

STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS EXAMINATION (A CASE STUDY OF ADEYEMI FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, ONDO, NIGERIA)

BY

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Abstract

This study investigated the students' attitude towards examination with special reference to Adeyemi Federal University of Education as a case study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted with sample size of one hundred and twelve (112) respondents randomly selected from Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State. Three (3) research questions and two research hypotheses were raised and answered in the study. Questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The reliability co-efficient of 0.78 was obtained for the instrument using cronbach's Alpha reliability and the data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Frequency count and percentage) for the research questions while One-way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. Gabriel test was used for post-hoc analysis. The findings revealed that there is a significant difference between the attitudes of students towards examination based on age $F(3, 108) = 2.521, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.064, \omega^2 = 0.045$. There was no significant difference between the attitudes of students towards examination based on academic level $F(3, 108) = 2.367, p > 0.05$. The study therefore recommended that Students should find out what triggers their Academic Anxiety that is; at the point when they are feeling anxious or stressed. In like manner, there should be the full implementation of the examination malpractices decree which provides for imprisonment of culprits to 21 years jail term. Hence, the arrest and prosecution of students caught in examination malpractices should always be done to serve as a lesson to others. Finally, Teachers and school guidance counselors should collaboratively guide students on how to develop good study habits, thereby enhancing their academic success.

Keyword: Examination, Counsellor, Students, Examination anxiety, Stress

Introduction

The western knowledge acquisition system or formal education is measured on certificates. Yet, certificate is not a full proof of knowledge. Before certificate is awarded, the students have to be assessed or examined in the field they have been trained. Examination is a yardstick against which students or candidates' competence

and progress are formally measured and appraised in the education sector. Examination as part of evaluation in education is aimed at determining a learner's level of skill acquisition or intellectual competence and understanding after a given training. Evaluation usually enables the teacher to be effectively ready for further teaching as this forms a

feedback. Examination is the most common tool around which the entire system of education revolves, it is the instrument used to decide who is permitted to move to the next academic level.

Examination is a part of teaching process since it acts as a tool to collect data about student's progress and achievement in a course. The results of the obtained data from examinations could be used by instructors and practitioners to make decision about what modifications should be done in the future courses or what points should be emphasized. Therefore, having the well-known concept of washback effect, which refers to the effect of testing on teaching and learning, thus, there is a reciprocal relationship between teaching and testing process. This fact doubles the importance of examination. In this regard, testing is the primary means by which the major decision about people lives are made in industry, education, the military, hospital, and mental health clinic.

Furthermore, 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 teachers with opportunities to try new methods of teaching. But when examination is not properly conducted, the expected feedback may not be attained. Hence, the result of such evaluation leads to wrong decision and judgement which affect the teacher, the learner, the entire education institution, as well as the society. Whenever there is examination irregularity or malpractice, the validity of the results will be questionable.

Attitude as a major factor affecting learning processes, may be implicit hence has not attracted enough attention from all stakeholders in education and therefore, it is important to consider the fact that learners can mainly contribute to their learning

outcomes as a result of their belief and perceptions about the subject matter e.g. whether they like it or not and whether they see any value in it. Attitudes are seen as more or less positive and encompass emotions, beliefs, values and behavior and hence affect individual way of thinking, acting and behaving which has a lot of implications to teaching and learning (Mensah *et al.*, 2013). They have a strong effect on behavior which helps in understanding and predicting peoples' behavior in a wide range of contexts. Attitudes though not directly observable are inferred from observable responses and behaviours which reflect a pattern of beliefs and emotions. They are elicited by certain stimuli and gradually get established into a consistency or a tendency (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia). A person's behaviour and choices when confronted with tasks are determined more by his beliefs and personal experiences rather than by his knowledge of specific tasks (Pilippou & Christou, 2018). However, this research work aimed at investigating students' attitude towards examination and many research have revealed that students have different attitude towards examination. Prominent among this attitude are examination anxiety, examination malpractices, unruly behaviour of students towards examiner and invigilator inside the examination hall. The researchers and educationists are continuously struggling to find the ways to maximize the performance of students by promoting better mental health and self-image. One step in this regard is to improve student's self-concept and reduce exams related anxieties. Students during their whole academic year naturally remain in constant worry and pressure about exams and might not be sure whether they are adequately prepared or not. Though a little bit of fear or anxiety

over examination is normal, but when it gets excessive and severe, it becomes examination phobia, which is the excessive worry, fear and anxiety regarding upcoming exams (Parvez, and Shakir, 2011).

The cheating behaviour of students during exams is one of the biggest problems for educators and has long been a topic of interest for researchers. Cheating in exams refers to attempts by examinees to answer exam questions using pre-prepared materials (O'Rourke *et al.* 2014). It can be achieved with cheat sheets (small pieces of paper), plagiarize the answers of other students, copying others' homework or letting other students copy theirs (Bushway and Nash, 2017). The view that society is an objective and education is an indispensable means to reach this objective was perfectly expressed by Aslan (2013) with the rationale that cheating behaviors are reinforced and they continue after completing school in daily lives, which negatively affect society. According to Balzer (2014), education is closely interrelated with the whole social system in every industrial society. Whitley *et al.* (2012), report that students, who cheat at high school, continue these behaviors at university and eventually these behaviors are emulated following school, as dishonesty in working life.

Examination Anxiety is very common in children from primary to higher level these days. It is experienced by more or less every student which is very painful and is a state of uneasiness about the future uncertainties. Though difficult, but it can be defined as some changes in behavior associated with the feeling of being examined in written test related to courses of study. The term "Anxiety" is described as an "unreasonable fear". This fear is based on some perceived event that yet to has taken place. In that way examination

anxiety can be defined as having extreme examination pressure which help the student realize that the pressure could be the causes of failure. Different researcher defined "examination anxiety" in different way. According to Sylvia (2005), "Fear of examination is viewed as a State having considerable significance for academic performance". Ruwan and Jayantunge (2018) defined, "Examination anxiety as a self-damaging factor which negatively affects the student and their performances. The student is unable to give maximum productivity and the end result would be critical".

Academic procrastination involves the habits of studying lessons in the late night hours and at the last minute (Hess, Sherman & Goodman, 2010). Sirois and Pychyl (2012) study revealed that students who procrastinate had high stress, poor coping strategies and also avoidance behaviours. Those students who suffered from such avoidance coping styles resisted completing assignments and addressing other deadlines that eventually evoked tension and anxiety. Thus, such students are bound to experience high examination anxiety and low academic performance. However, Guidance programmes for secondary school students are designed to address the physical, emotional, social, vocational and academic difficulties of adolescent students (Ezeji, 2011). It is against this background therefore that this research work aim at investigating students' attitude towards examination with a call for sober reflection and remediation.

Tyler's objective model

Ralph W. Tyler plays an essential role in the development of educational evaluation and testing and his name is given to the period of evaluation development from 1930 to 1945 (Madaus & Stufflebeam, 2000). He is the father of the objective

model, which is called Tylerian model or Tyler's objective model, which was first created in the 1940s. This model has the basic principles involving matching the pre-behavioral objectives with the actual outcome (Tyler, 1949). Evaluation is conceptualized in the view of Tyler as a comparison of intended outcomes with actual outcomes. In fact, as suggested by the name, Tyler's model is based on the objective-oriented theory. The model considers curriculum as a means of aiming toward an educational objective. The nature of Tyler's objective model is that it evaluates the degree to which an instructional program's goals or objectives were achieved. The model mainly involves the "careful formulation according to three educational goals (the student, the society, and the subject matter) and two goal screen (a psychology of learning and a philosophy of education)" (Popham, 1995). The result goals are then transformed into measurable objectives.

Statement of Problem

Examination is a crucial part of educational programme. It is through testing that the strengths and weaknesses of programs, facilities, instruments, individuals, and the test itself appear. Results of every test or testing session may be influenced by a host of factors, a couple of which are examination anxiety, examination malpractice, examination procrastination, poor study habit among others that the very examination session and its various dimensions may cause for the test takers, and test takers' attitudes toward examination. In spite of the bulk of research on the influence of students' attitude towards learning, little research work have acknowledge the attitude of students towards examination and how this attitude has affected their performance in the examination in Adeyemi Federal

University of Education, Ondo. Thus, this study aims to probe students' attitude towards examination in Adeyemi Federal University of Education and to outline possible remedies to be put in place.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine students' attitude towards examination with a call for sober reflection and remediation with special reference to Adeyemi Federal University of Education as a case study. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- 1 investigate examination anxiety as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination;
- 2 examine examination malpractice as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination;
- 3 access the place of poor study habit as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination; and

Research Questions

1. Do the students exhibit anxiety during Examination?
2. To what extent do the students engage in examination malpractice?
3. How is the study habit of the students towards Examination?

Research Hypotheses

For the purpose of this research, the following null hypotheses were formulated.

- HO₁ There is no significant difference in the attitude of students towards examination in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo based on age
- HO₂ There is no significant difference in the attitude of students towards examination in Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo

based on academic level

Methodology

The design used for this study was descriptive survey. In this study, survey was suitable to elicit information about “students’ attitude towards examination with a call for sober reflection and remediation with special reference to Adeyemi Federal University of Education’s students as a case study”. The population of this study consists of all the students from Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo. A total number of one hundred and twelve (112) respondents were used for the study. Fifty-six (56) NCE students and Fifty-six (56) Degree Students were randomly selected to make one hundred and twelve (112). The instrument for the study is self-developed questionnaire titled Students’ Attitudes towards Examination (SAE). It contains two sections (A and B). Section A contains students’ personal data while section B contains 20 items to which the subjects are to provide answers on students’ attitude towards examination.

Four-point Likert scale response format was used. The instrument was subjected to face validity. Four Test experts were used in this regard to check whether the items chosen were relevant to the study, clearly stated and capable of soliciting the right responses from the respondents. The items were subjected to item by item analysis to further establish its stability. Thirty (30) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to thirty (30) respondents to test the level of consistency and precision of the instrument measure. The reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability method. The questionnaires were administered to one hundred and twelve (112) students to complete and the researcher waited to collect it. The completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher for further processing. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Frequency count and percentage) for the research questions, while one way Analysis of variance was used to test the hypotheses raised and Gabriel test of post-*hoc* tool was used for mean comparison.

Results

Research question 1: Do the students exhibit anxiety during Examination?

Table 1: Frequency distribution table showing the students exhibiting of anxiety during Examination

S/N	Item statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St.D
1	Examination anxiety leads to students poor performance	43(38.4%)	55(49.1%)	12(10.7%)	2(1.8%)	3.24	.713
2	Examination anxiety increases the level of students dropout	37(%33)	46(41.1%)	26(23.2%)	3(2.7%)	3.04	.821
3	Overwhelming anxiety can affect memory and students may forget answers	32(28.6%)	41(36.6%)	13(11.6%)	26(23.2%)	2.71	1.120
4	Examination anxiety leads to examination malpractice	46(41.1%)	35(31.3%)	21(18.8%)	10(8.9%)	3.04	.981
5	Examination anxiety leads students to be absent from examination hall	32(28.6%)	34(30.4%)	28(25%)	18(16%)	2.71	1.052
Grand Mean						2.95	

Table 1 shows the students exhibiting of anxiety during Examination. From the table above, it can be deduce that the examination anxiety leads students to poor performance due to tension. Also, over 80% of the

respondents agreed that it increases the level of students dropout and leads to examination malpractice. More from the statistics, over 60% affirmed that Examination anxiety leads students to be absent from examination hall

Research question 2: To what extent do the students engage in examination malpractice?

Table 2: Frequency distribution table showing the extent the students engage in examination malpractice

S/N	Item statement	GE	SE	VLE	NAE	Mean	St.D
1	An authorized change of sitting position inside examination hall is an attribute of students during examination	69(61.6%)	21(18.8%)	16(14.3%)	6(5.4%)	3.37	.920
2	Students involve in copying from another person's work or extraneous materials brought into the examination hall	26(23.2%)	29(25.9%)	45(40.2%)	12(10.7%)	2.62	.961
3	High rate of examination impersonation by student of tertiary institution	48(42.9%)	47(42%)	12(10.7%)	5(4.5%)	3.23	.816
4	Unauthorized communication during examination process and disobeying examination instructions is common among students	60(53.6%)	24(21.4%)	16(14.3%)	12(10.7%)	3.18	1.042
5	Students do influence lecturers for the upgrading of their results	13(11.6%)	43(38.4%)	35(31.3%)	21(18.8%)	2.43	.927
Grand Mean						2.97	

Key: Great Extent (GE), Somewhat Extent (SE), Very Little Extent (VLE), Not at All (NAE)

Table 2 shows the extent do the students engage in examination malpractice. In view of this result, more than 80% of the respondents perceived that an authorized change of sitting position inside examination hall is an attribute of students during examination. This could be caused by the fact that almost all the students don't want to fail and at the same time being disturbed by anxiety or tension hence, seeking for all means to succeed. More so, over 90% affirmed that High rate of examination

impersonation by student of tertiary institution is the order of the day among students and prevailing attribute. Furthermore, unauthorized communication during examination process and disobeying examination instructions is common among students and this notion was affirmed by over 80% of the study participants. More so, just above half of the respondents agreed that Students involve in copying from another person's work or extraneous materials brought into the examination hall.

Research Question 3: How is the study habit of the students towards Examination?

Table 3: Frequency distribution table study habit of the students towards Examination

S/N	Item statement	SA	A	D	SA	Mean	St.D
1	Students poor study habit lead to their involvement in examination malpractice	52(46.4%)	44(39.3%)	11(9.8%)	5(4.5%)	3.28	.819
2	Students with poor study habit perform woefully in examination	21(18.8%)	37(33%)	42(37.5%)	12(10.7%)	2.60	.915
3	Student with poor study habit often end up dropping out of school	32(28.6%)	55(49.1%)	12(10.7%)	13(11.6%)	2.95	.928
4	Students with poor study habit are discourage to study and involved in the act of truancy	45(40.2%)	32(28.6%)	16(14.3%)	19(17%)	2.92	1.108
5	Students with poor study habit distract other student during the course of teaching-learning process	39(34.8%)	42(37.5%)	11(9.8%)	20(17.9%)	2.89	1.077
Grand Mean						2.93	

Table 3 shows the extent to which poor study habit serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. From the table above, it was discovered that over 95% of the respondents agreed that Students poor study habit lead to their involvement in examination malpractice. This means that student who didn't study hard do everything unauthorized in examination hall just to pass the exam. Also, more than 80% supported the notion that Student with poor study habit

often end up dropping out of school. While more than 70% agreed that Students with poor study habit are discourage to study and involved in the act of truancy with mean of 2.92. Lastly more than 70% affirmed that Students with poor study habit distract other student during the course of teaching-learning process. Meanwhile just a half of the respondents said that Students with poor study habit perform woefully in examination with mean of 2.60.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the attitudes of students towards examination based on age.

Table 4a: One-way Analysis of Variance summary showing difference in the attitude of students towards examination based on age

Sources	df	SS	MS	F-ratio	Sig	p
Between Group	3	179.679	59.893			
Within Group	108	1906.277	17.651			
Total	111	2805.956		2.521	0.045	<0.05

Table 4a shows that significant difference existed $F(3, 108) = 2.521, p < 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between the attitudes of students towards examination based on age. In order to determine the mean

value(s) that led to the significant difference observed in the ANOVA result of Table 4a the Gabriel test was used as a **post-hoc** test. The result of the Gabriel test procedure is displayed in table 6.

Table 4b: Gabriel Test showing differences in the attitude of students towards Examination based on age

Gabriel's Grouping	N	Mean	Group
< 20years	38	42.92	A
20-25years	59	45.22	B
26-30years	8	47.38	C
>30years	7	46.29	D

Table 4b presents Gabriel Test results to show group means that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA result of table 4.5. The result indicated that group 1

with a mean of 42.92 and group 3 with a mean of 47.38 differed significantly from group 2 and 4

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the attitudes of students towards examination based on Academic level.

Table 5 One-way Analysis of Variance summary showing difference in the attitude of students towards examination based on Academic level

Source variable	N	Mean	St.D	df	SS	MS	F	sig	p
100L	33	42.94	3.030	3	169.63	56.540	2.367	0.06	>0.05
200L	43	43.79	4.115	108	1916.65	17.747			
300L	23	45.40	5.633						
400L	13	46.67	4.873						
TOTAL	112	44.7		111	1086.28				

Table 5 shows that there was no significant difference $F(3, 108) = 2.367, p > 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there was no significant difference between the attitudes of students towards examination based on level.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed the extent to which examination anxiety serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. According to the respondents, Examination anxiety leads to students poor academic performance; examination anxiety

increases the level of students dropout; overwhelming anxiety can affect memory and students may forget answers; examination anxiety leads to examination malpractice; and that examination anxiety leads students to be absent from examination hall were the extent to which examination anxiety serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. It can be deduce that the greatest extent to which examination anxiety influence examination is that it leads to students' poor academic performance which is in line the assertion of Fallot (2011) who revealed that chronic anxiety has a detrimental effect on academic success. It is normal for a student to feel anxious before a test or examination, but it becomes problematic when the level of anxiety is excess. This finding is also in line with the work of Asadullapoor, Fati, & Gharaee, (2010) who reveal examination anxiety as feeling that are undesirable and unclear like when person predicts a dangerous situation. Extreme level of anxiety impedes individual's mental and physical health and also has a negative effect on their personal, social, familial, occupational, and educational performance.

The study further revealed the extent to which examination malpractice serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. According to the respondents, an authorized change of sitting position inside examination hall is an attribute of students during examination; students involve in copying from another person's work or extraneous materials brought into the examination hall; high rate of examination impersonation by student of tertiary institution; unauthorized communication during examination process and disobeying examination instructions is common among students and students do influence lecturers for the upgrading of their results serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. This could be caused by the

fact that almost all the students don't want to fail and at the same time being disturbed by anxiety or tension hence, seeking for all means to succeed. This finding is in line with Ojo (2019) who asserted that examination malpractice is a misconduct and improper practice in any examination with a view to obtaining excellent results through fraudulent actions. This social menace has crept into the fabrics of all levels of educational sector in the country with its inherent devastating effects. Examination malpractice ranges from cheating (copying from another person's work or extraneous materials brought into the examination hall, impersonation, plagiarism, unauthorized communication, influencing an examination official, unauthorized change of sitting position, disobeying examination instructions, possession of examination materials e.g examination question papers before the examination, attacking or threatening of invigilators etc. Examination malpractices in short are now a national problem. This is also in line with the work of Nwahunanya (2004) who sees examination malpractice as the act of omission or commission intended to make a student pass examination without relying absolutely on his or her independent ability. It is therefore clear that examination malpractice is committed by a candidate single handedly or in collaboration with other people such as other higher education students, parents, lecturers, supervisors, invigilators, printers and anybody or group of people before, during or after examination in order to obtain undeserved marks or grades.

The finding of the study revealed the extent to which poor study habit serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. According to the respondents, students poor study habit lead to their involvement in examination malpractice; students with poor study habit perform woefully in examination; student with poor study habit often end up dropping out of

school; students with poor study habit are discourage to study and involved in the act of truancy and students with poor study habit distract other student during the course of teaching-learning process were the extent to which poor study habit serve as an integral part of students' attitude towards examination. It was discovered that over 95% of the respondents agreed that Students poor study habit lead to their involvement in examination malpractice. This means that student who didn't study hard do everything unauthorized in examination hall just to pass the examination which is in line with the work of Omoniwa (2015) who confirms that students' academic performance is predicated on study and reading skills. There is a direct correlation between study habits and students' academic performance. Without good study and reading habits, students would not be able to perform excellently in their tests and examinations, however, poor study habit lead to examination malpractice among students. This is also in line with the work of Busayo (2011) who postulated that study habit is a pattern with which an individual organizes his or her reading in order to cope with new knowledge in the ever changing world. African, and indeed Nigerians are not used to reading because the predominantly medium of communication is oral. Africans are not reading society, but chatting society; the background of learning through culture, the cultural habit of people... prefer listening and chatting to reading.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that examination anxiety, examination malpractices and poor study habit have impact on the students' attitude towards examination. The study concluded that the greatest extent to which examination anxiety influence examination is that it leads to students' poor academic performance.

Likewise, an authorized change of sitting position inside examination hall is an attribute of students during examination. The study further concluded that students' poor study habit lead to their involvement in examination malpractice which need a sober reflection and remediation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. To avoid that anxiety prevents students from fulfilling their academic potential, students have to talk to someone about it. The Guidance and Counseling Center/Academic Advisors/Supervisors who are very experienced at helping students deal with anxiety related to their academic requirements.
2. Educators should create enabling learning environment free of tension and unnecessary stress so as avoid anxiety among their students
3. There should be regular education programmes such as symposia and school festivals should be conducted to heighten students' self-esteem, and remove negative past experiences and beliefs about examinations so that the students can confidently face the challenge of examinations with reasonable anxiety level.
4. There should be the full implementation of the examination malpractices decree which provides for imprisonment of culprits to 21 years jail term. Hence, the arrest and prosecution of students caught in examination malpractices should always be done to serve as a lesson to others.
5. Concerted efforts should be made in enhancing discipline among students through the counseling services in

schools in other to prevent them from acts of indiscipline during examinations.

6. There should be increased emphasis on the use of continuous assessment by schools and examination boards in determining students' success or failure in public examinations.
7. That principals, teachers and school guidance counselors should collaboratively guide students on how to develop good study habits, thereby enhancing academic success.
8. Parents should also enforce study habits right from home to improve academic performance of secondary school students.
9. Teachers and school guidance counselors should collaboratively guide students on how to develop good study habits, thereby enhancing their academic success.
10. Group guidance should be organized in schools by professional counsellors in order to create awareness on how students can develop effective study habits which could lead to good academic performance.

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