Contents

Prevalence of Depression Among Adolescents in Secondary Schools in Imo State 1
Rose Nwachukwu[1]
Chidinma Okwara-kalu C. E[2]
Agulanna G. G[3]

Academic Phobia and Adjustment Among First Year Students
in University of Calabar, Cross River State 9
Ajake, U.E[1]
Oboh Goodnews Nsa[2]

Influence of Attention Deficit Disorder on Learning Among Nursery/ Primary
School Pupils in Vandeikya Education Zone of Benue State. 17
Akume, Gabriel Terzungwe[1]
Tarbunde, Tabitha Apeidoo[2]
Biam, Nancy Nguveren[3]

Social Anxiety Disorder and Academic Adjustment of Tertiary Education
Students in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri Imo State 26
Uchechi Ihem-Chijioke[1]
Ndidiamaka Uwazurike[2]
Ijeoma Ajileye[3]
Pius Sibie[4]

Influence of Academic Test Anxiety on the Reading Comprehension of Students
of Government Secondary School Gwarinpa, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory 26
Denwigwe Chiaka Patience[1]
Ajah Mabel Obioma[2]

Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students
in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State 32
Ipem, J.N[1]
Nasiru Ringim Yahaya[2]
Okoro, Onyebuchi .O[3]

Examination Phobia as Predictor of Examination Malpractices Among
Higher Institution Students in Kwara State, Nigeria 40
Bibire, Abdulkareem Hussein[1] (Corresponding Author)
Adewuni David Adebayo[2]
Fidelia Nwamaka Ajagbe[3]
Abubakar Muhammed Sanni[4]
Saadu, Kayodeyunusa[5]

Perceived Prevalence of Bullying Among Secondary School Students
in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State 48
Anokam, E.O[1]
Paul-Cookey, N.R[2]
Nwanguma, V.C[3]

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EXAMINATION PHOBIA AS PREDICTOR OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES AMONG HIGHER INSTITUTION STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study examined examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices among higher institution students in Kwara State. The study adopted correlational research design. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select six tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Three hundred (300) students were randomly selected across the chosen institutions. Two instruments were used to elicit information from the respondents (1) an adapted questionnaire on examination phobia developed by Afolayan et, al (2013) and (2) an adapted questionnaire on examination malpractices developed by Stephen et, al (2014). The two instruments were subjected to pilot testing and found to have reliability coefficient of 0.65 and 0.68 respectively. In the same vein, they were also subjected to face and content validity. In doing this copies of the instruments were given to the experts in education. Results of this study revealed that examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices of tertiary institutions students in Kwara State, Nigeria. (Beta coefficient of =0.263 and Sig. =0.01) at P<0.05. It was also revealed that examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices of students in universities in Kwara State; (Beta coefficient of =0.329 and Sig. =0.002) at P<0.05. It was as well revealed examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices of students in polytechnics in Kwara State; (Beta coefficient of =0.220 and Sig. =0.028) at P<0.05 and it was revealed examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices of students in colleges of education in Kwara State. (Beta coefficient of =0.240 and Sig. =0.002) at P<0.05. In the light the results of this study, it is recommended that students in tertiary institutions in Kwara state irrespective of the institution type (university, polytechnic and college of education) should develop self and academic confidence that will enable them write their examinations without fear, tension and phobia which may result to examination malpractices.

Keywords: *Examination Phobia, Examination Malpractices, Higher institutions, Students.*

Introduction

Higher education also known as tertiary education in developing countries like Nigeria is not limited to university education, but it extends to different forms of post-secondary education. In Nigeria for instance, higher education as contained in the National Policy on Education includes education given in the Universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of education. The tertiary institution is universally seen as a viable key to realizing individual and societal aspirations since individual's education beyond the secondary level is instrumental to societal development. Higher institution also shapes and preserves the value that defines cultures, and it is believed to be a major machinery of social justice, equal opportunity, and democracy (Akinsola, Hussein, Oyenuga&Fatokun, 2012). Higher Education Institutions are viable and unavoidable elements in sustainable human development. This contributes in numerous ways to the development of the nation. For a developing country like Nigeria, the purpose of higher education is to produce middle and higher level manpower for national development. According to the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic Nigeria, FRN; 2004) tertiary institutions in Nigeria have the following goals:

1. To contribute to national development through high-level manpower training;
2. To develop and inculcate proper value for the survival of the individual and society;
3. To develop the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
4. To acquire both physical and intellectual skills that will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
5. To promote and encourage scholarship and community services;
6. To forge and cement national unity; and
7. To promote national and international understanding and interaction.

The stated goals of tertiary education in Nigeria are designed to be obtained through the different modes such as teaching, research, and community development (Umeh & Ikazoboh, 2008).

Examination phobia is a serious fear and anxiety that most of students experience in the examination situation. It is psychologically intensive than a usual fear from examination. It impairs students mental faculties and exerts negative impact on students' cognitive capabilities and personality by diminishes the consistency in performance in stressful examination situations. Psychologists use different terms to describe fear in students for instance, test phobia, fear of examination, test anxiety and examination phobia etc (Kowalski, 2000).In the same vein, response to an identifiable danger is considered as fear but when the fear or feelings of dread exceeds abnormally to its limits it called phobia while in academic setting is conceptualized as examination phobia (American psychiatric association, 2015). Examination phobia of students is their emotional state with fear or anxiety disposition (Bonacio & Reeve, 2010). It is a challenge to academic performance which also affects mental and physical health of students. Examination phobia leads students to develop various mental and emotional problems for example irritability, loss of appetite, sleeping disturbance, restlessness and inability to recall information etc (Saha, 2012).Examination phobia is a psychological condition in which students concerned experience high level of tension, panic, stress, anxiety, discomfort and abnormal fear during examination. A little nervousness or tension is heartily for students that can help them perform academically better in examination. However, when tension or fear becomes so excessive that it actually affects students performance in an examination and then it referred to as examination phobia or test anxiety. Every individual experience fear or anxiety in life, but when the fear or anxiety is high and irrational this can be referred to as phobia. Factors that cause phobia vary from one person to another person.

Factors of examination phobia are as follow:

1. Unrealistic expectation and fear of teachers;
2. Excessive pressure that cause greater worry and fear of failure;
3. Inadequate study;

4. Poor motivation and lack of self-esteem;
5. Poor nutrition and sleeping disturbance; and 6. Obsessive compulsive disorder (Sindu, 2015).

This research adopts the theory of Medler and Serason (1952). The theorists postulated that the fear of examination invariably results in a performance in evaluation situation. According to this theory, examination fear is debilitating and the performance of high anxious students is lowered in examination situation. The anxious student's worries during examination and they even engage in daydreaming to some extent. As a result concentration can be seriously affected (Medler & Serason, 1952).

One of the problems facing our educational system today is academic dishonesty (examination malpractice). Examination malpractice is a deliberate or intentional wrong doing contrary to official examination rules stipulated to place a student at the undeserved merit or demerit (Wilayat, 2009). According to Fasasi (2006) examination malpractice is a misconduct or improper practice, before, during and after examination by the candidates or others with a view to achieving high grades through fraudulent means. In the same vein, Stephen and Jude (2013) submitted that examination malpractice is an unethical act because it encourages mediocrity in the students who achieved academically higher through such immoral means may be ranked equal to those that read and studied on their own to achieve academically better. Malpractice Act. (1999) described examination malpractice as any act omission or commission by a person who in anticipation of, before, during or after any examination fraudulently 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 certificates issued. Examination phobia has cognitive component for instance, thinking of failure, lack of confidence, feeling of excessive mental pressure, suicidal ideation, and negative self-talk, among others.

More importantly, the relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractice cannot be over emphasized. Various researchers and writers have conducted series of studies on examination phobia and examination malpractice. For instance, Sarason and Sarason, (19[illegible]) asserted that examination phobia has some components which include emotional component for examples, apprehension, frustration, tension, nervousness, and depression among others. Psychological components include, trembling and limbs become cold, perspiration, nausea and palpitation among others. The aforementioned components lead to poor performance which in turn creates anxiety and leads students to engage in examination malpractice Examination phobia is one of the factors that lead students to engage in examination malpractices (Omotore, 201[illegible]). In the same vein, it was reported by Sufian (2015) that fear of punishment from parents and fear of annoyance of teachers on poor performance in the examination, though competition among class fellows for getting good grades, limited time pressure in attempting for examination questions, fear of repeating the same class and poor preparation of examination provide them the main cause of examination Phobia and leads students involving in examination malpractice. The main problem of this study is that it was observed that most of higher institutions students in Nigeria always exhibit learning phobia and this in turns lead them to look for the way out in passing their examination for this fact, they engage in examination malpractice. Besides, a lot of researches on examination phobia and examination malpractice have been carried out by various researchers but to the available literature at the researchers' disposal none dealt with examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractice among higher institutions students in Kwara State. Therefore, this paper deems it necessary to examine examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices among higher institutions students in Kwara State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine examination phobia as predictor of

examination malpractices among higher institution students in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically it examined:

1. Examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices of students in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria
2. Examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices of students in polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria
3. Examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices of students in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following questions were raised and answered with corresponding hypotheses

1. How does examination phobia predict examination malpractices of students in higher institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent examination phobia predict examination malpractices of students in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria?
3. How does examination phobia predict examination malpractices of students in polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria?
4. To what extent examination phobia predict examination malpractices of students in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study

Ho_1: Examination phobia does not significantly predict examination malpractices of students in higher institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria

Ho_2: Examination phobia Examination phobia does not significantly predict examination malpractices of students in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria

Ho_3: Examination phobia does not significantly predict examination malpractices of students in polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria

Ho_4: Examination phobia does not significantly predict examination malpractices of students in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey of correlational type. The study sample consisted of 300 respondents (students) selected across six selected tertiary institutions in Kwara State Nigeria. Namely: University of Ilorin; Kwara State university Malete; Kwara State polytechnic Ilorin; Federal polytechnic Offa; Kwara State college of education Ilorin; and Kwara State college of education Oro. A stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select six tertiary institutions across the sampled State. For this study the collection of data was carried out with the use of two instruments (1) Examination Phobia Questionnaire adapted from Afolayan et, al (2013) and (2) Examination Malpractice Questionnaire adapted from Stephen et, al (2014). The instruments contained two sections: A and B Section A contained demographic data of the respondents and this includes: gender, age, and type of institution, while section B contained items on the instruments. The first instrument was scored on five likert scale of not at all typical of me =1, not very typical of me =2, somewhat typical of me = 3, fairly typical of me =4 and very much typical of me = 5 while the second was also scored on two options of Agree = 2 and Disagree = 1. The instruments were given to the experts for face and content validity. They were also subjected to reliability using test re-test method and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics; and found to have reliability co-efficient of 0.65 and 0.68 respectively. The instruments were administered to the respondents (students) by the researchers and with the assistance of six trained research assistants. Linear Regression Statistics was employed to analyze the four hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance. SPSS software was employed for the analysis.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho_1: Examination phobia does not significantly predict examination malpractices of students in higher institutions of in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Analysis of coefficients of examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices of students in higher institutions of learning in Kwara State.

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	28.729	2.663		10. 788	.000
Examination Phobia	.632	.075	0.263	8.427	.012

Dependent Variable: *Examination Malpractice*
P < 0.05

Table 1 revealed that the calculated beta value 0.263 with calculated significant level of 0.012 computed at critical alpha of 0.05. From the above table examination phobia contributes 0.263 (26.3%) to examination malpractices and since the calculated significant (0.012) level is less than the critical alpha level (0.05), therefore this hypothesis was rejected. This implies that examination phobia significantly predic examination malpractices of students i higher institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho_2: Examination phobia does no significantly predict examinatio malpractices of students in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria

Table 2: Analysis of coefficients of examination phobia as predictor of examination malpractices of students in Universities in Kwara State.

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	28.461	2.749		10.353	.000
Examination Phobia	.038	.087	0.329	0.437	.002

Dependent Variable: Examination Malpractice
P < 0.05

Table 2 revealed that the calculated beta value 0.329 with calculated significant level of 0.002 computed at critical alpha of 0.05. From the above table examination phobia contributes 0.329 (32.9%) to examination malpractices and since the calculated significant (0.002) level is less than the critical alpha level (0.05), therefore this hypothesis was rejected. This implies that examination phobia significantly predic examination malpractices of students i universities in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho_3: Examination phobia does no significantly predict examinatio malpractices of students i polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria

Table 3: Analysis of coefficients of examination phobia as a predictor of examination malpractices of students in Polytechnics in Kwara State.

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	27.238	1.529		17. 814	.000
Examination Phobia	.521	.094	0.220	5.542	.037

Dependent Variable: Examination Malpractice
P < 0.05

Table 3 revealed that the calculated beta value 0.220 with calculated significant level of 0.037 computed at critical alpha of 0.05. From the above table examination phobia contributes 0.220 (22%) to examination malpractices and since the calculated significant (0.037) level is less than the critical alpha level (0.05), therefore th hypothesis was rejected. This implies tha examination phobia significantly predic examination malpractices of students i polytechnics higher institutions in Kwar State, Nigeria.

Ho_4: Examination phobia does not significantly predict examination malpractices of students in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria

Table 4: Analysis of coefficients of examination phobia as a predictor of examination malpractices of students in Colleges of Education in Kwara State.

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	25.217	1.000		25.217	.000
Examination Phobia	.084	.073	0.240	1.151	.006

Dependent Variable: Examination Malpractice
P < 0.05

Table 4 revealed that the calculated beta value 0.240 with calculated significant level of 0.006 computed at critical alpha of 0.05. From the above table examination phobia contributes 0.24(24%) to examination malpractices and since the calculated significant (0.006) level is less than the critical alpha level (0.05), therefore this hypothesis was rejected. This implies that examination phobia significantly predict examination malpractices of students in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of this study revealed that that there is a low positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractices of tertiary institutions students, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices of tertiary institutions students in Kwara State Nigeria. This implies that students' state of examination phobia was found to significantly predict their involvement in examination malpractices. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Sarason and Sarason (1991)who found that examination phobia has cognitive component for instance, thinking of failure, lack of confidence, feeling of excessive mental pressure, suicidal ideation, and negative self-talk, among others. Emotional component include these, apprehension, frustration, tension, nervousness, and depression among others. Psychological components include, trembling and limbs become cold, perspiration, nausea and palpitation among others. The afore mentioned components lead to poor performance which in turn creates anxiety and leads students to engage in examination malpractice. The finding of this study also corroborated the finding of Omotore (2011) who found that examination phobia is one of the factors that lead students to engage in examination malpractices

It was also revealed that that there is a low positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractices, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The finding of this study revealed that that there is a low positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractice of students, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices in polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria. The finding of this study revealed that there is a low positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractice, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria. This implies that higher institutions students irrespective of their institution types (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education) exhibited examination phobia which determined their involvement in examination malpractices.

Conclusion

This study concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractices of higher institutions students in Kwara State, Nigeria. Examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices of tertiary institutions students in Kwara State Nigeria. This implies that students' state of examination phobia was found to significantly predict their involvement in examination malpractices. It was also concluded that that there is a low

positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractices, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractice in universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The finding of this study concluded that that there is a low positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractices of students, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices in polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria. The finding of this study concluded that there is a low positive relationship between examination phobia and examination malpractices, thus examination phobia significantly predicted examination malpractices in colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria. This implies that higher institutions students irrespective of their institution types (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education) exhibited examination phobia which determined their involvement in examination malpractice.

Recommendations

\In the light of these results, it is recommended that students in tertiary institutions should develop self and academic confidence that will enable them write their examination without fear, tension and phobia which may result to examination malpractices

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