

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GUIDANCE TRAINING ON THE PERCEPTION OF SS3 BOYS TOWARDS EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE IN A SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOL IN OSUN STATE NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This one shot experimental study examined the effectiveness of guidance training on the perception of Senior Secondary School Three (SSS 111) towards examination malpractice. A pretest treatment of Azuka, Alutu and Aluede (2006) titled "Questionnaire on Students' Perception of Examination Malpractice" was administered on all the 80 SSS111 boys from the purposively selected school, followed by a guidance talk titled "Sensitization of Students on Dangers of Examination Malpractice" for two days and the posttest was given thereafter. Two hypotheses were generated and tested to measure the effectiveness of the training on the perception of the students towards examination malpractice. The statistical analysis was done using t-test and multiple regression tools for the two hypotheses respectively. Results of the study showed that the treatment on examination malpractice had significant impact in reducing examination malpractice. Also, participants' parents' occupation, educational level and familial nurture had no combined contributions on the effects of guidance training on students' perception of examination malpractice. Based on the findings, it was concluded that guidance training in form of guidance talk, seminar, workshop and interaction can be effective in curbing examination malpractice and other related academic malpractice among students.*

**Keywords:** Guidance Training, Examination Malpractice.

### Introduction

The word 'guidance' literally anchors on the root word "guide" which means to lead, pilot, aid, direct, interact, manage, inform, assist and steer (Shahinshah, 2010 & Shobola, 2008). Durojaiye (1972) simply summarized guidance as a means of helping an individual to understand himself. Gladding (1996) also submitted that guidance is a process of helping people make important choices that affect their lives. Considering these definitions, it is obvious that guidance is of paramount importance to every individual as it is believed that no man is an Island. It suffices to say that every man has a need and which must be met by another man through the process of assisting to understand self and to overcome his problem. In the light of this, guidance is applicable to every setting of man.

Guidance in the school setting in Nigeria became necessary with the success that was recorded at the trial-test of vocational guidance that was offered at St. Theresa's College, Ibadan, where fifty-four out of sixty final year students were gainfully employed after graduation. Guidance services became blossom with the advent of 6-3-3-4 system of education, whereby students are required to carefully select subjects that will be leading to their future career (with the assistance of trained guidance counsellor), thereby limiting guidance services to vocation/career in the school setting. As time went by, it became obvious that guidance in the school setting goes beyond career services in making the

individual achieve his life ambition.

Egbochukwu (2008) and Shahinshah (2010) categorized the coverage areas of guidance in the school setting as socio-personal, educational and career. Egbochukwu (2008) in Egbochukwu (2008) further highlighted these categories under the aims of guidance and counselling in Nigeria as that to provide students with opportunities to develop knowledge and appreciation of themselves and others; to develop relationship skills, ethical standards and a sense of responsibility; to acquire skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals which are suited to their needs, interests and abilities; and to provide information that would enable them make decisions about life and career opportunities. Prentice (1965) in Egbochuku & Elika (2010) gave a fuller picture of guidance in school setting, he claimed that guidance programme should incorporate counselling; individual appraisal service; informational service; educational service; personal/social service; placement service; follow-up service; and other services. These indeed encapsulate the total need of the student both within and outside the school setting. However, challenges that are associated with educational activity of students are innumerable in nature. They range from selection of subjects, study habit, examination anxiety, forgetting and remembering, dislikes of teacher and subject, to examination malpractice, especially in the case of Nigeria as the reason for this study.

Examination malpractice has become a normal occurrence among students world over, but more worrisome in Nigeria. Though there have been endless discussions on whether examination exercise should be expunged from school activity but there has not been any other substitute to assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning of both teachers and students respectively. Therefore, examination still remains one strong way of assessing academic activities in schools. Examination, as it were remains one of the Herculean tasks that is insurmountable for students generally irrespective of their level, sex, status or age. At the mention of examination, students begin to agitate, worry, pant, and express other general disposition of anxiety. Aside these common feelings toward examination especially in Nigeria, Ugo & Odimba (2010) submitted that there is over-reliance on results of examinations to secure higher education or to get jobs by the students; and there is high level of moral decadence in the society. Consequent upon these, students resort to various corrupt practices to achieve 'successes' in examinations.

Ugo & Odimba (2010) quoting Afigbo in Onyechere (1996) described examination malpractice as any action done or omitted which makes it impossible to use an examination in determining the level of competence of a candidate in absorbing, reproducing, and where appropriate, applying knowledge. In effect, examination malpractice is any negative deviation or departure from the recommended and accepted norms in the conduct of examination. It is reported that students have devised several ways of practicing examination malpractice, among which are: impersonation; bringing in foreign materials (books, calculator); substituting worked scripts; stealing, converting, misappropriating scripts; collusion in the examination hall (copying); mass/organized cheating involving assistance from teachers and outsiders; and insult/assault on supervisors/ invigilators (Oluyeba & Daramola, 1992 in Alutu & Aluede, 2010). In describing how institutionalized and fraternal examination malpractice has become in Nigeria, Ijaiya (2002) stated that the examination malpractice practitioners employ the services of adult agents/collaborators inform of the teachers, examination agents (in form of examiners in the case of external examinations), touts/mercenaries, as well as the parents to perform the act.

In the bid to curb this ugly menace of examination malpractice, Federal government of Nigeria enacted Act. 33 of 1999 constitution. This act spelt out the various forms of examination malpractice and the penalties that are attached, which range from a fine of N100, 000 to imprisonment of 3 to 4 years. In the same vein, the state and local governments and non-governmental organizations have mounted series of workshops, seminars, campaigns and talks on the pernicious effects of examination malpractice on the students, educational sector and on the image of the nation at international level. In the same line, several academics have written and attended scholarly conferences to proffer solutions to the problem of examination malpractice; and all these efforts have yielded a little improvement on the challenge to have clean and fair examinations in the country. To further lend a helping hand to surmount this problem is the input of guidance service by giving guidance talk to students to enable them change their perception towards examination malpractice; hence this study.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of students on examination malpractice as well as the effects of guidance training on their perception of examination malpractice. Also, to establish if parents' occupation, educational level and familial nurture would affect the perception of the students towards examination malpractice, even after the guidance process.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference at pre-test and post-test of guidance training on the perception of students on examination malpractice.
2. There will be no combined contributions of parents' occupation, parents' educational level and familial nurture on the effects of guidance training on students' perception of examination malpractice.

### **Methodology**

The design used in the study was experimental, adapting the one-shot experimental design without the use of any control group.

### **Participants**

Using the purposive sampling technique, the sample used in the study comprised of all the eighty (80) SSS III boys of Saint John's secondary school, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. The decision to use SSSIII students was because of their preparation for their final public examination; West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE), in which any detectable involvement in examination malpractice by the external examination body would lead to their results being withheld or cancelled. Similarly, boys' school was selected because boys are expected to be more daring than girls; as it appears that many acts of examination malpractice require some daring moves by those involved in it.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used was questionnaire derived from the adaptation of Azuka, et al (2006) tagged: "Students' Perception of Examination Malpractice." The instrument with three way response format of "Agree," "Disagree," and "Can't Say" in which Agree attracts

the value of 3, Disagree 2 and Can't Say attracts the value of 1. The instrument has a total of twenty-five (25) items, spread across sub-themes like self-esteem, self-assertion, and integrity, etc. In it, any candidate with scores from (65-70) is believed to have positive attitude towards examination malpractice while any candidate with scores between (46&52) is believed to have a negative attitude towards examination malpractice.

### Procedure

The study was carried out in just one secondary school. It was preplanned to coincide with the second term examination week in the selected school. On Monday, the first day of the programme, the pretest was given; using an adaptation copy of Azuka, et al (2006) questionnaire to elicit information on the perception of the students on examination malpractice and its severity. The administration of the questionnaire took place between the hours of 9 and 10am. The following two days (Tuesday and Wednesday), guidance talk on examination malpractice titled "Sensitization of Students on Dangers of Examination Malpractice" was given. The guidance talk was conducted between 10am and 12noon the first day and between 8 and 10am the second day. On Friday of the same week, the posttest was administered to the students using the same set of questionnaire.

### Data Analyses

The t-test statistical analysis was used to analyze hypothesis 1 while the multiple regression analysis was employed to analyze hypothesis 2. The results are presented thus:

Table 1 reveals that the students that were exposed to guidance training had a mean score of 67.662 and an sd of 1.757 on examination malpractice construct before the training, and a mean score of 50.612 and an sd of 0.999 at post test level. These values yielded a t-ratio of 69.921, which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 1: t-test table showing the difference at pre-test and post-test of guidance training on the perception of students on examination malpractice.**

	mean	n	sd	t	P<0.05
Pre-test	67.662	80	1.757	69.921	0.196
Post-test	50.612	80	0.999		

It is shown in table 2 that when the independent variables were entered into a regression analysis to determine the relative contribution of each of the dependent variable, it was found that none of their values was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This could then be concluded that these independent variables (Father's Occupation, Mother's Occupation, Father's Educational Level, Mother's Educational Level, Whom do you live with) have no significant influence on the efficacy of the training the students were exposed to, that is guidance training therapy. Thus, the second hypothesis is upheld.

**Table 2: Multiple Regression statistics showing the combined contributions of parents' occupation, parents' educational level and familial nurture on the effects of guidance training on students' perception of examination malpractice.**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	P<0.05
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	50.811	0.575		88.384	0.000
Father's Occupation	-0.041	0.114	-0.045	-0.356	0.723
Mother's Occupation	0.045	0.165	0.033	0.273	0.786
Father's Educational Level	-0.133	0.137	-0.122	-0.972	0.334
Mother's Educational Level	0.105	0.173	0.078	0.607	0.546
Whom do you live with	-0.058	0.038	-0.173	-1.510	0.135

## Discussion

The fallout of this study is that guidance training in form of seminars, talk shows and interactive discussions with students especially in secondary schools will help to reduce the rate of examination malpractice in Nigeria. The first hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference at pre-test and post-test of guidance training on the perception of students on examination malpractice was rejected. The effectiveness of this training is likely dependent on the central position that guidance occupies as a major service to be rendered to the students to become complete citizens within and outside the school setting. This confirms the propositions of Egbochukwu (2008), Shahinshah (2010) and Egbochukwu and Elika (2010) that guidance services should be offered in school settings and part of the coverage area is educational aspect of the students.

The second hypothesis which states that there will be no combined contributions of parents' occupation, parents' educational level and familial nurture on the effects of guidance training on students' perception of examination malpractice was retained. Examined superficially, one would have ordinarily expected that students whose parents' educational level is low, or who engage in menial vocations, or who don't stay with their biological parents as a result of low socio-economic status of the parents would want to engage in any illegal means to achieve their academic feat. Hence, little or no impact of such intervention should positively affect their perception on examination malpractice, but reverse is the case here. The plausible reason for this might also be the usefulness of guidance services to the students.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

From the findings of this study, it is concluded that guidance training in form of guidance talk, seminar, and interaction can be effective in curbing examination malpractice and other related academic malpractice. It is further established from the findings of this study that external attributes such as family, socio-economic status and the likes can not affect the effectiveness of guidance training to reduce the perception level of the students towards examination malpractice. It is therefore recommended that:

- 1) School heads, teachers and ministry of education should give counselling its proper place in the school system, whereby, a school counsellor is allowed to carry out counselling duties among the students and staff of the school; and not to be found doing other administrative chores and teaching subjects
- 2) Counsellors should from time to time mount guidance seminars or talks in the school addressing some ills that are associated with the society but which the students can learn to correct
- 3) There is need to assess counselling activities in the schools on term basis to inform the counsellors on how they are faring
- 4) There is also the need for school counsellors and parents to synergies the conflicting challenges of the students and both work towards a fruitful completion of their academic ambition.

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