
**PERCEIVED ROLES OF SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN
CURBING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES IN SELECTED
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KWARA STATE**

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Abstract

This paper assessed the perceived roles of Social Studies students in curbing examination malpractices in selected Secondary Schools in Kwara State. The study was descriptive survey design and three hundred and seventy-two (372) male and female students were sampled out of ten thousand (10,000) students in Kwara State. A structured instrument titled Social Studies Instrument for Examination Malpractices (SSIEM) was used to elicit information for the study. Three hypotheses were tested using inferential statistical techniques and independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance. It was revealed that examination malpractices discourage hard work among students and also discovered that it is possible to use Social Studies to reduce desperation during examinations among students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Social Studies curriculum by Nigeria Education Research and Development Council should be in consonance with

the dynamic and contemporary society. Social Studies Educators should employ appropriate instructional strategies to enhance effective learning such as the students-participatory approach.

Keywords: Perceived roles, Students, Examination malpractices, Schools, Social Studies.

Introduction

It is imperative to note that Social Studies is a discipline which deals with peoples' interaction within their environment and with the people around them. It deals with people who have various problems and are striving in order to improve their living conditions. However, Social Studies is not limited to just academic processes but also inculcates the right types of values, skills and attitudes needed for the functioning and survival of the individual and society. It is a subject that asks questions, raises issues, faces problems, and identifies realities of life (Isyaku, 2012). Therefore, through the knowledge of Social Studies students understand their environment and the social problems existing within their environment and attempt to proffer solutions to such problems, for instance, examination malpractice, cultism, human trafficking, prostitution, drug abuse and corruption (Ololobou, 2010).

The knowledge of Social Studies will equip the students to be self-reliant and independent so as to enable the student to contend with challenges of examination malpractices and it will form the foundation for continuing education. This will help eliminate the issue of haling and any other wrong during examination. Through Social Studies, students obtain knowledge of the past which will help them to shape the present and predict the future. Social Studies is scientific in nature because it embraces innovation and critical thinking, imperatively, it will help develop students' positive attitude towards scientific and technological innovations instead of relying so much on certificate-oriented based education (Ololobou, 2010). This will help broaden the horizon of the students and discourage students from examination malpractice. Social Studies equip

students with basic skills and good social habits to fit into society. It means, developing the students' capacity to learn and to acquire skills essential to the Formation of a satisfactory professional life (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014).

Social Studies enhances the achievement of the national educational aims and objectives by educating for self-realization, human relationships, civic responsibility, economic competencies and critical thinking through its various contents and methods (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008). Knowledge of Social Studies will help students, especially at the junior secondary school level to distance themselves from examination malpractices because it is contrary to the acceptable norms and values of society and the objectives of Social Studies. It will also help students to become responsible and disciplined individuals capable and willing to contribute to the development of their societies (NERDC, 2007). The educational goals of the nation desire to build complete and balanced citizens by emphasizing all aspects of learning. Similarly, the Social Studies conception of an effective and efficient citizen is one who is cognitively alert, possesses functional and useful skills as well capable of exhibiting desirable attitudes, values and actions (Ololobou, 2010).

The value and functionality of any educational system lies in its ability to actualize the goals of education. In educational systems, world over, the examination process makes the difference. The goals of national educational systems and indeed national development become like a mirage if examination ethics is not encouraged and instituted (Nwadiani, 2005). Examination remains the best tool for an objective assessment and evaluation of what students have achieved after a period of schooling. Hence any action that undermines examinations pose a great threat to the validity and reliability of examination results and certificate (Olatunbosun, 2009).

Unfortunately, the process of examination malpractice in Nigeria Junior Secondary Schools has become a contemporary shame (Nwadiani, 2005). This is attributed to the high degree of examination malpractice that has become endemic in the educational system. Evidences abound of increasing involvement in examination

malpractice by students, teachers and parents (*Daily Independent*, 2004, *Vanguard*, 2005; *Weekend Pointer*, 2005). Examination malpractice is any act of omission or commission by a person who in anticipation of, before, during or after any examination fraudulently secures any unfair advantage for himself or any other person in such a manner that contravenes the rules and regulations of the extent of undermining the validity, reliability and authenticity of the examination, Examination Act, 1999. The alarming rate of increase in examination malpractice in junior secondary schools in Nigeria, calls for concern from all stakeholders in the education sector. The incidence of examination malpractice is multidimensional in nature ranging from smuggling of prepared notes into examination halls and classes (Adegoke, 2010). Examination malpractice is a scourge that has defied all measures adopted to eradicate it from the educational system. It has continued to rear its ugly head in most examinations conducted in Nigeria from primary to universities.

In view of the ever-increasing incidences of examination malpractices and the problem associated with the conduct of examinations in Nigeria, this paper is undertaken to survey secondary school students' perception of Social Studies as a tool in curbing examination malpractice among JSS students and, parents in Kwara State, Nigeria. Of all the subjects studied in Nigeria schools, Social Studies is the most (if not the only) appropriate curriculum design for addressing Nigeria's problem educationally and comprehensively (Okam, 2002). It was designed from a unique perspective of exploring the potential of Social Studies as a curriculum instrument for curbing examination malpractice among Junior Secondary School students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Fagbuyi (2012) noted that examination malpractice has become so rampant that education stakeholders no longer have enough confidence in the certificate being used by various educational institutions all over the country. He advocates that more innovated and decisive steps should be taken to stop this menace. Therefore, the research is to assess if there is any difference between male and female students' regarding the perception of malpractice in Kwara state. And if there is any difference between rural and urban

students' perception of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractice in Kwara State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to assess the perceived roles of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices among selected secondary school students. Specifically, the study examined the:

- i. perception of male and female students in curbing examination malpractices;
- ii. perception of JSSII & JSSIII student on the roles Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices in Kwara State; and
- iii. influence of rural and urban students' perception in curbing examination malpractices.

Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant difference between male and female students' perception of the roles of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractice in Kwara State.
- ii. There is no significant difference between JSS II and JSS III students' perception of the roles Social Studies in curbing examination malpractice in Kwara State.
- iii. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students' perception of the roles Social Studies in curbing examination malpractice amongst students in Kwara State.

Methods

This study adopted descriptive survey design which was employed to assess the perception of Secondary schools Students of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices in Kwara State. The reason for using descriptive method is because its sufficiency in drawing information about the feelings and ideas from large subject. The population of the study was ten thousand (10,000) students. A simple random technique was employed to select three hundred and seventy-two (372) respondents as the sample size of the study.

The structured instrument titled perceived role of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices Questionnaire Social (PROSSICEMQ) was used. The face and content validities were determined by the experts in Social Studies in Kwara State while reliability was determined by using split-half method and the result yielded. 0.86.

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between male and female students’ perception of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices amongst JSS students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Perception of Male and Female Students on Social Studies in Curbing Examination Malpractices

Students	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig (P)	Dec
Male	205	91.2727	6.2505	146	1.121	1.96	0.264	H02 Accepted
Female	167	89.9437	8.1203					

Table 1 shows that the calculated p-value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. While the t-calculated value of 5.754 is greater than t-critical value of 1.96 at DF 370. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was significant difference between male and female students’ perception of Social Studies in curbing examination Malpractices.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between JSS II & JSS III Students’ perception of the roles of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices in Kwara State.

Table 2: Perception of JSS II and III Students’ view on Social Studies in Curbing Examination Malpractices

Students	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig (P)	Dec
Male	205	91.2727	6.2505	146	1.121	1.96	0.264	H02 Accepted
Female	167	89.9437	8.1203					

Table 2 shows that the calculated p-value of 0.264 is greater than 0.05 at significance level while the t-calculated of 1.121 is lower than the t-critical value of 1.96. at df 146. This led to the acceptance and retention of JSS II & JSS III students' perception in curbing examination Malpractices.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between rural and urban students' perception of the roles of Social Studies in curbing examination Malpractices amongst students in Kwara State.

Table 3: Perception of Rural and Urban Students' view on Social Studies in Curbing Examination Malpractices

Students	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig (P)
Urban	224	91.4286	8.13200	370	0.193	1.96	0.847
Rural	148	91.5946	8.10798				

Table 3 shows that the calculated P-value of 0.0847 is higher than the 0.05 alpha level of significance while the t-calculated value of 0.193 is lower than the critical value 1.96 at DF 370. This results in the retention of the null hypothesis and the perception of rural and urban students' views on the roles of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices.

Discussions

The result of the study shows that hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female students' perception of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices. The finding corroborates with Edukugho (2006), Adegoke (2010) and Fagbuyi (2012) who are asserted that Junior secondary schools are no longer committed to their studies. They believed that can only receive assistance in the examination.

The class level of students of hypothesis two revealed the acceptance of students' view in the perception of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices amongst students. This was in agreement with Omoeba (2008), Olatunbosun (2009), and Ololobu (2010) that attributed malpractices to students'

unpreparedness which create's lack of confidence in their ability to pass their examination and thereby results in cheating.

The location of the students in hypothesis two shows the significant differences exist between rural and urban students of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices. This finding is in line with the assertion of Tijani (2005), Okam (2002), and Isvaku (2012) believed that examination malpractices are likely to occur irrespective of the location (rural and urban areas) of the students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher drew the conclusion that gender has no significant difference on students' perception of Social Studies in curbing examination malpractices, and students' opinion doesn't establish the curbing of examination malpractices in Kwara State. In addition, the class level of students lacks significant differences in the perception of curbing of examination malpractices and the Location of the learners is not a barrier on the perception of Social Studies in curbing Examination Malpractices in Kwara State.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, it was recommended that curriculum developer should developer instruction that will bring about development and acquisition of critical thinking, problem solving and performances skills in students. Social Studies Educators should employ appropriated instructional strategy to enhance effective learning. Social Studies experts should expose Students to activities that would promote and encourage social interaction, active engagement in learning, self-motivation discovery learning, learning by doing and learning by experience.

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