation and distress among students, families, and the broader society. Those individuals who have evaded apprehension and subsequent retribution are unable to justify the acquisition of credentials, let alone fulfill their obligations at their designated workstations. According to the scholarly work of Onyibe, Um, and Ibina (2015), it is evident that... once more, within a societal framework where the prevalence of examination malpractice is conspicuous, the discernible repercussions are evident in the caliber of human capital that the educational system has engendered. Once more, educational systems endeavour to instill a profound sense of discipline, assiduity, and altruistic values in their recipients. However, when examinations are marred by instances of misconduct, the crucial feedback mechanisms become compromised, resulting in a distortion of the educational system. The manifestation of inadequate scholarly achievement is evidenced by the prevailing occurrence of bank insolvencies, structural collapses, economic subversion, acts of vandalism, abductions with monetary demands, illicit drug trade, as well as the production and distribution of counterfeit pharmaceuticals (The CWO Voice, 2010). As per the scholarly work of Jimoh (2009), it is discernible that the perpetration of examination malpractice engenders an indelible erosion of one's credibility. A nation that garners infamy due to its engagement in examination malpractice inevitably suffers a significant erosion of its international standing and credibility. The insinuation posits that any documentation or certifications originating from said nation shall be regarded with a sense of skepticism, akin to the present circumstances surrounding Nigeria. The educational institutions of said country appear to be bereft of vitality in the realm of international educational collaboration. According to Ada (2004), it has been posited that due to the prevalence of malfeasance within academic institutions, the outcomes of examinations often present a distorted representation of the prevailing circumstances. It is contended that a significant proportion of individuals who have completed their studies are unable to substantiate the grades they have attained through rigorous examination. The prevalence of examination malpractice within tertiary institutions in Rivers State has resulted in a predicament where the conventional method of

utilizing formal examinations to gauge the aptitude of candidates for assimilating, reproducing, and applying knowledge has become unfeasible. The lamentable occurrence of examination malfeasance serves as the impetus behind the proliferation of various qualifying assessments within Rivers State, including the Post-Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination and job placement aptitude tests, which aim to authenticate the veracity of candidates' educational credentials. Given the prevailing societal norms, it has become evident that academic credentials serve as the sole valid indicators of one's educational accomplishments. Consequently, students in Rivers State have adopted a perspective wherein the successful completion of examinations is perceived as an imperative, leaving no room for failure. Due to the pervasive issue of examination malpractice, a lamentable consequence has emerged wherein a substantial number of graduates hailing from Rivers State find themselves bereft of the ability to compose coherent missives, let alone comprehend and assimilate the contents of newspaper articles. According to Olusanya (2003), it has been observed that certain individuals who have obtained university degrees through engaging in fraudulent examination practices have inadvertently transformed into a contingent group of individuals who are deemed unsuitable for employment opportunities. Maduabum (2009) observed that the prevalence of examination malpractice is discernible across all states within the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as well as within various educational systems. According to Uzoagulu (2008), the act of "giraffing," which involves surreptitiously obtaining information during an examination along with the practices of coping, bringing handwritten materials and textbooks into the examination hall have been identified as the foremost manifestations of examination malpractice.

The pervasive act of cheating has transcended mere occurrence and has evolved into a widespread national phenomenon within the Nigerian context. It is disheartening to observe that the fabrication of certificates, employed as a means to secure admission or employment, has become an ingrained and customary practice among individuals who find themselves in dire circumstances. This trend is not limited to the general populace, as even members of the political elite have succumbed to this regrettable in recent years, a number of individuals occupying esteemed positions within the legislative and executive branches of the Nigerian government have faced allegations pertaining to the falsification of educational certificates. Consequently, certain individuals have experienced a significant downfall in their societal standing due to their involvement in acts of academic dishonesty. The incident involving a former speaker of the House of Representatives in Nigeria, wherein he deceitfully asserted possession of a degree from the esteemed University of Toronto, only to confound and bewilder all individuals, remains vividly ingrained within the collective consciousness of numerous Nigerian citizens (Ariba, 2011).

Obilor, Ikpa and Ikechukwu (2020) undertook a comprehensive investigation to evaluate the ramifications of academic dishonesty on the educational pursuits of undergraduate students within the confines of Rivers State. The study employed a research design characterized by its descriptive nature, wherein data was collected and analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The sample size for this study consisted of 745 participants, specifically 491 individuals who were either lecturers or students in the Faculty of Education at Rivers State University and 254 individuals who were either lecturers or students in the Faculty of Education at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The simple random sampling technique was employed in order to procure a sample size of 260, which was determined by employing the esteemed Taro Yamen Formula. The researchers employed a questionnaire specifically designed to investigate the phenomenon of examination malpractice in order to gather the necessary data. Subsequently, a statistical analysis was conducted using Pearson's product moment correlation test, resulting in

a computed value of 0.99. The research inquiries were addressed through the use of statistical measures such as means and standard deviations. The null hypotheses that were formulated underwent testing at a significance level of 0.05 using the z-test. The findings suggest that there is a lack of substantial disparity in the average perspectives held by both lecturers and students regarding the various categories, origins, ramifications, and strategies employed to mitigate the prevalence of academic dishonesty during examinations, which in turn obstructs the overall educational experience of undergraduate students in universities within Rivers State. It has been deduced that the perpetration of examination malpractice is characterized by a lack of integrity, a violation of legal statutes, and a departure from moral principles. Based on the aforementioned information, the study proposes that the government should rigorously implement existing legislation pertaining to examination malpractice in order to effectively discourage such behaviour among individuals. Furthermore, it is suggested that the provision of ample teaching and learning resources be prioritized to enhance the efficacy of educational processes. Lastly, it is advised that parents and guardians refrain from exerting excessive pressure on their children, thereby fostering a healthier academic environment. The primary objective of this study was to assess the impact of examination malpractices on the academic performances of students.

Statement of the Problem

As per the scholarly work conducted by Marie and Zolitz (2017), an empirical investigation was undertaken utilizing data sourced from the Netherlands, thereby yielding substantial and reliable evidence pertaining to the causal nexus existing between the utilization of marijuana and the scholastic achievements of individuals enrolled in institutions of higher learning. The findings indicate that university students residing in states where medical marijuana is legally accessible allocate significantly fewer hours towards endeavours directly related to their education, in contrast to their peers situated in states where such access is not permitted by law.

The element of the problem of this study therefore, bothers much on how cult related activities like drug abuse, threat to life, truancy, destruction of school properties and examination malpractice affect undergraduates' university education in Nigeria. Available literatures showed that a lot of researches have been carried out on the subject matter. However, none of these studies have been conducted in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria. Hence, this study is carried out to fill such gap.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate examination malpractice and undergraduates university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria. Specifically, the objective include to: Examine the relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates university education in South-South Geo Political Zone in Nigeria.

Research Question

The following research question was formulated to guide the study.

How does an examination malpractice influence undergraduates' university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to guide the study.

There is no significant relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria.

Methodology

The research design utilized in this study was the correlational survey design. This design is applicable for this study because it indicates relationship between an independent variable and the dependent variable in a study (Nworgu, 2006). However, this design is not able to show cause and effect relationship between two variables, but as mentioned earlier it can only reveals the magnitude of relationship between the independent and dependent variables in a study. The design is applied in the study because, it is appropriate for quantitative independent and dependent variables as it is in the study, (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The quantitative independent variable includes that of examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education as the measure of the dependent variable in this study. The target population of this study was consists of 27,119 engineering and education students from university of Benin, Edo State, Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State and university of Port Harcourt, Rivers State in South-South geo political zone in Nigeria. The population was distributed as 12,121; 7,646 and 7, 352 for Uniben, NDU and Uniport respectively. A sample size of 443 students' representing (1.63%) of the total population was selected through proportionate stratified random sampling technique among the three universities. The sample size was distributed as 198, 125 and 120 for Uniben, NDU and Uniport respectively. Table 1 indicates the sample frame and distribution of sample into the three (3) selected universities.

Table 1: Sample frame and distribution of sample into the three (3) selected universities

S/N	Name of University	Population Students'	of Sample size of Students'
1	University of Benin	12121	198
2	Niger Delta University	7646	125
3	University of Port Harcourt	7352	120
4	Total	27119	443

The instrument adopted in the collection of data in the study was a questionnaire titled Examination Malpractice and Undergraduates University Education Questionnaire (EMUEEQ), with ten (10) items. All the items were measured on a 4 point rating scale of:

1. Strongly Agree (SA) 4-points;
2. Agree (A) 3-points
3. Disagree (D) 2-points and
4. Strongly Disagree (SD) 1-point

The validity of the instrument was carried out by the supervisor of the study and two experts in measurement and evaluation in the Departments of Counseling and Educational Psychology and Educational Management of Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. All the corrections, comments, and contributions on the instrument by the validity process were effectively utilized in the final draft of the instrument. Arising from the inputs of the validity process out of the original 12 items drafted, a total of 10 items were finally approved in the instrument for this study. The reliability of the instrument internal consistencies of various variables was obtained through the utilization of Cronbach's Alpha strategy. The questionnaire

was administered once to 30 students' of Federal University of Otuoke in Bayelsa State that was not part of the main population of the study. The reliability coefficient values yielded .783 and .812 for examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education respectively. The obtained values confirmed the functionality of the reliability coefficient magnitude of the instrument for data collection in the study. The researchers personally carried out the administration of the various copies of the questionnaire instrument directly to the respondents for distribution and retrieval. In order to facilitate the distribution and retrieval process more carefully, two supportive research assistants were utilized to facilitate the distribution and retrieval of the distributed copies of the instrument. Nevertheless, out of the total 465 copies of the instrument distributed, 443 (95.27%) copies were properly administered by the respondents. This further implies that, 22 (4.73%) were improperly administered. The whole process of distribution and retrieval of copies of the instrument for data collection lasted for a period of ten (10) weeks. The data were analyzed with the application of simple percentage analysis, mean and standard deviation analyses and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) analysis for the demographic data, research question and hypothesis respectively with the support of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 26.

Results

Analysis of Demographic Data

Table 2: Simple Percentage Analysis of Respondents' based on Name of University

Name of University	Frequency	Percentage
UNIBEN	198	45
NDU	125	28
UNIPORT	120	27
Total	443	100

The data presented in Table 2 shows that 198 (45%) of the total respondent' were from uniben, 125 (28%) were of NDU and 120 (27%) were of uniport. This implies that respondents' from University of Benin were more in number than their other colleagues in the study.

Table 3: Simple Percentage Analysis of Respondents' based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	300	68
Female	143	32
Total	443	100

The data presented in Table 2 reveals that 300 (68%) of the total respondent' were male and 143 (32%) were female. This implies that male respondents' were more in number than their female counterparts in the study.

Research Question

What is the relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria?

Table 4: Model summary of simple regression analysis of the relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education

Variables	N	R	R ²
Examination malpractice	443	-.588	.346
Undergraduates' university education	443		

The data presented in Table 4 shows a correlation coefficient r-value of -.588 with a correlation coefficient square (r^2) value of .346. This reveals that 34.6% of the total variance of undergraduates' university education can be attributed to the examination malpractice. Consequent upon the relationship between the two variables, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient (PPMC) analysis was carried out in order to ascertain if the relationship between the variables is significant or not (See Table 5).

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduate university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) analysis of the relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduate university education

		Examination malpractice	Undergraduates university education
Examination malpractice	Pearson Correlation	1	-.588*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	443	443
Head teachers' job performance	Pearson Correlation	-.588*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	443	443

* = Significant at 0.05 alpha level; Degree of Freedom (df) = 441; N = 443

The data presented in Table 5 reveals that, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) analysis is significant $p < .05$ alpha level, because the calculated probability p-value of .000 is less than the criterion probability p-value of .05 alpha level with 441 degrees of freedom and correlation coefficient r-value of -.588. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduate university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria is rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduate university education in South-South Geo-Political Zone in Nigeria is upheld.

Summary of Finding

There is a significant relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education in South-South Geo-political zone in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The result in Table 5 indicates that, there is a negative relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education with a correlation coefficient r-value of -.588. This is an indication of moderate magnitude and in the negative direction. The negative

relationship between examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education implies that as scores of examination malpractice increases, there is a corresponding decrease in undergraduates' university education scores and vice-versa.

When Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) analysis was applied, r-value of -.588 was found to be statistically significant at .05 alpha level. Hence it can be seen from the result that, a significant negative relationship existed between examination malpractice and undergraduates' university education in South-South Geo-political zone in Nigeria.

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Obilor, Ikpa and Ikechukwu's (2020) study, which assessed the effects of academic dishonesty on the collegiate population within the boundaries of Rivers State. The research design employed in this study was that of a descriptive survey. The findings of the study indicate that there is no substantial disparity in the average perceptions held by both lecturers and students regarding the ramifications of engaging in examination malpractice within the realm of education.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that examination malpractice has significant relationship with undergraduates' university education. In alignment with the conclusion, it was recommended that, students' should not involve themselves in an examination malpractice as a result of its potentials to highly support their involvement in cult related activities in the university system.

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