

# Examination Malpractices in Tertiary Institutions: Perceived Roles of Women Academia in Business Education

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## Abstract

Women are important part of a nation's citizenry. This is because God has deposited great traits in women which make them nation builders such as love, peace, empathy, wisdom, strength, among others. Being the first contact with children, they know how to handle issues that arise with children and youth. In the academic world, women have the capacity to build good relationship with, care for and model good character for students. This paper examined the roles of women academia in Business Education and their responsibility in curbing the menace of examination malpractices in tertiary institutions. The paper delved into purposes of examination; rising tide in social vices: examination malpractices; causes of examination malpractices; consequences of examination malpractices; roles of women academia in curbing examination malpractices; and way out. The paper concluded that women are the potent tool in curbing social vices as they have the innate ability as mothers to understand and help to change students positively. It was recommended among others, that women academia should make deliberate and conscious efforts in influencing the lives of students by teaching students the value of vocational skill acquisition and entrepreneurial skills which will help them in future rather than running after certificates that lack originality because the bible says "...owo alaapon ni imu ola wa" meaning "...the hand of the diligent makes rich" (Proverbs 10:4).

**Keywords:** Examination, Malpractices, Women, Academia, Business Education.

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## I. Introduction

Women in academics are potent tools of social change, hence potent tools in curbing social vices. This can be as a result of their innate ability as mothers to understand and help to influence students positively, and consequently the society. The importance of quality education in nation building has been emphasized and described as the bedrock of every society and a tool for nation building. Okemakinde (2014) noted that in recent times, quality education was brought to focus owing to the neglect and mass production of educated people without regards to set standard, procedure and process in education; quality education is said to be the right of every citizen, not a privilege that may be granted or withheld by those to provide it and for quality education to be achieved, it is important to know that principal factors such as the teacher, the learning environment and the student must be in place.

Akinfolarin (2004) submitted that educational administrators have important roles to play in the lives of students such as their moral, social and academic attainment, among others but noted, however, that today, these crucial roles of the administrators have become more challenging. She emphasized that the tertiary institutions in our society are not different from any institution of learning in the whole world although the climatic condition may differ but the management principles or activities of planning, organizing, controlling, staffing and decision making are not peculiar. It is the responsibility of a school administrator to achieve specific objectives and results of the institutions through the participation of other stakeholders such as lecturers, students, parents, community members and government officials among others. She reiterated that educational institutions are not only to train people on intellectual development but to train a 'total individual' spiritually, morally, physically and mentally, hence, the administrators' roles include character molding, transmitting knowledge and skills as well as managing other related educational activities.

Adegbenjo and Adebayo (2017) see examination as a means of assessment to test the knowledge, skills and abilities of students in schools. It is a means of evaluating the quantity of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired within a specified period of time. Citing Nnam and Inah (2015), examination is a yardstick

against which candidates' competencies and progresses are formally measured and appraised in the education sector. Teaching and learning become more efficient and effective when students are subjected to examination processes in order to determine the rate of assimilation of contents of the instruction given.

Women are very important and needed for success in every facet of life because of the special traits God has deposited in them. The mother is the first contact with children in any family. Dankaro and Dankaro (2011) citing Hughes, Kroehler and Zenden, (1999) affirmed that the family is the child's immediate constituency and a primary socialization agent in its training in the formative years. It is for this reason that the family plays a major role in caring for children and educating them without which there would be no cultural continuity. Such education provides a social basis for emotional and social attachment to enable them acquire behaviours essential for effective participation in the society. Okpoko (2010) noted that women are usually the first known teachers of children at home.

According to Ayanniyi and Anya (2017), the development of a nation largely depends on the types of values that are cherished, vigorously pursued and applied by majority of its citizens. They averred that although values vary from place to place, from people to people and from one nation to another, there are universal values that are recognized generally, and accepted in societies globally such as honesty, hard work, justice and patriotism. However, Ayanniyi and Anya noted that Nigerian society has gradually relapsed in its adherence to laudable traditional values for which traditional societies of the pre-colonial era were known. In actuality, most of traditional folklores and fireside stories contain lessons to be learned in honesty, hard work, humility, charity to the destitute and dedication but these values have been greatly eroded and many social vices such as drug abuse, cultism, examination malpractice, prostitution, sexual harassment, armed robbery, kidnapping, violent demonstration and volatile and militant students' unionism has emerged and are threatening to wipe out the cherished values.

Education is the engine room for the socio-economic and political development of any nation, which inculcates into learners, skills and attitudes under the auspices of the school for the learners' continuous and willful growth in personal social competence (Nwachokor, 2011). Mshelia (2014) however, noted that ethical issues confront institutions of learning, students and all other employers of labour in an organization. These issues arise in the relationship between the students and the schools, between students and other parties like lecturers, school administrators, other staff, society and employers, among others.

Integrity is an important factor in the business life, hence the need for people who are able to hold up their heads in order to succeed as individuals and part of the nation. Madu and Jile (2008) opined that every business is a venture, whether such business succeeds or fails depend on the ability of the entrepreneur to effectively use his positive qualities and restrain his negative characteristics such as self-confidence, risk taking, task oriented, drive and energy, leadership, creativity, taking initiatives, aggressiveness, empathy, among others. Amao-Kehinde and Olaniyi (2018) made it clear that schools in Nigeria do not mould people to understand their moral identity, character formation and letting people understand who they are, instead, they are taught to believe in what they are. This leads to general lack of commitment to the ideals of honesty, transparency, prudence, accountability and integrity in the implementations of academic activities in Nigeria.

Nwachokor (2011) sees functional business education as an aspect of vocational training which makes her recipients to be exposed to saleable skills, which will make its beneficiaries to be self-reliant. Business education is an aspect of educational programme which has been carefully designed to meet the basic skills, knowledge and capabilities to function either as business teachers or business executives. It is education needed to teach people business, to handle personal affairs and about business in order to be good citizens of the society. Amao-Kehinde and Olaniyi however, noted that lack of proper code of conducts (ethics) in institutions of learning has become a plague that hinders the speedy development of the programme of business education.

Every business deserves effective and efficient human resources for its success. However, Paul, Wada; Enejoh and Omisore, (2013) observed that the alarming rate of increase in examination malpractice in academic institutions (which is the nursing ground) for the abundant human resource in Nigeria draws attention from all stakeholders in the education/training sector. They posit that the examination system is a paramount factor that determines the sustainability of the development of human resource, training and research. From all indications, the widespread phenomenon of examination malpractice can be best described as the 'new age suicide' because; both persons who indulge in the act have killed themselves already.

This paper highlights the roles that women in academics can play in assisting students to avoid examination malpractices.

### **Purposes of Examination**

Examination is the process of assessing learning outcomes through which teachers evaluate the extent to which the students have followed and understood learning experiences to which they have been exposed (Obioda, Onyechi and Okere, 2013). Aboki (2000) in Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) opined that examination lies in the centre of any educational enterprise as it serves three main purposes: measuring competence or

achievement in a given field of endeavor; helping predict future success and also assisting in selection purposes; and as an activity, providing incentives to learning. They noted that examination and education are inseparable, for the efficiency and quality of an educational system is usually determined through the performance of its products in an examination or a set of examinations. The examination therefore, influences what is taught and learned in schools, especially when the results of the examinations are used to make important decisions on achievement, selection and placement purposes. In the same vein, Zakka (2014) in Adegbenjo and Adebayo (2017) says examinations could be seen as the most objective techniques used in the measurement of learning outcomes at all levels of education in Nigeria and the world over.

Adegbenjo and Adebayo (2017) however, noted that despite the importance of examination in teaching and learning processes, a number of factors may likely affect the credibility of examination scores and one of such practices as Onuka and Durowoju (2013) noted, is examination malpractice, which is any dishonest or unauthorised action or deed committed by a student on his own or in collaboration with others like fellow students, guardians, parents, teachers, head teachers, examination officials, supervisors, invigilators, security officers and anybody or group of people before, during or after examination in order to obtain underserved marks or grades. Examination malpractice does not occur in the examination hall alone, it occurs before, during and even after the examination. The incidences of examination malpractice are common everywhere and every examination season witnesses the new and ingenious ways of cheating.

Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) emphasized that in Nigeria, examinations have become a fulcrum for determining promotion from one level to another and the acquisition of certificates which consequently determine the future occupational career of a student or candidate. The examination therefore, becomes a “do or die” affair. This high stake associated with examination induces desperation in students to the extent of wanting to do anything and everything to ensure success. All stakeholders in educational planning have a responsibility to influence positively on how examinations are administered.

Scholars such as Adeyemi (2010); Akanni and Odofin (2015); Onyibe, Uma and Ibina (2015), among others, found that examination malpractice is always in form of copying on sheets of paper, handkerchiefs, desk/chairs; swapping of answer booklets and collusion with other candidates or external agents; leakage of examination questions before the actual examination day; use of electronic gadgets like calculators, organizers, radio walkman and mobile phones. Also, bringing books or cribs into the hall, insulting or assaulting supervisor or invigilator, replacement of answer script with another one during or after the examination, impersonation, smuggling scripts written outside into the examination hall, writing on thigh, stretching of neck like the Giraffe to look at the work of fellow candidates, hooligans gaining entry into the examination hall by force when examination is in progress to remove question paper, relaxation of vigilance by invigilators, talking, dictation of answers to students among others.

Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) emphasized that examination malpractice occurs at all levels of the Nigerian educational sector and noted how sad that teachers, parents, management of institutions or school authorities, office clerks, invigilators or supervisors, officials of various examination bodies, police officers and bank officials; that is, custodians of examination materials are in most cases the perpetrators of examination malpractices. They averred that it is disheartening that examinations are not achieving their primary objectives because examination malpractice had become a nauseating phenomenon in the Nigerian education system which is posing a great threat to the standard of examinations in Nigeria and the acceptability of the worth of the certificates resulting from the examinations. The problem of examination malpractice has reduced certificates issued in Nigeria into worthless papers, such that a number of candidates with outstanding results cannot defend their certificates.

### **Rising Tide in Social Vices: Examination Malpractices**

Examination malpractice refers to actions and behaviours that negate the orderly conduct and procedures of examination and gives a candidate undue advantage over others. such actions include getting advance information of examination questions before the examination, cheating to get underserved grades or smuggling pre-prepared answer into the examination hall or collaborating with others during the examination (Obioda, Onyechi and Okere, 2013). Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) see examination as a form of evaluation where the learner is tested in all areas covered in the process of teaching at the end of a semester for proper placement and certification. It has a time table and a time frame. It always has an external body or examination committee to moderate. Adebayo (2004) observed that examination malpractice is really a cankerworm in the nations' educational fabrics but noted, however, that with the full cooperation of well meaning Nigerians, the stain could be removed. Odeleye (2014) stated that the confusion and bastardisation of the Nigerian society which manifest in lack of integrity and moral failure is more visible in the spate of examination malpractices in schools and external examinations.

Amao-Kehinde and Olaniyi (2018) noted a worldwide moral breakdown characterized by cheating in examinations, increased use of drugs, drinking of alcohol, sex abuse, terrorism, cultism and kidnapping and

averted that these unethical behaviours have pervaded the entire educational system and that efforts over the years to reduce the incidences through ethical re-orientation of learners have not yielded much result. They noted the prevailing global challenges to be tackled by the present and future leaders of the country may persist unless the educational system is made to become free of any misconduct or misbehaviours.

Women academia in business education are perceived to be able to help in instilling these values through vocational guidance and exceptional moral models. This will go a long way to instill in students value for work. Fasae (2018) noted the need for Nigeria to rise up from its mire of moral decadence through the essential tools of character and vocational development which can be made possible via the inculcation of sound moral education, values, ethics, and positive attitude into vocational education curriculum. Faborode (2010) in Abamba (2011) however, noted that the problem of Nigeria's under development and indeed subsisting economic regression and mass poverty is rooted in lack of sustained and sustainable industrial base. He suggested the principle of 'vicious circle of knowledge – enterprise – production – experience – knowledge' to lay the foundation for vocational and technological learning which will eventually transform Nigeria to a technological society.

In the views of the authors, overcrowding classrooms; lack of basic amenities such as electricity, water, conducive classrooms, clean environment, public toilets; order of the day; influence of peer groups; buying handouts; poor teaching methods; bad teachers' behaviour; teachers' attendance; government recognition of certificates above hardwork; methods of testing; higher tuition; among others, are responsible for students participation in examination malpractices.

### **Causes of Examination Malpractices**

Malpractice refers to all illegal means adopted by students in passing examination either within or outside the examination hall. It can be taken to mean 'cheating' 'cookery' or 'fraud'. It is also an act or arrangement from which an examinee is programmed to derive illegal and illicit advantage over and above other candidates (students) in respect of some given examinations (Ayanniyi and Anya (2017). A lot of reasons are responsible for examination malpractice based on scholars' views. Adegbenjo and Adebayo (2017) examined causes and consequences of examination malpractice on the academic achievement of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in Polytechnics in South-Western zone of Nigeria and found that government non-implementation of examination malpractice decree and inadequate preparation for examinations were some of the causes of examination malpractices. Animasahun and Ogunniran (2014) studied correlate of examination malpractice among secondary school students in Oyo State and found that government non-implementation of examination malpractices decree, lack of effective supervision of students during examinations, society preference for paper qualification, inadequate preparation for examination, lack of self-confidence, ill-equipped school and lack of good study habits are the causes of examination malpractices.

Oseni (2014) investigated the factors influencing examination malpractice and noted that societal factors such as quality of family, moral and societal values; personal factors (genetic); emphasis on certificates; poor teaching methods and lack of completion of the required syllabus; inadequate school facilities and teachers; lack of confidence on the part of the students resulting from poor attitude to school, poor study habit, unpreparedness for the examination, lack of interest and peer group influence; high expectation from the society: low salary levels of teachers and examination officials; high enrollment fees; poor supervision during examination and aided by invigilators; and unconducive environment where examinations are written are responsible for examination malpractices in schools.

Furthermore, Bitrus (2013) identified moral decadence, quest for material wealth, urge for credentials rather than education, poor teaching/ learning habits, upbringing of the children, parents and family history, poverty/poor remuneration, frustration, pride, maladministration of schools heads and examiners, students' lack of self-confidence, poor condition of examination centre's/halls, unceasing staff strikes that often interrupt academic calendar, desire to be in business by proprietor of private learning institutions, inadequate guardian and counseling in our various learning institutions, inadequate laws/policies to tackle the menace, non enforcement of existing law on offenders, in most cases and in many schools, school management, lecturers/teachers, parents/guardians and the so called security agents are involved. Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) emphasised that in most of the studies conducted on examination malpractices in schools, researchers agree that the two (2) greatest causal factors of malpractices were the fear of failure and too much emphasis which the government and society attach to paper qualifications.

### **Consequences of Examination Malpractices**

The effectiveness of any educational programme is determined by appropriate methods of assessment which is an indicator of quality of performance of the school system and the level of attainment of its products. Bitrus (2013) noted the need to set machineries in motion to identify all culprits and get them sanctioned.

Though it sounds emotive, these reflect the truth of the matters in most of our various learning institutions. Schools' management, lecturers/teachers, proprietors, students and guardians, examiners and invigilators and even security men and women have buried their integrity.

Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) noted that wrong perception of education as a means of meal ticket, getting a job and a matter of must acquire the paper qualifications by hook or crook has been formed in the minds of students. Students no longer appreciate the intrinsic value of education which is the total development of the individual to be able to make meaningful contribution to the family, community and nation (<http://www.nairaland.com>). Zakka (2014) in Adegbenjo and Adebayo (2017) observed that examination malpractices decreases job efficiency, denies innocent students the opportunity for admission, delays the processing of examination results and stunts national growth. Furthermore, Anzene (2014) in Onyibe, Uma and Ibina (2015).listed the effects of examination malpractices to be dismissal, loss of position and irreversible loss of credibility, termination, loss of self-confidence and certificate racketeering are the effects of examination malpractices on national development.

In the views of the authors, poor human resources development results which leads to poor management of organisations and consequently, poor economic development.

### **Perceived Roles of Women Academia in curbing Examination Malpractices**

Amao-Kehinde, and Olaniyi (2018) citing White and Bagilhole (2009) said the word academia refers to the academic world, or an environment concerned with the pursuit of research, education, scholarship and community service. It could also mean a scholastic life. It is the literary accumulation of knowledge and skills as well as development and transmission of knowledge from generation to generation. Furthermore, it is a term used to portray the people, students, institutions and faculty involved in teaching-learning.

Teachers exert a great influence on students from whom students get inspiration and he also acts as a quasi-counsellor who guides them in the day-to-day activities of the school. The teacher is the pivot on which any educational development rotates because he is the one who interprets the aims, goals and plans of education. When talking about crisis of character, it is important to note the role of teachers and schools in character building (Ogidi (2016). Abamba (2011) noted that the academia could make constructive criticisms and make suggestions as to how best to bring to reality the envisioned 'Great Nigeria' and also serve as a veritable pool of ideas that can help Nigeria actualize her great vision. It was also noted that so far, the academia has not been failing in this as they have been having powerful influence on students through the courses they teach. Further observation revealed the need for behavioural engineering for the adult population who hold the destiny of the nation in their hands and noted that the capable men and women in our tertiary institutions can help in this.

Amao-Kehinde and Olaniyi (2018) averred that teachers exert a great influence on students in terms of imparting knowledge and skills in the process of learning. They see the school as an institution that influences in a decisive manner the education of young generations of a country, the transmission of cultural and moral values, as well as the premises for new social changes. The impact of school in shaping the young generation is very important and therefore requires an analysis of its real contribution and its values.

Woman is the adult female human being. The importance of women to education and national development cannot be over emphasized. They are home makers, main custodian of social, cultural and fundamental values of a society and permanent change is often best achieved through them (Aladenusi, 2008). Onyeukwu (2008) avers that the fundamental role played by women in contemporary leadership is incontrovertible because either by natural endowment or by consequential, the role of women in national development cannot be over emphasized. Jatau and Pali (2008) noted that women occupy an important place and perform an important role in every society. As mothers, they model character and help in the upbringing of children.

Women today face enormous challenges in educating the young people in their charge. In addition to providing youth with basic academic knowledge, skills, and character development training, women have increasingly been called upon to play a primary role in helping to solve a variety of social problems among youths such as aggressive and anti-social behaviours, drug abuse, precocious sexual activity, criminal activities, academic under-achievement and school failure (Mogbeyiteren, 2018).

Kehinde; Adeyemi; Abimbola; Alagbala and Fabunmi (2018) observed that technology can be a game changer for children in the next 21<sup>st</sup> century. They noted that women behaviour heavily influence children characters by their social surroundings. Parents, caregivers, culture, peers and society are only some of the social influences that affect children behaviour, when a child's character development is hindered by neglect or abuse, they will oftentimes have difficulties throughout their lives adapting to social settings and viewing themselves as being worthy of love. Should be alert about the dangers and the opportunities the new technologies created.

It is obvious that mothers need to demonstrate, teach values and morals through their characters in the society for the youth to be well developed and grow functionally since some children observed the lack of

values in their parents because they are closer to their lives. The adult interaction is essential since humans have “social” brain (Goswami, 2008) which acquires knowledge incrementally through cultural experiences and social context, also children need technical skills and equipment to thrive in the technological world.

### **Way Out**

There is no doubt that morals have declined dramatically (Amao-Kehinde & Olaniyi, 2018). Fading away of character education has put the society into serious problems and eventual decay. The society suffers when character is lost. Any society devoid of character and moral values is heading towards her doom. The deficiency of proper character is responsible for the increase in the rates of examination malpractice, violence, corruption, abduction and other heinous activities. Teachers must recognize that they are first and foremost character educators through teaching students the values of caring, honesty, responsibility and other important traits that make for a patriotic citizen. (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006).

Ayanniyi and Anya (2017), proffering solutions to examination malpractices noted that experts on Behaviour Management such as (Onokerhoraye, 1993, Alhassan, 2006, Awanbor, 2006 and Jekayinfa, 2007) have written that in order to put an end to the persistent menace of examination malpractices in our institutions, parents, teachers, society, government, students, and the school administrators have specific roles to play.

**The Parents:** Should not in any way lend support to their wards to engage in any sort of examination malpractice not give money to their children either to buy examination papers or to appoint examination contractors. Parents should provide their wards with abundant home supervision and training by good examples and models of excellence which will enable them to pass through stress and difficult situations.

**The Teachers:** Should guide students to develop a healthy self-concept which would help them to form a right disposition to life and help to modify their attitudes against any act of misbehaviour. Teachers, being indispensable in the process of education should possess the attributes of endurance, diligence and honesty and be able to impact such attributes to the students by teaching values that students can know in advance and actions they can take in any given situation.

Furthermore, Ayanniyi and Anya (2017) opined that immoral behaviours, such as examination malpractice, could be prevented by moral education if students are led to appreciate the effects of one’s choices on others. Teachers can achieve this desirable moral attitude in learners if they make effort to link their lessons/lectures to moral thinking activities and by serving as models to the learners. Examinations should be invigilated in the very proper ways they are to be done and be sincere to their consciences in the way they teach. Teachers should do real teaching instead of dictating notes or forcing students to buy handouts and not going to class to teach.

**The Students:** Students should avoid laziness, gross indiscipline and other anti-social behaviours, attend classes regularly, study individually and in groups, prepare well for and pass examinations by themselves. All these can be done by developing good and well planned study habit.

Women academics are perceived by the authors to be able to help in assisting students in overcoming the vice of examination malpractices through the following ways:

- Building good relationship with students, caring for and showing concern in their affairs. This can be achieved by encouraging effective discussion, communication and interaction with students both within and outside the classroom.
- Being examples of good character models for students during teaching and examination supervision. Emphasize values, morals and honesty that they believe in through their character and behaviour.
- Demonstrate the value of hardwork and diligence to students and de-emphasize the value of certificates without originality. Students who are hardworking do not engage in examination malpractice.
- Teach students to understand their moral identity and self-esteem, emphasize the need for students to be sound in both mind and morals and teach them mutual respect for self, others and constituted authority.
- Teach concepts and ensure that students understand well before examinations and also assist students with techniques for studying for success.
- Teach students the importance of answering questions correctly. Some students fail because they don’t give adequate responses to questions.
- Educate students on the values, opportunities and dangers inherent in social media and bad peers.
- Show personal interest in students’ personal affairs, rendering little financial help where necessary. Teach them to believe in themselves, i.e. who they are rather than what they are. Enhancing their social and emotional skill development.
- Go out for them consciously. Look for them in order to help them. Do not wait for them to come for help before you help them.
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## II. Conclusion

There is no doubt that women are important in nation building. In the academic world, women are the potent tool in curbing social vices as they have the innate ability as mothers to understand and help to change students positively. This could be by way of dedication to hardwork and role models in good behaviour.

## III. Recommendations

- The study recommended that women academia should make deliberate and conscious efforts in influencing the lives of students.
- They should teach students the value of vocational skill acquisition and entrepreneurship skills which will help them in future rather than running after certificates because the Bible says "...owo alaapon ni imu ola wa" meaning "...the hand of the diligent makes rich" (Proverbs 10:4).
- Women counselling units should be organized in schools where students can be directed to when caught engaging in social vices.

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