

## **Impact Of Quality Assurance Strategies On Curbing Examination Misconduct Among Senior Secondary School Students In Federal Capital Territory, Abuja**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the impact of quality assurance strategies on curbing examination misconduct among senior secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Two research questions and its correspondent's hypotheses were used in this study. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of this study comprises of the entire 4036 (1695 males and 2341 females) teachers where 430 teachers were used as a sample size of this study. Questionnaire on the Role of Quality Assurance Strategies and Examination Misconduct' (QRQASEM) was developed and faced validated by two experts in educational measurement and evaluation which yielded 0.87 validity index and Cronbach Alpha was used to determined internal constancy which yielded 0.85 reliability index. The data collected was answered using percentage to answer research while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significant. The finding reveals that, monitoring as a quality assurance strategy has a significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students, and supervision as a quality assurance strategy has a significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. Base on the findings, it was recommended that principals/teachers should make sure that they monitor students very well during examination to curbing examination misconduct in secondary schools, making sure that they evaluates the students very well during lesson in the class before examination to curbing examination misconduct in secondary schools

**KEYWORDS:** Quality assurance, curbing examination misconduct

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The value and functionality of any educational system lie 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 mirage if examination ethics are not encouraged and introduced, it will affect the educational process because in Nigeria, ministries of education, examination bodies, parents, school principals, classroom teachers, and even learners base their judgments concerning the quality of educational outcomes most of the time on performance at public examinations [1]. Public examination therefore seems to be the most popular parameter by which society judges the product of its educational system. Till date, examinations still remain the best tool for NECO objective assessment and evaluation of what learners have achieved after a period of schooling. Hence, any action that undermines examinations poses a great threat to the validity and reliability of examination results and certification.

Onuka [2] observed that examination is not only a process of assessing the progress of students but, it also motivates and helps them to know their academic strengths and weaknesses apart from providing teacher with opportunities to try new methods of teaching. But when examination is not properly conducted, the expected feedback may not result. Hence, the result of such evaluation leads to wrong decision and judgment which affect the teacher and learner, the entire education industry, as well as the society [3]. Whenever there are examination irregularities or offences, the validity and resulting outcome is questionable. [4] Findings indicates that principals, teachers and students indulge in examination malpractice in secondary schools during WASSCE in Nigeria due to inadequate monitoring. It is acknowledged that examination malpractice is caused by exams anxiety, fear of failure and money wasted and insufficient preparation. The result finally acknowledges that the major types of examination malpractice observed in secondary schools are cheating from textbooks and internet,

browsing using GSM-handset during examination, conspiracy between supervisor and school principals to write answers for students on the blackboard, selling of question papers to mercenary writers outside the examination hall due inadequate monitoring. The Examination Misconduct Act [5] explain examination offence, as any act of omission or commission by a person who in anticipation of, before, during or after any examination fraudulent secure any unfair advantage for himself or any other person in such a manner that contravenes the rules and regulations to the extent of undermining the validity, reliability, authenticity of the examination and ultimately the integrity of the certificate issued. Again examination offences is commonly defined as a deliberate wrong doing contrary to official examination rules designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage, [6].

Quality assurance in education deals with proactive means of ensuring quality of inputs, teaching-learning process, academic achievement of pupils and school environment before things get out of hands [7]. Thus, an education system of high quality should have high quality students, teachers, facilities, and school curriculum and government policies as inputs. The manner in which the inputs are processed from the beginning to the final years of an educational programme and the quality of assessment of the entire teaching-learning activities also constitute important aspects of quality assurance. Students constitute a vital input into the education system. Without them, all other inputs cannot achieve educational objectives. At the entry point of the educational system the students are expected to be of quality. That is, they should meet the expected standard of the level or the class in which they are to be enrolled. Incidentally, students of poor ability have been admitted or promoted into higher classes in our educational institutions. This practice does occur frequently during free education programmes. [8], wondered if products of such free primary and secondary education were going to be enrolled for Senior Secondary Certificate of Examination. Quality assurance demands that students should be of required standard before they are admitted into schools. It also demands that they should not be promoted if they performed below standard. [9] viewed admission of children with very poor academic standards into secondary schools as a way of laying the foundation for indiscipline and cheating in examinations. Examination malpractice according to Emaikwu cited in [10] is cheating in the examination or any intention to benefit or give undue advantage to oneself or another by deceit or fraud, before, during and after examination. The National Policy on Education states that “no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers” [11]. Incidentally, many teachers are lacking in quality which can enhance meaningful teaching. As at 2013/2014 session, 25.65% of teachers in Nigerian secondary schools were not professionally qualified [12]. The quality of teaching to be given by this category of teachers is likely to be low, and this will have adverse effects on the learners.

Conversely, quality education could produce right skill, knowledge and attitude that led a nation the greater high. Teachers as inputs, therefore, constitute a major factor of quality assurance. In the National Minimum Standards on Education and Establishment of Institutions Act 16 of 1985 in conjunction with the 1999 Constitution, the Minister of Education was empowered to maintain standards and quality. This is done by setting minimum standards, maintaining and constantly improving all schools in the Federation through regular inspection. In order to achieve uniform standards the Federal Ministry of Education delegated the task to the Federal Inspectorate Service (FIS) Department. One weakness of the Education Minimum Standards Act 16, of 1985 is that the FIS was not legally backed up by legislation to cover all schools. In this respect the Act 16 of 1985 was amended to provide adequate legal backing for ensuring quality assurance at basic and post-basic educational levels. With this amendment quality assurance in education in Nigeria shifted from the old system of school inspection to constant and continuous monitoring, evaluation and quality improvement processes that provide new operative mode of evaluation. The new system is designed in such a way that the evaluation inputs, processes and output meet the set standards, so as to bring about improvement in teaching and learning in the foundational classes.

Quality assurance concerns itself with consistently meeting product specifications. Quality assurance in the secondary school system implies the ability of the schools to meet the expectations of the users of students in relation to the quality of skills acquired by their outputs [13]. It can also be said to be the ability of the secondary schools to meet certain criteria relating to academic matters, staff-students ratio, staff mix by rank, staff development, physical facilities, and funding and adequate library facilities. [14] Quality assurance is a key component of successful internationalization mechanism for building institutional reputation in a competitive local and global arena and necessary foundation for learners’ protection. A study by [15] findings reveals that there is a significant influence of quality evaluation in curbing examination malpractices among students.

According to [16] effective supervision during examination also reduce the frequency of examination misconduct, supervision before, during and after examination should be effective through provision of adequate seats for examinations, adequate number of invigilators should be assigned to examination room for example the policy of a chief invigilator and at least one invigilator to every 40 students should be adhered to (which some universities are still practicing). All activities relating to examinations such as question paper production, invigilation, marking and result collation as well as computation should be handled with a high sense of

responsibility by those concerned. Furthermore, he argued that tripartite Monitoring which is the monitoring of examination arrangements before, during and after the examinations is another measure to curtail examination misconduct. It should be carried out by the secondary schools management simultaneously. It is to ascertain that effective and efficient supervision, invigilation and custodianship of examination materials are carried out without variances from the university's approved examination regulations. Tripartite monitoring ensures the checking of the appropriateness or otherwise of other measures put in place to alleviate examination misconduct in its entire ramification before, during or after examinations, [17].

The starting point to the achievement of the secondary school objectives in Nigeria is defining quality, which implies spelling out what is considered as 'quality' derived from what is most valued and is important in education. Quality assurance strategies include monitoring, evaluation, supervision and inspection. Monitoring is the process of collecting data at intervals about ongoing projects or programmed within the school system. The aim is to constantly assess the level of performance with a view of finding out how far a set objectives are being met [18]. The aim of evaluation as a quality assurance strategy is to see how the system can be assisted to improve on the present level of performance. Supervision might involve inspection, but it goes beyond inspection and includes attempt at bringing about improvement in the quality of instruction. It involves staff as essential part of the process. It is a way of advising, grinding, refreshing, encouraging and stimulating staff. Finally, inspection usually involves an assessment of available facilities and resources in an institution with a view to establishing how far a particular institution has met prescribed standards, it is more of an assessment rather than an improvement induced exercise.

The phenomenon of examination misconduct on senior secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is influenced by many factors such as lack of monitoring and supervision of school programmes, lack of confidence as a result of inadequate preparation, peer influence, societal influence, parental support and poor facilities in schools are some of the, factors responsible for examination misconducts. School programmes, teaching learning environment, the teacher, the student, over-value of certificates, decadence in the Nigerian society and parental support are some factors responsible for examination misconduct in the Nigerian educational system. Despite the high premium placed on examination, yet examination malpractices still exist in the educational environment which tend to reduce the quality of education in secondary schools. Indices of examination malpractices in Nigeria show how there is mass cheating in public examinations. Nothing concrete effort has been done to reduce the problem except the cancellation of results of affected centres or the withholding of results in certain subjects.

### **Research Questions**

For the purpose of this study, the following research questions are raised to guide the study:

1. What is the impact of supervision as a quality assurance strategy on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students?
2. What is the impact of evaluation as a quality assurance strategy on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students?

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses are formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho1:** Supervision as a quality assurance strategy has no significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

**Ho2:** Evaluation as a quality assurance strategy has no significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

## **II. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **Design**

A survey research design was used in this study. This is because, involves the collection of data within a short span of time from a random sample of the target population [19]. This design was considered suitable because the study sought to investigate the impact of these quality assurance strategies on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

### **Population, Sample and Sampling Technique**

The populations of this study comprised of the entire 4036 teachers in the 62 schools covering were 430 teachers in Abuja FCT. Teachers were randomly selected from across Abuja using the stratified random sampling technique. Lottery method of simple random sampling was employed to obtain a sample size of 430. Serial numbers of the elements in the sampling frame were recorded on pieces of papers folded and mixed thoroughly before respondents were asked to pick at once without replacement. This technique gave equal

opportunity to the respondents (teachers) thereby reducing the bias effect that may interfere with the validity and reliability of the study.

**Instrumentation**

The researchers developed an instrument for data collection called ‘Questionnaire on the Role of Quality Assurance Strategies and Examination Misconduct’ (QRQASEM). QRQASEM is made up of two sections: section ‘A’ contained 2 items in form of bio-data of teachers (school and Gender). Section ‘B’ consists of 18 items that expresses statements on the roles of quality assurance in curbing examination misconduct in secondary schools. QRQASEM is based on the 5 points Likert type scale given as follows: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2= Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

**Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

QRQASEM was subjected to experts’ judgment for validation. Two Experts in Measurement and Evaluation validated the instrument for checking the appropriateness, and relevance of the items, clarity of expression and size of print. The consensus rating gave 0.87 validity index. QRQASEM was pilot-tested using twenty (20) teachers from GSS Gwagwalada and GSS Asokoro who were not part of the sample size. This was to determine reliability of the instrument. Cronbach coefficient Alpha method of estimating reliability was employed to compute coefficients of internal consistency which yielded the reliability coefficient of 0.80 index. This was considered suitable because Cronbach coefficient Alpha is a more general method of estimating internal consistency for instruments with scales that provide responses on a continuum of ‘Strongly Agree, Agree, undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree’ [20]

**Procedure for Data Collection**

QRQASEM) was administered personally by the researcher with prior arrangement with the schools concerned. With the aid of the school principal the consent of the teachers was sought. The privacy of information and other ethical assurances was guaranteed to the teachers. Immediately, the researcher administered the instrument (QRQASEM). Freedom to ask questions for clarification was granted and sufficient time to respond to the items was also given to the respondents. However, respondents were not allowed to interact with one another in the process of responding to the items so that to maintain independent responses. Completed questionnaires were collected at once for analysis.

Descriptive statistic (mean and standard deviation) was used to answer research questions while non-parametric statistics (chi-square-  $\chi^2$ ) was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant using SPSS version 21 and the result are presented in Tables below.

**III. RESULTS**

**Research Question One:** What is the impact of supervision as a quality assurance strategy on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard for Responses on Supervision as a Quality Assurance Strategy in Curbing Examination Misconduct**

Statements	SA	AG	UD	DA	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Inadequate supervision by teachers encourage examination misconduct	170	150	20	45	45	3.02	0.75
Conducive classroom supervision reduces examination misconduct	170	150	20	40	50	3.78	0.78
Some of the supervisors are agents for creating examination misconduct among students	150	170	20	45	45	3.02	0.75
Organizing exams workshop for supervisors minimizes exams misconduct among secondary school students	190	175	20	25	20	3.72	0.72
Good supervision incentives in schools reduces students exams misconduct	170	150	20	45	45	3.02	0.75
Proper searching by the supervisor before entering exams hall reduces exams misconduct	170	150	20	40	50	3.78	0.78
Most of the supervisor are too loosed to students thereby creating avenue for exams misconduct	150	170	20	45	45	3.02	0.75
<b>Cluster Mean</b>						<b>3.78</b>	<b>0.75</b>
<b>Scale Mean</b>						<b>3.00</b>	

Table 1 displays the cluster mean of 3.78 and standard deviation of 0.75. The clusters mean 3.78 is greater than the scale mean 3.00. This implies that where there is proper supervision strategy help in curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. In other words, examination misconduct among secondary school students would be curbed due to impact of supervision as a quality assurance strategy is observed. This response was tested at the 0.05 level of significant using Chi-Square ( $X^2$ ) Statistics and the results are shown in Table 2.

**Ho1:** Supervision as a quality assurance strategy has no significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

**Table 2: Chi-Square Statistics on Impact of Supervision in Curbing Students Examination Misconduct**

	Values ( $X^2$ )	Df	Asymptotic Sig (2-tailed).
Chi-Square	40.500 <sup>a</sup>	428	.002
Likelihood Ratio	55.080 <sup>b</sup>	427	.001
Linear Association	000	1	.000
Valid Cases	400		

*a.0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3*

Table 2 depicted the value of chi-square ( $X^2$ ) 40.500a, degree of freedom (df) 428 and p-value 0.002. Since the p-value  $0.02 < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected; hence supervision as a quality assurance strategy has a significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students.

**Research Question Two:** What is the impact of evaluation as a quality assurance strategy on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard for Responses on Evaluation as a Quality Assurance Strategy in Curbing Examination Misconduct**

Statements	SA	AG	UD	DA	SD	Mean	Std Dev
Proper evaluation by the school principals reduces examination misconduct	210	160	15	20	25	3.12	0.72
Frequent evaluation by the ministry of education during exam period reduces examination misconduct	180	180	20	30	30	3.08	0.78
Quality evaluation by the examiner discourage students examination misconduct	210	150	20	20	30	3.92	0.97
Quality evaluation strategy such as students should formed single line and separate them as they are entry the exams hall reduces students exams misconduct	210	150	20	20	30	3.92	0.97
Forming exams committee to evaluate schools exam reduces students exams misconduct	210	160	15	20	25	3.12	0.72
Quality evaluation strategy to ensure no movement of with the intention of collecting or borrowing of writing material minimizes exams misconduct	180	180	20	30	30	3.08	0.78
Most of the secondary schools head are not serious in evaluating their teachers/students during exams thereby creating avenue for misconduct	180	180	20	30	30	3.08	0.78
<b>Cluster Mean</b>						<b>3.33</b>	<b>0.85</b>
<b>Scale Mean</b>						<b>3.00</b>	

Table 3 displays the cluster mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.85. The clusters mean 3.33 is greater than the scale mean 3.00. This implies that where there is proper evaluation strategy help in curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. In other words, examination misconduct among secondary school students would be curbed due to impact of evaluation as a quality assurance strategy is observed. This response was tested at the 0.05 level of significant using Chi-Square ( $X^2$ ) Statistics and the results are shown in Table 4.

**Ho2:** Evaluation as a quality assurance strategy has no significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

**Table 4: Chi-Square Statistics on Impact of Evaluation in Curbing Students Examination Misconduct**

	Values ( $X^2$ )	Df	Asymptotic Sig (2-tailed).
Chi-Square	41.500 <sup>a</sup>	428	.002
Likelihood Ratio	56.080 <sup>b</sup>	427	.001
Linear Association	.000	1	.000
Valid Cases	400		

*a.0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3*

Table 4 depicted the value of chi-square ( $X^2$ ) 41.500a, degree of freedom (df) 428 and p-value 0.002. Since the p-value  $0.02 < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected; hence evaluation as a quality assurance strategy has a significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students.

#### IV. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The result obtained in Table 1 responses from research question one, displays the cluster mean which is greater than the scale means. This implies that where there is proper supervision strategy help in curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. In other words, examination misconduct among secondary school students would be curbed due to impact of supervision as a quality assurance strategy is observed. Drawing inference from hypothesis one in Table 2 depicted the value of chi-square ( $X^2$ ), degree of freedom (df) and p-value. Since the p-value  $0.02 < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected; hence supervision as a quality assurance strategy has a significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. This finding is in agreement with that of [21] findings reveal that there was a significant relationship between teachers' involvement (supervision) in examination malpractice and pupil's academic performance in primary science. That is where there is quality supervision reduces examination malpractices.

Table 3 responses to the research question two displays the cluster mean which is greater than the scale means. This implies that where there is proper evaluation strategy help in curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. In other words, examination misconduct among secondary school students would be curbed due to impact of evaluation as a quality assurance strategy is observed. Drawing inference from hypothesis two in Table 4 depicted the value of chi-square ( $X^2$ ), degree of freedom (df) 398 and p-value. Since the p-value  $0.02 < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis is rejected; hence evaluation as a quality assurance strategy has a significant impact on curbing examination misconduct among secondary school students. This finding is in agreement with that of [22] findings reveal that there is a significant influence of quality evaluation in curbing examination malpractices among students. in line with those finding above, [24] findings indicates that principals, teachers and students indulge in examination malpractice in secondary schools during WASSCE in Nigeria due to inadequate monitoring, examination malpractice is caused by exams anxiety, fear of failure and money wasted and insufficient preparation and the major types of examination malpractice observed in secondary schools are cheating from textbooks and internet, browsing using GSM-handset during examination, conspiracy between supervisor and school principals to write answers for students on the blackboard, selling of question papers to mercenary writers outside the examination hall due to inadequate monitoring.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the goals of national educational systems and indeed national development become like mirage if examination ethics are not properly handled by the ministries of education, examination bodies, parents, school principals, classroom teachers, and even learners base their judgments concerning the quality of educational outcomes most of the time on performance at public examinations. Indeed, monitoring, supervision, evaluation and inspection as a quality assurance strategy on curbing examination if properly executed in secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals/Teachers should make sure they supervise students very well during examination to curbing examination misconduct in secondary schools,
2. Principals/Teachers should make sure that they evaluate the students very well during lesson in the class before examination to curbing examination misconduct in secondary schools.
3. Ministry of education should also supervise, the supervisors as well provides securities during examination to curbing examination misconduct in secondary schools,

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