

EXPLORING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE INTENTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES

Osaiga Felix Isibor*
O.R. Dania **
Becky Oyenmwun Osagie***

ABSTRACT

Unlike several studies, which employed mostly descriptive and exploratory approaches in explaining malpractice, this study contributes to knowledge by empirically examining the malpractice phenomenon with respect to its: common manifestations, initiator and relationship with selected demographic and psychological factors. The survey involved the administration of questionnaires to a conveniently selected sample of 350 Undergraduates from three Universities (a federal, a state and a private owned University) in Edo State, Nigeria. Data obtained were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Result obtained revealed that "Giraffing" was the commonest form of malpractice among undergraduates. Intention to engage in malpractice was found to be higher among males and students in public Universities. Level of preparation and perceived difficulty of examination were found to be the most significant psychological variables affecting intention to engage in malpractice. Curbing malpractice will therefore require Government and University authorities to strategize on managing these two variables.

Keywords: Examination Malpractice; Malpractice intention; Sorting; Undergraduates.

INTRODUCTION

Examination refers to the part of students' evaluation process that involves the determination of the intellectual ability, competence and the learners' level of understanding after a given training has been offered (Emaikwu, 2012). It is a means of evaluating the quality of knowledge, skills, capability, understanding that a person has acquired within a specified period of time (George & Ukpong, 2013). As a tool of evaluating academic performance, it is the basis on which the entire system of academics operates, rotates

and it is an instrument used to decide whether a student will be allowed to move to the next level (Adegbenjo & Adebayo, 2017). According to Nnam and Inah (2015), examination is the means by which a candidate's ability, knowledge, competence, progresses is formally measured and appraised in the educational sector. Since examination grades are the most common means by which parents and society are informed about a learner's academic performance (Airasian, 2001), no student wants to fail. This encourages some students to engage in malpractice.

Examination malpractice is any action or deed that a candidate involves in, either during or after the examination, in collaboration with a staff in the academic system such as lecturers, invigilators, supervisors, examination officers or

*Research Scholar, Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.
osaiga.isibor@uniben.edu

ones parents or guardians in a bid to obtain high grades (Onuka & Dorowoju, 2013). Examination malpractice is noted as fraud in the school system since the culprit ends up with undeserved grades. It also discourages the culture of hard work, decency, honesty, good behavior, determination and academic excellence (Amadi & Opuiyo, 2018). Examination malpractice was first reported in Nigeria in the year 1914, when question papers for the senior Cambridge Local Examination leaked to candidates before the scheduled date and time of the examination (Anzene, 2014). However, the first major campaign against examination malpractice in Nigeria, was by the Examination Ethics Protest (EEP) in 1996 (Eneh & Eneh, 2014).

Examination malpractice has become a major challenge facing the educational sector. The rate at which it has engrossed the educational system is worrisome hence, in 1999, the Nigerian government issued the examination malpractices and miscellaneous offences Act to curb the unwanted menace (Yusuf, Yinusa & Bamgbose, 2015). The menace of examination malpractice has however gone viral in Nigerian University system, as there is no examination conducted without it manifesting in one form or the other (Nnam & Inah, 2015).

Despite the magnitude of this problem in Nigeria, very little or nothing has been done with respect to empirically understanding malpractice as a form of behaviour. What exist in the literature are mostly mere essay or descriptive studies pointing causes, consequences and

possible solutions (Adegbenjo & Adebayo, 2017; Adeyemi, 2010; Akanni & Odofin, 2015; Amadi & Opuiyo, 2018; Chowdhury, 2018; Jimoh, 2009; Onyibe, Uma & Uma, 2015; Peters & Okon, 2013; Yusuf, *et al*, 2015). There is therefore a paucity of research aimed at empirically examining the cause and effect relationships between factors suggested as causes and students' intention to engage in examination malpractice in Nigeria. This article therefore contributes to literature on examination malpractice by empirically proffering answers to the following questions:

1. What are the common manifestations of examination malpractice amongst undergraduates in Nigeria?
2. Who is the initiator of the malpractice process?
3. What factors encouraged students to engage in malpractice?
4. Does examination malpractice intention vary with students' gender, age, current level and type of university?
5. To what extent does selected factors (test anxiety, peer pressure, fear of failure, level of preparation, perceived difficulty of examination and parents socio-economic background) predicts examination malpractice intention among Undergraduates?

MALPRACTICE AS A FORM OF BEHAVIOR

Behavior refers to the way an individual acts towards people, society or objects either good or bad, normal or abnormal according to society

norms (Wilma & John, 2000). It is action exhibited by a person that can be seen or heard (Albelto & Troutman, 2002). Wilma and John (2000) opined that individual difference, difference in family pattern, environmental factors and psychological factors are the cause of behavioral difference amongst individuals. As a form of behavior, Wilayat (2009) defines examination malpractice as any deliberate action of wrong doing that contravenes the regulation of an examination board. It is improper action before, during and after the examination by candidates with the aim of obtaining good grades through fraudulent means (Fasasi, 2006).

At the level of the student, examination malpractice encourages mediocrity being that students who succeed in getting increased grade through illegal means are rated equal or better than students who actually took time to study (Akaranga & Ongong, 2013). It has been found to encourage students' involvement in vices like stealing, cultism, prostitution and robbery (National University Commission 2016). Furthermore, examination malpractice, promotes laziness or lack of commitment to academic work on the part of student. It further entrenches moral bankruptcy amongst students who are leaders of tomorrow. This is because, engaging in examination malpractice provides students with the opportunity to learn and engage in fraudulent and dishonest activities. These kinds of student are then likely to engage in fraudulent behavior as employees in any organization. Examination malpractice may therefore not be

unrelated to the prevalent rate of bank failure, collapse of building, economic sabotage and vandalism (Onyibe, Uma & Ibina, 2015). On the macro level, examination malpractice has led to declining standard of Education in many Countries (Ijaiya, 2001). It can also led to an irreversible loss of credibility, as graduate with certificates emanating from examination malpractice prone countries are treated with suspicion (Jimoh, 2009; National University Commission, 2015). In Nigeria, examination malpractice often occurs in different forms:

Sorting: Also known as "runs" or "blocking". In this form of malpractice, students render payment either in kind (sex) or cash to be awarded undeserved marks by lecturers in examination (Chukwu & Lato, 2016). Students give gratification to their lecturers to obtain better grades. Items may include money, gift items and even sex in order to obtain good grades in examination. *Sorting* in Nigerian Universities has become a major societal problem (NUC, 2016). In 2005, the National University Commission (NUC) made a formal declaration of War Against *Sorting* (WAS). However, inspite of this effort, *sorting* has continued to plague the Nigerian education system. *Impersonation:* This is the case where another candidate or hired mercenary sits for examination on behalf of a genuine candidate (Onyibe, Uma, & Ibina, 2015). The act involves students taking test or examination on behalf of the rightful examinee for monetary reward or as a favor for a girl friend or a boy friend (Tambawal, 2013). It

happens because the number of students in a class are large and lecturers are often not able to physically identify all of them during an examination (Akaranga & Ongong,2013).

Smuggling of foreign materials and electronic device:

This form of examination malpractice involves the use of unauthorized materials also called "chukulli" such as notes, clothes, electronic devices for chatting and browsing of the internet and the use of papers as small as an identity card to write in codes, condense portion of what has been taught in class (Olasehinde, 1992). Some students, who intend to carry out this form of examination malpractice go to the examination hall on time so as to enable them jot on desks or walls where they are to sit for the exam (Akaranga & Ongong, 2013). Unauthorized materials may also be smuggled into the examination venue by female students in pants, bras, shoes, hem, or written on their thigh (Tambawal, 2013), and in shoes and belts by male students. *Force entry:* this occurs when hooligans forcefully gain entry into the examination hall with the aim of distracting invigilators or supervisors and thereby giving students the edge of talking, dictating answers to fellow students in the hall and the exchange of the question papers (Adeyemi, 2010; Akanni & Odofin, 2015; Onyibe, Uma &Ibina, 2015).

Leakage: This occurs when there is collusion between a candidate and the examination official in charge of examination questions. When this happens, such a student has access to the content of the examination paper or part of it prior to the examination (Tambawal, 2013). *Giraffing:* The

term is gotten from an African wild animal that has an extremely long neck, legs and a very small head (Onyibe, Uma, & Ibina, 2015). This form of malpractice is very common amongst students. It entails a student copying from the writings of other students during exams or in the examination hall. *Academic alliance:* This is also often called "Alignment". In this form of malpractice, a student befriends an opposite sex (for instance, girl befriends a boy) who is usually very brilliant with the intention that they would both sit together on the scheduled date of the examination (Olasehinde, 1992).

Akanni and Odifin (2015), categorized the various forms of examination malpractice among students into three:

1. Pre-examination categories which involve the procurement of question paper prior to the scheduled date of the examination.
2. Malpractice during examination entails impersonation, substitution of scripts of candidates, copying from another candidates work, colliding with invigilators and so on.
3. Post examination malpractice consist of candidates tracing lecturers, invigilators, in other for them to either substitute unearned scores with earned ones or through other means leading to undeserved scores.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENGAGING IN MALPRACTICE

Factors that have been suggested as being responsible for examination malpractice include:

a. *Fear of failure*: Self-confidence in the academic context is when a student believes and has faith that he will pass an examination without involvement in sorting, bribery, and cheating. Many students get involved in malpractice after examination because they doubt their ability to obtain excellent result without it. Fear of failure could also be a result of threat from the Lecturers: for instance telling students that no matter what they write, they will not pass. Hence, students engagement in malpractice may be traced back to fear of failure (Petters & Okon, 2013). Good students have good faith that they will pass any examination, especially if they have studied for a long time in preparation for the examination. Flowing from the above, we seek to test the hypothesis that:

H1: Fear of failure has a significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention.

b. *Test anxiety*: Also termed examination or anticipatory anxiety (Hamzah, Mat, Bhagat & Mahyiddin, 2018), test anxiety is common among students and has been found to be a major cause of poor academic performance among students all over the world (Dawood, Ghadeer, Mitsu, Almutary & Alenezi, 2016; Khosravi & Bigdeli, 2008). It is an undesirable reaction towards evaluation. Test anxiety is a psychological condition in which students

experience extreme distress and anxiety in test situations. A little anxiety during exams could motivate students but mounting up anxiety often influence academic performance negatively (Wine, 2003). Hence, students with high test anxiety are likely to engage in malpractice (Ossai, 2011). Test anxiety is often measured as a two-factor construct, consisting of the cognitive (often referred to as "worry") and emotional (or affective) components (Cassady, 2005). Symptoms of test anxiety includes restlessness, unusual body movements, difficulty in concentrating, forgetfulness insomnia, fatigue, muscle contraction, abdominal pain, and tremors (Mandler & Sarason, 1952; Porto, 2013). Based on the above, this study seek to test whether:

H2: Test anxiety has a significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention.

c. *Peer influence/pressure*: Peer behavior is by far the strongest influence that leads to academic dishonesty (McCabe, 1993). Students learn strategies, beliefs, value, behavior, motivation and rationalism of their peers. Peer influence has also been found to have significantly more effect on behaviour of young persons than the immediate family (Gonzales, Cauce, Friedman & Mason, 1996). Flowing from the above, we seek to test the hypothesis that:

H3: Peer influence/pressure has a significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention.

d. Inadequate preparation: The present generation of Nigerian Undergraduate students prefers to be glued to the television sets, viewing movies, listening to music, or walking around with their electronic gadgets, chatting and twitting. Except for during examination sessions, only few serious-minded students bury their heads in their books in preparation for examinations to ensure they pass well (National University Commission, 2016). It is assumed that the more prepared a student, the lesser the intention to engage in malpractice and vice versa. Based on the above, we seek to test the hypothesis that:

H4: Inadequate preparation for examination has a significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention

e. Perceived difficulty of examination: Where the scope to be covered in a particular course is broad and technical or examination questions set by a lecturer does not agree with what was taught in class, students lose hope in their own abilities. They may then resort to engaging in malpractice (Okpe & Lar, 2014; Tambawal, 2013). Hong (1999) observed that the more difficult a test, the higher the level of anxiety and worry experienced by students. Flowing from the above, we seek to test the hypothesis that:

H5: Perceived difficulty of examination has a significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention

f. Parent's socio-economic condition: Social and economical status of students is generally determined by combining parents' qualification, occupation and income standard (Jeynes, 2002). Pedrosa, Dachs, Maia & Andrade (2006) in their study of social and educational background found out that students from deprived socio-economic and educational background performed better than students from a high socio-economic and educational background. They named the phenomenon "Educational Elasticity". Several other studies have also corroborated this fact (Considine & Zappala, 2002; Graetz, 1995). Parents with a high social status, professional qualification, who are influential, are often more willing to bribe the way through school for their children and wards (Akaranga & Ongong, 2013). We therefore seek to test the hypothesis that:

H6: Parent's socio-economic condition has a significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a survey design involving the use of a structured questionnaire. A survey is best for studying a sample with the intent of generalizing the result to the entire population from which the sample was drawn (Yomere & Agbonifoh 1999). The structured questionnaire approach was adopted given the nature of the dependent variable. It offered respondents greater anonymity, thereby encouraging the

respondent to disclose feelings and attitudes more readily (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

The population for this study comprised of all Undergraduate students in Edo state. Sample elements were however drawn from a federal, a state and a private owned University. The federal and state owned Universities represented public Universities. A sample of 350 undergraduate students was conveniently selected from the various schools to represent the population. Individual respondents making up the sample were conveniently selected from those found in various halls (lecture halls, reading venue, hostel halls and fellowship venues) of residence as well as relaxation spots in the selected Universities. These locations were chosen because given the nature of the study, there was the need to avoid respondents' biases hence the use of neutral locations.

The questionnaire used in this study was made up of closed ended, open ended and Likert type questions. Although malpractice is rampant in the educational system (Yusuf *et al*, 2015), due to its nature, many students may not be willing to admit they have engaged in it. Hence, malpractice intention proxies for malpractice behaviour in this study. Questions on test anxiety were adopted from Smith (2000), those on peer influence were adopted from Santor, Messervey, and Kusumakar (2000), questions about perceived difficulty of exam were adopted from Spehl, Straub, Heinzmann & Bode (2019), those on fear of failure from Stuart, Bray, Breaux, Erevelles, Hayduk, and Major (2013), while those on common manifestations of malpractice, initiator of the malpractice process and malpractice intention were self developed.

Table 1: Demographic distribution of respondents

SN	VARIABLE	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	GENDER	Male	145	41.5
		Female	204	58.5
		Total	349	100.0
2	AGE	Less than 18 years	64	18.4
		18-22 Years	202	58.2
		23 Years And Above	21	23.3
		Total	347	100.0
3	CURRENT LEVEL	100 Level	65	18.6
		200 Level	80	22.9
		300 Level	99	28.3
		400 Level	94	26.9
		500 Level	5	1.4
		Total	347	100.0
4	TYPE OF UNIVERSITY	Public	209	59.7
		Private	140	40.0
		Total	349	100.0
5	PARENT'S HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL	O Level	93	59.7
		Tertiary	161	40.0
		Post Graduate	80	22.9

	LEVEL	Total	334	100.0
6	RANGE OF PARENT'S INCOME	Less Than 100000	82	23.4
		Between 100000 And 500000	183	39.4
		Between 500000 And 1000000	52	14.9
		Above 1000000	39	11.1
		Total	311	100.0
7	ENGAGEMENT IN MALPRACTICE	Yes	134	39.5
		No	205	60.5
		Total	339	100.0

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2020)

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The entire 350 questionnaires administered were retrieved, indicating a 100% response rate. Table 1 show the distribution of respondents. As can be seen from the table, the respondents for this study were mostly: females (58.5%); between the ages of 18 and 22 years (58.2); in 300

level (28.3%); and from public Universities (59.7%). With respect to socio-economic status,

59.7% (93) of the respondents had parents with O' level certificate while 39.4% (183) of respondents were from families where range of parents' income was between 100,000 and

500,000. Although literature suggest otherwise (Nnam & Inah, 2015), only a mere 38.3 per cent

134) of the respondents agreed they had ever engaged in examination malpractice.

Common Manifestations of Examination Malpractice amongst Undergraduates in Nigeria

Respondents were presented with a checklist and asked to indicate the various forms of malpractice they had ever engaged in. Table 2 shows their responses

Table 2: Manifestation of Malpractice

S/N	Forms of malpractice behavior	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Bringing prepared answers to the examination hall (e.g <i>Bullet "chukuli"</i>)	99	19.53
2	Giraffing - Copying other students' work during examination (with or without their consent)	198	39.05
3	Copying directly from textbook or handout during examination	37	7.30
4	Having other people write my examination (impersonation)	31	6.11
5	Writing examination in "special" or prearranged venues	39	7.69
6	Giving (cash, gifts, sex etc) to my lecturers for good grades	64	12.62
7	Writing an examination for another person	39	7.69
	TOTAL	507	100

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2020)

Several of the forms of malpractice found in this study approximate those reported by other studies (for instance, Amadi & Opuiyo, 2018). Of the various forms of malpractice suggested to respondents, the most common forms Undergraduates engaged in were “Giraffing - Copying other students’ work during examination (with or without their consent)” followed by “Bringing prepared answers to the examination hall (e.g Bullet “chukuli)” and “Giving (cash, gifts, sex etc) to my lecturers for good grades”. The least common form of malpractice among the sampled undergraduates was “Having other people write my examination (impersonation)”.

Other forms of Malpractice

Aside the checklist provided, respondents were asked to indicated other forms of malpractice they had engaged in. Table 3 shows responses obtained. Aside forms of malpractice behaviour suggested by the checklist, result indicate that “Asking a fellow student questions in the exam hall” is another common form of malpractice behaviour among Undergraduates.

Table 3: Other common forms of Malpractice

Forms of malpractice behavior	Frequency
Asking a fellow student questions in the exam hall	5
Getting answers to examination questions before the exam date	2
Teaching others in the examination hall	3
Using smart watch in the hall	1
Bringing phones into the hall	1
Sitting in a special order or location	1
Writing on my palm	1
Arranging a girlfriend for my lecturer	1

Source: Authors’ Fieldwork (2020)

It is worthy of note that contrary to several reports (Chukwu & Lato, 2016; NUC, 2016), sorting as a form of malpractice is not rampant among Undergraduates. This is further corroborated by the fact that students’ intention to engage in sorting scored lowest (1.73 and 1.94) among possible malpractice behaviour (See Appendix II). This may be an indication that the war against sorting in Nigeria has been effective. Results from Tables 2, 3 and Appendix II, therefore suggest that while sorting maybe on the decline, Undergraduate students are however turning to more subtle forms of malpractice like Giraffing, use of chukulli or bullet and impersonation.

Initiator of the Malpractice Process

Respondents who had previously engaged in malpractice were asked about who first suggested the idea to them.

Table 4: Initiator of Malpractice idea

S/N	Initiator of the malpractice process	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ranking by undergraduates
1	A friend	97	59.88	1 st
2	My classmate/Colleague	24	14.81	2 nd
3	A lecturer	23	14.20	3 rd
4	Others	18	11.11	4 th
	TOTAL	162	100	

Source: Authors’ Fieldwork (2020)

From the analysis of response, 59.88% of Undergraduates said their friend first suggested the idea of engaging in malpractice to them.

14.81% said that their classmates initiated them into the malpractice. 14.20% of respondents said their lecturers first suggested the idea while 11.11% said others initiated them into the process. By others, respondents indicated they meant 'their Parents', 'school mothers', and 'secondary school teacher'.

Factors that encouraged Malpractice among Undergraduates

Students who agreed they had engaged in malpractices were asked to honestly state reasons why they did so. Content analysis of responses revealed eight factors (see Table 5).

Table 5: Factors that influences malpractice

S/N	Factors	Sample Statements	Freq	%	Ranking of factors
1	Need to obtain better grade	"I wasn't satisfied with what I wrote", "I would have scored a poor grade if I didn't copy from my friend"	27	25.23	1 st
2	Exam tension and forgetfulness	"I couldn't remember what I read", "I am usually so tensed that I go blank in the examination hall"	21	19.63	3 rd
3	Lack of adequate preparation	"I didn't cover my course outline, most of the questions looked unfamiliar", "I honestly didn't prepare for the examination"	25	23.36	2 nd
4	ill health	"I was sick during the exam. My friend had to assist me in writing", "I usually have headaches in the exam hall, it makes thinking difficult"	6	5.61	6 th
5	Fear of failure	"I am always afraid I will fail if I write by myself", "I don't want to fail"	11	10.28	4 th
6	Peer group	"Everyone around me was cheating"	2	1.87	8 th
7	Monetar	"My friends usually settle me for	5	4.67	7 th

	y gain	assisting them in the hall", "it's the way I generate income for myself on campus"			
8	Difficult exams	"The question asked were very complex", "Our lecturers are not fair, they give difficult questions with little time to answer. The only way to survive is to cooperate with my course mates"	10	9.35	5 th
	TOTAL		107	100%	

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2020)

The four most recurring among these factors were: the need to obtain better grade; lack of adequate preparation; examination tension and forgetfulness; and fear of failure. Least occurring among the factors identified were monetary gain and peer group influence. While some of these factor agree with what has been previously suggested in literature (see George & Ukpong, 2013; Petters & Okon, 2013), this study highlights some previously overlooked reasons namely ill gains and pursuit of monetary gain. Result in Table 5 also suggests that factors encouraging malpractice relate more to factors internal to the individual students.

Students' Demographic and Malpractice Intention

Table 6 shows the relationship between selected demographic variables and students' intention to engage in malpractice. Analysis shows that there was a significant relationship between malpractice intention and student's gender ($p=0.006$) as well as type of University ($p=0.005$).

Table 6: Demography and Malpractice intention

Variab les	Cate gorie s	No. of res pon den ts	Mea n inde x	Freq uenc y	P- v al ue	Dec isio n
Gende r	Male	145	2.5	1.409	0.006	Sig nifi can t
	Fema le	204	2.2			
	Total	349	2.3			
Age	Less than 18 years	64	2.3	1.483	0.228	Not sig nifi can t
	18-22 years	202	2.3			
	23 years and abov e	81	2.5			
	Total	347	2.3			
Level	100 level	65	2.1	1.758	0.137	Not sig nifi can t
	200 level	80	2.3			
	300 level	99	2.3			
	400 level	94	2.5			
	500 level	5	2.1			
Total	343	2.3				
Type of Unive rsity	Publi c	209	2.5	8.010	0.005	Sig nifi can t
	Priva te	140	2.2			
	Total	349	2.3			

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2020)

There is however no significant relationship between Malpractice Intention and Students' age ($p=0.228$) or level (0.137). Contrary to suggestions by Calabrese and Cochran (1990), the mean index in term of gender, indicates that malpractice intention is higher among male students and lower among female students,. On the basis of University types, the mean indexes obtained suggest that intention to engage in malpractice was higher in Public Universities and lower in Private Universities.

Psychological Factors, Parents Socio-economic background and Malpractice Intention

Psychological factors in this study comprised of fear of failure, test anxiety, peer pressure, level of preparation and perceived difficulty of examination. These were measure on a five-point Likert scale and perception index obtained is attached as appendix 1. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the level of significance between these factors and intention to engage in malpractice (see Table 7). Findings indicate that the selected psychological variables explained a mere 13.9% variation in malpractice intention. Contrary to suggestions by McCabe (1993), that peer influence had the strongest influence on academic dishonesty, this study found that of all the selected variables, only "Perceived difficulty of Examination" and "Level of Preparation" had any significant relationship with malpractice intention among undergraduate students. We therefore reject hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 6 but accept hypotheses 4 and 5 which stated that level of preparation and perceived difficulty of

examination had significant effect on Undergraduates' examination malpractice intention.

		7	1	
		0.0	1.5	
		61	22	0.1
Fear of Failure	0.0942	9	3	3
Perceived difficulty of Examination		0.0	3.0	
		65	81	0.0
	0.2011	2	8	0
		-	-	-
		0.0	4.8	
Level of Preparation	-0.2809	57	55	0.0
		8	6	0

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2020)

Table 7: Selected psychological factors and malpractice intention

Regression Statistics		ANOVA				
Multiple R	0.3728					
R Square	0.1390					
Adjusted R Square	0.1265					
Standard Error	0.9248					
Observations	350					
		Df	SS	M S	F	Significance F
Regression		5	47.0929	9.5021	11.86	0.00
Residual		344	4.2540	0.0123		
Total		349	51.3469			
		Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	
Intercept	2.3298	0.3554	6.5545	0.0	0.0	
Test Anxiety	-0.0370	0.0071	0.5178	0.6	0	
Peer Pressure	0.0809	0.0000	1.3787	0.1	7	

“Perceived difficulty of Examination” had a positive relationship with malpractice intention. This means that the more difficult an examination, the more likely that students will engage in malpractice and vice versa. This finding has a major implication for the curbing of malpractice. If malpractice will be checked, Lecturers must ensure they: adequately cover their course outline; find interesting ways to teach in class; phrase exam questions properly and adequate time is allotted for each question. “Level of Preparation” however had a negative relationship with malpractice intention. This means the better prepared a student is for an examination, the less likely that such a student will engage in malpractice and vice versa. Undergraduates must therefore be encouraged to study. Parent’s socio-economic status was measured using Parents’ highest educational level and range of parents’ total monthly income. Results obtained from analysis of variance (see Table 8) shows that there was no significant relationship between Parents’ socio-economic status and students’ intention to engage in malpractice.

Table 8: Parents' socio-economic status and Malpractice intention

Variables	Categories	No. of respondents	Mean index	F	P-value	Decision
Educational level of parent	O level	93	2.33	0.0	0.98	Not significant
	Tertiary	161	2.33	14	6	
	Post graduate	80	2.35			
	Total	334	2.33			
Range of parent monthly income	Less than 100,000	81	2.24	2.1	0.09	Not significant
	Between 100,000 and 500,000	138	2.49	27	7	
	Between 500,000 and 1,000,000	52	2.38			
	Above 1,000,000	39	2.10			
	Total	310	2.36			

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2020)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Considering the broad objectives of this study as well as the result obtained, it can be concluded that level of preparation and perceived difficulty of examination are the most significant variables affecting malpractice behavior amongst Undergraduates. Curbing malpractice majorly requires strategizing on managing these two variables. Intention to engage in malpractice was found to be higher among male students and in public Universities.

Policy Recommendation

University administrators can enhance level of preparation among students by providing conducive environment that will encourage studying. Oseyomon and Isibor (2015) observed that academic performance improves as stress

level decreases. University administrators must look out for possible issues that could cause stress among students and tackle them because such issues could negatively affect students' motivation to study. University authorities must also rise up to their responsibilities of monitoring and ensuring lecturers regularly attend lectures as well as ensuring examination questions are moderated. Moderating of questions will help to ensure they cover only areas treated, are adequately timed and are properly worded and not vague. Effort should continue at orienting and reorienting students, lecturers and other stakeholders in the University system about the negative implications of malpractice for students, the University's reputation and even perception of a Country's brand image

Recommendation for further study

Some limitations of this study, serve as opportunities for further research. The selected psychological variables in this study only explained about 14% variation in malpractice intention. This is a pointer to the fact that there are several other significant variables which were not included in this study. There is therefore the need to further unearthing these latent variables as that will help in developing more effective strategies for curbing the malpractice menace. Furthermore, this study was limited to malpractice behavior amongst undergraduates in selected Universities in Edo state. Increasing the scope of the study would help in further testing the validity of the

conclusion reached in this study. Lastly, we observed that malpractice intention was higher amongst students in public Universities. This finding may have been moderated by the fact that the selected private University is a Christian University. There is therefore the need to ascertain whether similar result obtains in “non religious” private Universities. This would provide a better understanding of the implications of religious orientation, religiosity and spirituality on malpractice intention.

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