

CURBING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION THROUGH EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

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Abstract.

Nowadays, teaching and learning is faced with various challenges which hinder academic performance of students and lure students into looking for alternative means to pass examination instead of reading and understanding the course, they were taught. This, therefore lure them in engaging in examinations malpractices. Examination malpractices constitute a major threat to the credibility (quality Assurance) of educational assessment in Nigeria. This paper looks at the role of effective teaching and learning in curbing examination malpractices in colleges of education. This paper examines the concept of examination malpractices, quality assurance in education and effective teaching and learning. It also examines some of the reasons for examination malpractices, various examination malpractices among students of Colleges of Education in Nigeria and role of effective teaching and learning as a panacea for curbing examination malpractices in colleges of education.

Keywords: Examination malpractices, quality assurance, teaching and learning.

Introduction

It is an accepted fact that teachers are usually not born but made. Good teachers nurture their knowledge and skills through constant and deliberate efforts. One of the prerequisites to being a good teacher is to understand the teaching/learning process indepthly. In almost every country in the modern day world, examinations are among the primary methods of assessing learners' skills and knowledge. One of the biggest challenges in carrying out these assessments is examination malpractices. This vice has eaten deep into the Nigerian education system and if care is not taken, it will jeopardize Nigeria education system totally. The point to note here is that, if indulging in examination malpractices is a common trend in our Colleges of Education in Nigeria, then who are we producing for the country? The answer is clear; we are producing bad and corrupt teachers and learners. This is because if there is no value in the attainment of education, the certificate obtained has no value. This is why this paper intendeds to give an insight into the concept of effective teaching and learning as a means of curbing examination malpractices.

Effective teaching and learning

Teaching is a set of events, outside the learners which are designed to support internal process of learning. Posner R.F and strike D (2011) assert that teaching (Instruction) is outside the learner. Learning is internal to learners. You cannot motivate others if you are not self-motivated. Motives are not seen, but, behaviors are seen. Is learning a motive or behavior? Learning is both a motive and behavior but only behavior is seen, learning is internal, performance is external. The profession of educating people is teaching. Learning is about a change: the change brought about by developing a new skill, understanding a scientific law, changing an attitude etc. The change is not merely incidental or natural in the way that our appearance changes as we get older. Learning is a relatively permanent change, usually brought about intentionally. When we attend a course, search through a book, or read a discussion paper, we set out to learn! Other learning can take place without planning, for example, by experience. Generally with all learning there is an element within us of wishing to remember and understand why something happens and to do it better next time.

Effective teaching/learning is a term used to describe the knowledge, strategies and conduct of a successful educator. It is the ability to make positive impact on student's life and academic career including the capacity to teach important skill, set introduce new concept, manage any classroom concerns etc. Learning in other way is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study, experience or being taught. Hansel (2012) suggest that, a child self-image, self concept or expectations are critical for academic development because they forecast on the self and even determine the child's experience. The main feature of education system is academic achievement through effective teaching and learning. The weak structure of education at basic level affects the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Kellaghan

and Greaney (2018) assert that academic performance at basic level does not only determine access to secondary and subsequently higher education but also affects the ways individuals view themselves and are viewed by the society. With this kind of situation prevailing in schools, unappreciable academic achievement may occur as learning outcome. This could only be justified through effective teaching and learning.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is the total efforts made, process or services, on a performance, or the customers or the client perception of that performance. (UNESCO 2012) affirmed that, the philosophy of quality assurance is based on the assumption that the use of a set of techniques and procedures for transforming products and services can be extensively and successfully used by various organizations to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility and competitiveness of a business as a whole.

The issue of quality assurance in education has been the central themes for education in many countries of the world Nigeria inclusive. Nigeria being a developing country depends on her education for the development of high level manpower to maintain the various sectors of the nation's economy. Thus, the teachers and teacher-educators are saddled with the responsibility to deliver the needed education in order to continue the transformation.

The importance of quality education in nation building cannot be over emphasized. (Uffy, G.H & Hill, D. G 2014) lamented that there have been several calls by government on education managers on how to make the educational system more vibrant in the quality of its product after several problems of mass failure, half-baked products and examination malpractice products from our various educational institutions in Nigeria. This paper looks at how effective teaching and learning can bring about the lost glory by restoring quality assurance in education. The responsibility for quality assurance rests with school managers, stakeholders, individuals and the society.

Fafunwa (1984) sees education as the human act of informing, forming and strengthening of the powers of the body and mind, a process for transmitting culture for the knowledge to ensure social control and guarantee rational direction of society. He also holds that the purpose of education is to develop attitude, ability and behaviours considered desirable by society.

The five national objectives or goals of Nigeria, which have been encouraged as the necessary foundation for the national policy on education, are the building of:-

- a. A free and democratic society
- b. A just and egalitarian society
- c. A limited, strong and self-reliant nation
- d. A great and dynamic economic
- e. A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens.

It is the belief of the Federal Government of Nigeria that since education is an instrument for national development, the stated national objectives can be achieved using education as a tool.

Education is a continuous process. It goes formally at various levels i.e. the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. One remarkable feature of this endeavour is examination. It is in this process of examination that malpractices are consummated.

Examination malpractices

The Education system in Nigeria is been faced with various challenges which weaken the system but examination malpractices constitute one of the greatest among all because they threaten the foundation of the system. It is disheartening to know that some parents, teachers, examination body, Government and society members were found to have been involved in examination malpractices. Examination malpractices can be seen as all aspects of wrong doing which give the candidate undue advantage over others in obtaining success in an examination. These could occur before, during or after the examination. Awanbor (2014) opines that examination malpractice is the application of unusual means to obtain a score or set of scores that is normally beyond the mental capability or the state of preparedness of a candidate for the examination.

Odongba (2012) says that examination malpractice refers to an act of wrong doing carried out by candidates or groups of candidates or any other person with the intention to cheat and gain undue advantages in an examination. Nwabusi (2019) lamenting the sad situation in the examination and evaluation practices said that, examination malpractice has become so endemic that Nigerian students do not see anything wrong with it. Both external and internal examinations from basic education through post basic to tertiary education are riddled with chronic examination malpractices. The introduction of continuous assessment in the system which ordinarily was meant to check the trend has even worsened

the situation. Invariably therefore, there is need to sanitize the nations education by getting rid of examination malpractices. This is a challenge to education administrators within and outside the school system.

Various forms of examination malpractices in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

There are various means in which examination malpractices can be perpetrated. The following are some of the common examination malpractices in Colleges of Education.

- a) Exchanging examination booklets during examination:- This form of malpractice is common among students. This is a situation whereby one examinee will pass his/her examination booklet to another in the examination hall for copying.
- b) Use of phones to download relevant materials during examination:- Students with intention to cheat during examination come into the examination hall with smart phones and they use the phone(s) to download relevant materials to assist themselves and sometimes share what they got from the phone with other candidates in the examination hall.
- c) Communication between students during examination:- This is also rampant in examination halls, and some invigilators overlook it. This is another form of examination malpractices. Communication among examinee should be strictly prohibited.
- d) Writing relevant points on seating furniture, part of the body and clothing:- This form of examination malpractice happens prior to examination. An examinee writes relevant points on various topics on chairs, body parts or their clothing's which he/she can copy from during examination.
- e) Giraffing:- This form of malpractices involves an examinee craning his/her neck to view what their neighbor(s) is writing and copying from it. This term is derived from the physical features of the giraffe, particularly its long neck. This is also common and it is among the oldest form of exam malpractice.
- f) Impersonation:- This is the act of pretending or disguising to be another person with the aim of helping them cheat and pass examination. This is one of the commonly known forms of examination malpractices in Nigeria.
- g) Lecturers exposing questions to students prior to examination:- Some lecturers also contribute to examination malpractices as they expose their exam questions to student's prior to examination to give those sets of students undue advantages over others.
- h) Lecturers awarding marks to some groups of students instead of across the students. This is also common among lecturers as most of the students they like are being given some preferential treatments including undue award of marks to them over others.
- i) Lack of vigilance in supervising examination:- Majority of examination invigilators have seen the examination hall as gisting venue and this makes them not to concentrate on supervising the students. This will allow the students to be free to indulge in examination malpractices.

Causes of Examination Malpractices in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

There are diverse reasons why students and stakeholders indulge in examination malpractices. The following are some of the causes among others.

- a) Lack of examination ethic and orientation for students:- Many colleges don't orientate students as and when due on examination ethics and conduct. 'When purpose is unknown, abuse is inevitable'. Some students lack the full ethics of examination and this sometimes makes them to be victims of examination malpractices.
- b) Lack of workshops, seminars, training and retraining of lecturers on how to invigilate examination: Periodical training and retraining is needed for lecturers. The absence of this also leads to increase in cases of examination malpractices.
- c) Students laziness: Students of nowadays are so lazy and do not want to study hard to pass examinations. Despite the availability of search engine which makes acquiring knowledge and skills easier and faster, students still prefer spending long hours on social media than making use of the great opportunity they have through mobile phone(s) to study. They prefer to copy from the brilliant ones.
- d) Poor remuneration for lecturers: Salaries in Nigeria especially for teachers are very poor. The cost of living has skyrocketed and most lecturers are living below average standard of living. These situations lure most lecturers into examination malpractices.
- e) High emphasis on paper qualifications: In Nigeria, paper qualification is regarded as the utmost priority for gaining admissions or lucrative jobs. As such, students follow all sort of bad ways to obtain paper qualifications.
- f) Lack of effective teaching: Some teachers are not competent enough in classroom teaching/learning. This also contribute to students' indulgence in examination malpractices, as majority of students who do not have the full

understanding of the courses taught during lecture periods will definitely look for alternative to pass which most times will be examination malpractices.

- g) Lackadaisical attitude of examination supervisors: Some supervisors are not active and vigilant in supervision. Some see examination hall as a gisting venue which allows students to indulge in examination malpractices.

Negative Impact of Examination Malpractices

Negative Impacts of examination malpractices are huge on country, schools and individuals. Some of the impacts include:

- a) Decrease in the nation's integrity: We have all heard of numerous countries whose education certificates are not recognized outside their country. When examination malpractices become the order of day, such a country loses its integrity and can no longer be trusted by other nations.
- b) Increase in corruption: Corruption is among Nigeria biggest economic problems. Looking at the vice critically, one can see it that corruption in numerous public offices stems from the generally corrupt societal and education systems in the country. If students cheat in their exams, they believe they can get away with any form of corruption afterwards.
- c) Underdevelopment: This happens when the education sector is constantly producing unqualified people who only passed their examinations through cheating. One of the primary reasons most underdeveloped countries find themselves in precarious situations is the lack of qualified personnel in various economic sectors.
- d) Watering down professions: Imaging a country whose doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers and accountants are all products of exam malpractices, such a country would have professionals that are only so by name. As a results, people die at the hands of incompetent doctors, students get substandard education at the hands of incompetent teachers while buildings collapse at the hand of half-baked engineers.

Role of effective teaching and learning in curbing examination malpractices in colleges of education

Shannon A. G and Jeffer K.L (2008). Assert that, effective teaching and learning is the ability to make positive impact on students' life and academic career including the capacity to teach important skill, set introduce new concept, manage any classroom etc. If effective teaching and learning takes place, higher percentage of student will not indulge in examination malpractices, and it will also encourage those perpetrating the act to stop and rely on their academic efforts as majority will be doing. The use of effective teaching and learning in curbing examination malpractices depend heavily on lecturers and learners. The following are the various ways in which effective teaching and learning can help curb examination malpractices.

1. Effective teaching will help assess the needs of students, allowing lecturers to understand which classroom strategies may be helpful. Lecturers can also lead more constructive one-on-one meeting with learners to know the best ways to support them. This will help students achieved their learning goals and shun examination malpractices.
2. It increases students' engagement in classroom. Student's engagement in classroom is very paramount. Lecturers can use this means to bring out the best in the students and make them believe in themselves. Learners are not blank slate. Good practices can help lecturers design interesting lesson plan and encourage an overall enthusiasm for the materials. Accurate teaching methods may also help lecturers form positive relationships with students.
3. It enhances the quality of teachers' feedback to students. If teachers use effective teaching strategies they can better understand how to measure the progress of their students. They can also respond to their enquiries with relevant and accurate information and address area of weakness in them before examination.
4. Effective teaching and learning require appropriate use of instructional materials. There is this saying that 'What I see I remember what I hear I forget'. The use of Instructional materials help students to acquire in-depth knowledge of what the lecturer is teaching and it helps them to be able to interpret the same based on their knowledge. This is another means of curbing exam malpractices as learners already have the full understanding of what has been taught.
5. Effective teaching and learning instills academic discipline. When learners are academically disciplined as part of what has been instilled in them by their lecturers in and outside the classroom, it will help them rely on their effort and make them shun examination malpractices.
6. Effective teaching and learning gives learners confidence. Lack of confidence is part of what encourages students to indulge in examination malpractices. Effective teaching and learning will guarantee absolute confidence in learners as the course thought is understood and adequate knowledge is imparted.

7. Effective teaching and learning involves the use of constructivism. The paradigm shift in pedagogical activities has resulted to Constructivism. Constructivism is learner's centeredness which involves grouping of learners and allowing them to brainstorm and contribute through their background knowledge. There's a saying that 'learners are not blank slate'. This method helps both lecturers and learners to achieve their objectives. Effective use of this method will also curb examination malpractices.

Conclusion

This paper has gone a long way in discussing the use of effective teaching and learning in curbing examination malpractices in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. It could be concluded that, examination malpractice in Colleges of Education is part of the challenges facing the education sector. If all the afore-mentioned solutions are put in place, they will reduce the menace if not totally eradicate it in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made for effective teaching and learning in curbing examination malpractices.

1. Managements of Colleges of Education should periodically conduct examination supervision seminars and training for lecturers while there should be orientation for students on examination ethics and conduct.
2. There should be full implementation of examination malpractices decree by the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria and Colleges should uphold their disciplines for examination misconduct.
3. Concerted effort should be made at improving the level of discipline among students.
4. There should be effective supervision of examination by invigilators/supervisors aimed towards zero tolerance to examination malpractices.
5. Government should improve the remuneration of lecturers for them to be able to meet up with standard of living and abstain from bribery and corruption.

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