

Teachers' Perception on use of Values Clarification Strategy for curbing Examination Malpractice in Upper-Basic Schools in Ilorin Metropolis

OKUNLOYE Rotimi W.

Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
okunloye.rw@unilorin.edu.ng

BALOGUN Idayat N.

Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
balogun.in@unilorin.edu.ng

OLADELE Jumoke I.

Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
oladele.ji@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract

Examination misconduct is a cancer in the society which requires pragmatic approaches including values clarification to curb such practices right from the grass roots. The study examined Social Studies teachers' perception of values clarification strategy for curbing examination mal-practice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara state, Nigeria. The study was a descriptive survey. A sample size of 200 upper basic Social Studies teachers was selected from a population all teachers in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. A researcher-designed questionnaire which was face and content validated by social studies experts with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.76 was used for data collection. Data obtained were analysed using frequency count and percentage. Results showed among others that different forms of examination malpractices are still prevalent in the Nigerian basic schools and teachers' awareness level of values clarification strategy for curbing the menace is moderate. It was recommended among others that values clarification strategy should be emphasized as a method for curbing examination mal-practices in basic schools. School proprietors and social studies and civic education teachers should adopt the method in addressing the examination malpractices.

Key words: Education, Examination, Examination Mal-practice, Value, Values clarification Social Studies teachers, Upper Basic schools.

Introduction

Education in all ramifications ensures the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and cultivation of values and attitudinal change that equip individuals for better living, functionality in society and positive contribution to societal development. Education in Nigeria is regarded as an instrument par excellence for effecting human capital and national development, (FGN, 2013). To actualize these goals, the National

Policy on Education (NPE) recognized and stated as part of the core curriculum at all levels of the Nigerian education system for personal and societal problem solving to ensure that Nigeria become a fast and egalitarian society; a free and democratic society; united, strong and self-reliant; great and dynamic economic and land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (FRN, 2013). Social studies was designed for the study of human and how he/she fits into a social group by utilizing the necessary attitudes, values and skills at his reach to make the planet earth better than he met it. Social Studies has been given a pride of place at all levels of Nigerian educational system as a means to achieving the corruption free, humane, moral and democratic society which Nigerians crave for (Opoh, Edinyang & Ogbaji, 2014). Social Studies can thus help the Nigerian citizens generally to develop the ability to respect the worth and dignity of all human beings, help in the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity, instil in man a disposition for acceptance of attitudinal change or rebranding in order to tame the tide of corruption which has enveloped all sectors of life in Nigeria (Oyibe & Nnamani, 2016).

For an individual to be awarded an academic certificate after passing through an educational institution, evaluation through examination is non-negotiable. Accordingly, paper and pencil test has become the major yardstick for gauging students' performance in the school system According to Oko and Adie (2016), examination is an organized assessment or evaluation strategy which presents individual with a series of questions or tasks geared towards ascertaining the individual acquired knowledge and skills. It is one of numerous ways of evaluating students learning process. Amadi and Opuiyo (2018) explained that examination is part of evaluation in education aimed at determining a learner's level of intellectual competence and understanding after a given training. Therefore, examination is the pivotal point around which the whole system of education revolves and the success or failure of the system of examination is indeed an indicator of the success or failure of that particular system of education (Zakka, 2014). According to Zakka (2014) examinations vary in style and requirements. For example, in a closed book examination, an examinee is often required to rely upon memory to respond to certain items, whereas in open book examination, the examinee may use one or more supplementary materials in the course of the examination. It can also be formal or informal.

In educational system, world over, the examination process makes the difference in the actualization of the goals of education. The goals of national educational systems and indeed national development become a mirage if examination ethics are strictly adhere to in the conduct of private and public examinations for selection, certification, recruitment, promotion and allied purposes. The significance of examination has been further reiterated by Njoku and Njoku (2016) who observe that examination still remains the best tool for an objective assessment and evaluation of what learners have achieved after a period of schooling. Therefore, any action that undermines examination poses a threat great to the validity and reliability of examination results and certification in any educational system in spite of the emphasis on examination, some students still do not

take their examination seriously while some prepare very seriously for it. Those who do not take their examinations seriously explore and device illegal and unethical alternative means of helping themselves out to pass. These include writing notes to the examination hall, writing on their palm and laps with tiny prints. Smuggling of pre-answered examination questions into examination halls, copying from other students and recruiting other persons to write examination on their behalf (impersonation) and other forms examination malpractice as defined by West African Examination Council (WAEC) (2003) is an irregular behaviour or act exhibited by candidates or anybody charged with the responsibility of conducting examination in or outside the examination hall, before, during or after such examination with the aim of taking undue advantage.

Examination malpractice according to George and Ukpong (2013) is a social menace but some students today see it as an acceptable and recognizable means of examination at all levels of education, which seem to be a positive effective while the negative part of it is that a lot of students carry result that do not reflect their ability, with this it threatens the quality of graduates produced by the educational system of today (Jokthan, 2016). Examination Mal-practice Index (EMI) a measure for examination breaches, increased from 6.9% in 2005 to 7.5% in 2006, representing an increase of 0.3% annually (Monday, Uduak, Aniefiok, Akon & Fidelis, n.d.). According to the National Examinations Council (NECO 2018) over 20,000 cheated out of over 1 million candidates that sat for the June/July Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) conducted by NECO in 2018.

Nigeria has suffered huge losses as a result of endemic corruption which is evident in high crime rate and other indices of systemic social integration. The unhealthy incidents of fraud, embezzlement, bribery and forgery perpetrated by Nigerians at home and abroad have earned the country the status of pariah nation in the international community. These corrupt practices, is believed to have started right from home to primary and secondary schools, had stalled the development of the nation (Zakka, 2014). It has been observed by Amadi and Opuiyo (2018) that copying, the use of textbook and phones, sorting of courses, paper leakage among others are forms of examination practices indulged in by students. If educationists and stakeholders do not pay adequate attention to re-orientation of learners in basic and secondary schools the acceptable norms of conduct in public examination to drastically reduce examination malpractices, the nation's educational standard is bound to further decline. The logical outcome of this trend according to Egbo (2015) has been the production of half-baked secondary school graduates to pursue courses of study for which they are not well equipped at higher institutions of learning.

The Federal Government in a bid to tackle this ugly trend, which is gradually destroying the education system, promulgated a decree stipulating a jail term of 21 years to every offender (Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), 1999). In spite of this extreme penalty, examination mal-practice is still on the rise and as such, there is the need to explore other non-punitive or legalistic approach such as values clarification strategies. The development of a nation largely depends on the right type of values that are cherished

and vigorously pursued and applied by majority of its citizens is an urgent imperative for citizens' capacity building and national development. Although values vary from one place to another, from people to people and from one country to the other, there are universal values that are recognized generally, and accepted in human societies. These include honesty, hard work, justice and patriotism. Nigerian society has gradually relapsed in its adherence to laudable traditional values for which traditional societies of the pre-colonial era were known. These values have been greatly eroded and many anti-social vices have emerged which threaten to wipe out these cherished values. Values which may be described as those beliefs and norms of acceptable behaviours for good inter-personal and inter-group relationships. This means value in this context is perceived as the determiners in individuals which influence the choice of what is desirable or undesirable, morally right or morally wrong and which ultimately direct individuals behavioural disposition (Mezieobi & Danlad, 2012). Values clarification is asset of strategy's for teaching positive values and re-orientating individuals and groups who previously subscribe to and exhibit negative values (Mezieobi & Danlad, 2012). Values clarification according to Akintude and Selzing-Musa (2016) is a pragmatic and effective approach for curbing examination malpractices and other social vices among children and youth in the school system.

Social studies focus on the study of human-environmental relationships for the purposes of citizenship education (Okunloye, 2007). Civic Education is another Social studies-related basic school subject in Nigerian schools which focuses knowledge acquisition, skills development and attitude and value cultivation for citizenship education, societal problem-solving and development (Okunloye, 2014). Its status in the basic school curriculum as a special subject for citizenship education, personal and societal problem solving involving the use of values clarification by teachers makes it appropriate to addressing the menace of examination malpractices in Nigeria basic schools (Okunloye, 2016). Therefore, this paper examined teachers' perception of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the level of teachers' awareness on value clarification strategy for tackling examination for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis?
2. What is the perception of teachers on the use of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis?
3. What are the challenges faced by teachers in using values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis?

Methodology

The descriptive survey was adopted as the design for the study. Descriptive survey is considered the most appropriate design as it aided describing the perception of a given population within the study area through the use of questionnaire. The population for this study was all teachers in upper basic schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area (LGA) of Kwara State; while the target population was upper basic teachers. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were employed. In the first stage, simple random strategy was used to select twenty upper basic schools after which the purposive sampling strategy was used to select all Social Studies and Civic education in selected schools constituted the sample for the study. The instrumentation used for this study is a researcher-designed questionnaire prepared and administered to the respondents. The questionnaire comprises of 2 sections: section A and B. Section A was used to elicit information on student's demographic data and information, Section B was used to elicit information on perception of teachers of values clarification for eradicating examination malpractice. The section consisted 20 items scaled on a four-point Likert scale-type from strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SA). The instrument was face and content validated by experts in Social Studies and educational measurement. Internal consistency of the items were established using Cronbach's alpha reliability test. A Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.76 which was adjudged sufficient was obtained. Data obtained were analysed using frequency counts and percentages, involving percentage and frequent counts.

Results

The research questions were answered using frequency counts and percentages.

Research Question One: *What is the level of teachers' awareness on value clarification strategy for tackling examination for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis?*

Responses on teachers' awareness of values clarification strategy for curbing examination malpractice were categorized into high, moderate and low level which was analyzed using frequency and percentages as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Percentage Analysis of Awareness of Values clarification for tackling Examination Malpractice in Upper Basic schools in Nigeria

Teachers' Awareness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High level of Awareness	74	37.0
Moderate level of Awareness	86	43.0
Low level of Awareness	40	20.0
Total	200	100.0

The result in Table 1 indicated that, 74(37.0%) teachers' level of awareness of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice was high, 86(43.0%) of teachers' of awareness was average, while 40(33.0%) of teachers' level of awareness of the use of values clarification for tackling examination malpractice was low. This implies that teachers' level of awareness of values clarification to tackling examination malpractice was moderate in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis.

Research Question Two: *What is the perception of teachers on the use of values clarification strategies for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis?*

Responses on teachers' perception on the use of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice were categorized into positive and negative which was analyzed using frequency and percentages as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of Perception on Use of Values clarification for tackling Examination Malpractice in Upper Basic schools in Nigeria

Teachers' Perception	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positive	157	78.5
Negative	43	21.5
Total	200	100.0

The result in Table 2 indicated that, 157(78.5%) teachers' had a positive perception of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice while 43(21.5%) teachers' had a negative perception of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice. This implies that teachers' had a positive perception of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis.

Research Question Three: *What are the challenges faced by teachers in using values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis?*

To answer research question three, mean as well as their rank order was used to analyze the data. Responses were graded on a four-point Likert scale. Items with a mean response of 2.5 and above were adjudged as challenges in using values clarification strategy by teachers as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean and Ranking Order of Challenges in using Values clarification by Teachers

Challenges in Using Values clarification by Teachers	Mean	Ranking
Low awareness of values clarification	3.59	2 st
Lack of understanding of the strategy	3.15	5 nd
Laziness	3.60	1 st
Poor remuneration	3.36	3 th
Over-populated classes	3.32	4 th

As shown in Table 3, challenges in using values clarification by teachers in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis were laziness with a mean score of 3.60 ranking first, low awareness of the effectiveness of values clarification with a mean score of 3.59 ranked second, poor remuneration with a mean score of 3.36 ranked third, over-populated classes with a mean score of 3.32 ranked fourth and lack of understanding of the strategy ranked fifth.

Discussion

The finding revealed that teachers' awareness level of values clarification to curb examination malpractice was moderate. This finding is in agreement with that of Egbo (2015) who reported that teachers' awareness level of values clarification strategy for curbing examination malpractice in secondary schools in Enugu State to be moderate. According to Akintude and Selzing-Musa (2016), the vigorous campaigns and seminars, the need for adherence to examination ethics and positive values such as honesty, dedication to duty and study, hard work and perseverance among others seem to have raised the awareness level on the need to curb examination malpractice and other negative values in the school and society.

Another finding showed that teachers' had a positive perception of values clarification strategy for tackling examination malpractice in upper basic schools in Ilorin Metropolis. This finding is in line with that of Uchekwe (2012) who reported that stakeholders' perception of strategies adopted for curbing examination malpractice was slightly effective. This finding do not concur with that of Ukpior (2005) who reported that student with negative self concept doubts themselves and such student gets involved in examination malpractice. Alutu and Aluede (2006) also points to the fact that the majority of students have a wrong perception about examination ethics.

Furthermore, findings show that the challenges in using values clarification by teachers were laziness, low awareness of values clarification, poor remuneration, over-populated classrooms and lack of understanding of the strategy. This finding is in consonance with that of Oko and Adie (2016) who reported that the challenges of using values clarification in curbing examination malpractice in Ilorin Metropolis to include laziness, lack of preparation and lack of self-confidence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while examination malpractice is still prevalent in the Nigerian basic schools, teachers' awareness level of moralistic approaches to curbing the menace is moderate while teachers' perception of values clarification was positive. Although, they faced myriad of challenges.

Recommendations

1. Examination malpractice should be emphasized as a moral dilemma and values clarification strategy for teaching social studies and civic education in upper basic schools should be employed.
2. Various education stakeholders should make concerted effort to raise teachers' awareness level of values clarification as a strategy for positive values clarification while maintaining a positive perception of values clarification as a strategy for tackling examination malpractice in schools.
3. All school proprietors; public and private should address the challenges of poor remuneration and high student-teacher ratio hindering the use of values clarification strategy in teaching Social Studies and Civic Education for addressing social vices including examination malpractices.

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