Quality Education, the Best Pro-Active Measure to Examination Malpractices in our Formal Institutions of Learning.

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Abstract
The school, be it primary, secondary or tertiary is a formal institution adequately established, funded and supervised to produce well developed individuals and citizens who would take up their proper places in their respective families, homes, state, nation and even the global community. These education institutions are expected to give quality services (quality education) based on the quality input made to them (teaching/learning environment, curriculum, teachers and after staff, facilities, funding, supervision, etc). Unfortunately, daily experiences have shown the ever increasing rise and reports of examination malpractices in the various levels of our nation’s education system. Worried by this obvious but unfortunate phenomenon, the paper takes a critical study of the concept of quality and education, respectively and jointly also. It also observes that examination malpractice betrays the basic principle of quality education. The paper, however, maintains that quality education at all levels of the education system is an undisputable necessity to solving malpractices in our formal schools system.

Keywords: Quality, Education, Pro-active, Examination, Malpractices, Institutions.

Introduction
The school system is a social organization structure, empowered and funded to build up the mental, physical, spiritual and moral qualities of the citizens. Hence, it is the most liberal institutions authorized to produce the best from the citizens and for the citizens. This, therefore, implies that the society, irrespective of its micro values, looks upon the school as a more sophisticated institution to actualize both the local, national and international values expected of the individual citizens submitted under its tutelage. Based on the high premium placed on the school system, quality practices and assurance become the greatest task expectation of the school system. Hence, quality education is then a demand and not a mere plea. If the human trust on education for quality human existence and performance could be sustained, then quality input in education is a compulsion. Quality education begets quality manpower production, which is in contrast to all forms of in-disciplinary behaviors, which include Examination malpractices. Unfortunately, the formal school system is bedeviled with serious cases of malpractice behaviours of which examination malpractices are recorded so glaringly. This anti-education clog has and is raising fundamental questions, all doubting the quality potentials of our present education system. This paper is challenged to critically examine the concept of quality education in Nigeria and its reality, given the growing rate of examination malpractices in Nigeria school system today.

The Concept of Quality
Quality is a concept that has remained controversial over the ages. As a philosophical issue, it does not have a universally accepted or acceptable definition. Its meaning differs as thought and reasoning differ. Hence Kalusi (2001:64) argues that “quality is a complex concept and there is hardly any consensus. It is many things to many people”. However, quality, from the dictionary perspective (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary) refers to “the standard of something when it compared to other things like it, how good or bad something is“, (Hornby 2000:953). From this definition quality could be said to be a comparative phenomenon. In this case the quality of one thing could be higher than the other or lower than the other. Something may have poor quality while the other may be of good quality. In this case, quality is measured by an accepted human standard. Hence, it could be argued that quality is both relative and objective. It is relative in the sense that individual societies have their standard of measuring a thing and grading its quality as high or low, good or bad. It is also objective because there are certain basic international standards required for something of international value. Objective quality is necessary at an inter-societal level. DuBrin (1997:252) views quality as ‘a desirable attribute of a product or service that distinguishes it for the person seeking the attribute”. In this regard quality could be said to have the attribute of worth and acceptance. DurBrin, however, outlines some major characteristics of a good quality as against a bad one as:

- Conformance of expectations
- Conformance to requirements
- Loss of avoidance
• Meeting and or exceeding customers’ expectations
• Excellence and value

In like manner, Akinpelu (200:6) uphold that “quality is the defining essence of anything, that characteristic which makes the object what it is, and without the object will not be a good instance of it”. Isyaku’s (1999) position appears to posses a relative reflection arguing that quality refers to the degree of relative worth of a thing’s worth being determined by the efficiency expected of it. These definitions anchor on the point that quality is a state of doing or performing efficiently, relevantly, and ultimately when a person, or a thing is expected or determined to do. Hence, the quality of a thing or person is determined by its work or act.

A person or a thing has its maximum expectations by the society and his/her functions or its functions are evaluated to determine whether or not he/she or it has performed accordingly. For instance, the quality of leadership is determined by the quality of living of its citizens. The quality of an education system could be assessed from the quality of its product (output).

The Concept of Education

The concept “education” seems difficult to define, because different people define it from different perspectives. For the sociologist, education is the transmission of norms, skills, knowledge, values of the society to the child to make him or her an acceptable member of that society. But to the humanist, education is the process of identifying the inborn potentialities of the child and developing them for the benefit of the individual and the society, using acceptable methods. Even among the philosophers, there appear to be diverse approaches to the concept, each underpinning the philosopher’s schools of thought. Hence, Akinpelu (1981:184) discovers a prescriptive guide to what education must involve:

i. A conscious effort to bring about desirable change
ii. A change that is intentional, deliberate and purposeful;
iii. Knowledge and understanding and;
iv. A method of transmission that is morally acceptable.

From the criteria set by Akinpelu, which was a modification of Peters’ and Frankena’s ethical concept of education, education is not only a reform strategy but also quality loaded. For instance, the first criterion suggests that education is about desirable change. What a society gives to her citizens in the name of education must be worthwhile, desirable, valuable, and acceptable. Education is achieved through effective, intentional, deliberate and purposeful planning and actions. It cannot come by mistake or accident. Education also involves not only knowledge of facts, but also application of such facts through proper understanding. Every information or fact given out in the process ought to be subjected to critical evaluation to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the information. Hence, the method of transmission must be morally acceptable. The knowledge, skills, and values or morals transmitted or developed in the child must be achieved through acceptable methods.

Quality Education

Education without quality is a deceit and dangerous to both the individual and the society. Quality education therefore deals with standard, efficiency, excellence, relevance, appropriateness and values. It involves some conditions and levels from which it can be measured in school business. Quality in education refers the worth of its inputs, teachers and evaluation procedures, which translates to the output. Amaele, (2000:24) affirms strongly that quality education is a must do affair, if a society expects quality manpower for rapid development and transformation. Hence, he argues that: “quality education is expected to address critical issues like the dignity of labour, quality leadership and committed citizenship, industrial harmony, political stability, religious tolerance, self-reliance and others”. Ndiomu (1989), however, highlights a crucial point that quality must be relevant and adapted to the needs of the society, arguing that such needs must meet the standards in health, growth and physical survival in a complex and global world. What every human community desires, needs, expects and demands, is quality education. Quality education in this context refers to that which produces the best of the individual members of the society morally, intellectually, physically and even spiritually. The child must be fully developed to become a relevant, honest dedicated, committed member of his or her environment to make the best contributions within and outside his/her immediate environment.

When quality is used to describe the type of education received at any level of our formal school system, what comes to mind is the degree of conformance to the expectations of that type and level of education. The knowledge, skills, competence, performance and character, which are required at that level would be expected to be supplied by the individuals who have received education at that level. Conformance to requirements with regard to education, according to DuBrin (1997) mean:

i. Adequate curriculum
ii. Appropriate teaching methodologies
iii. Adequate and sufficient trained teaching staff
iv. Conducive teaching and learning environment and experiences.

It is necessary to add that quality education entails:

a. Adequate funding and prudent utilization of resources
b. Proper selection and evaluation of pupils/students
c. Regular and routine supervision of pupils/students and staff through well trained internal and external personnel
d. Well articulated rewards and punishment mechanism.

Quality education entails that the product of the system (the educated) should perform to the expectations of the set standard of the people. He (the educated) should be a creator of employment, a producer of goods and or services. Quality cannot be sacrificed for quantity. The child deserves the best education, which is qualitative, or nothing. Hence, Akipelu (2000) contends that education without quality can even be more dangerous than no education. He emphasizes that without quality, education has no value. Majasan (1998:1) maintains: “No nation can remain permanently in the forefront of development leadership if its education ceases to be qualitative. Quality education is value-loaded. Hence, he argues that:

Quality education should produce disciplined behavior, hard work, improved cultural heritage, patiently acquired skills, valuable techniques, acceptance of teacher’s leadership role, mutual respect within and outside the school community. (p.3)

He further cautions that an education system, which encourages its youths to be corrupt with drugs, sensuousness, uncontrolled youth culture, unprecedented sense of generational self-consciousness, opposition to constituted authority and cultism in various shapes and forms cannot be measured as quality education. Quality is a mixture of the elements of culture, morality, manners art, science, technology, application of knowledge, creativity, value skills and positive personal values such as personal freedom, hard work and self-organization. According to Owen (2001), quality education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various people, retaining and maintaining as far as possible, all sound and healthy elements in the fabric of their social life, adapting them, where need be, to changed circumstances and progressive ideas as an agent of national growth and development. Quality education without development is like driving a car without the entire brake system. It is a wasted exercise for it propels all the human, material and financial elements to abrupt disaster. It is like producing a human robot which existence cannot meet the challenges of the time. Education without morality is worse than no education.

The Concept “Examination”

Examination is defined as the assessment of an examinee’s ability, achievement in a given task or subject matter. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1972) sees it as the assessment of a person’s performance when confronted with a series of questions, problems or tasks set for him in order to ascertain the amount of knowledge he has acquired. It also implies “a formal written, spoken or practical test especially at school or college, to see how much the learner has learnt. Examination means the testing of students’ knowledge on what they have been taught over a period of time. It also means any activity required by examining body in the evaluation of a student in a programme of studies.

Paye (1982) affirms that examinations are those end – of – term or end-of –course assessment procedures which are “bigger test”. They are more formal and are usually anxiety provoking. He further states that, students make distinction between test and examinations and that, some of these distinctions reflect in the fear and anxiety they express about examinations.

According to Ainkpelu (1998) examination can be described as an achievement test which measures the outcome of instruction, the progress students have made as a result of training and learning for a certain period. Similarly, Akande (2000) affirms that examination refers to achievement test and is classified into different categories, formative and summative. She further explains that formative is meant to assess the progress in the development of knowledge and skills before or during the course of instruction. While summative measure the outcome of instruction at the end of the course work. She noted that those entire tests taken during the final exam like JSSCE, SSCE, and NECO are all achievement test and also they are standardized test. Okoye (1986) describes examination as an “organized assessment technique, which presents the individual with a series of question or tasks geared toward ascertaining the person’s acquired skills, knowledge-content, and ability to utilize this knowledge and skills affectively”.

Examination Ethics/Rules

It is the common practice that students are tested after a particular instruction has been passed across. The performance of such people is determined by the level of correct response given to the question/items.
Examination, test and measurement are used interchangeably. Generally, in our schools it is stipulated that student must be examined and found competent before moving to higher level. There are ethics of examination which must be adhered to during the course of taking test, particularly; in tertiary institutions such ethics include that:

I. Duly registered students are eligible to sit for examination.
II. A student who fails to attend up to 75% lecture in tertiary institution is not eligible to sit for the examination.
III. Students arriving later than half an hour (30 minutes) after commencement of examination might not be allowed to sit for the examination.
IV. Any student found to be giving or receiving assistance may be required to withdraw from the examination hall or face panel.
V. Silence must be observed in the examination hall. The only way to communicate is by rising up your hands so as to attract the attention of the invigilator.
VI. Students must display their school identity cards on their desk/tables during each examination. Students may be searched by the invigilator while the examination has commenced of the student is suspected.
VII. Students must remain seated while invigilators go from row to row to collect the answer booklets after the completion of the examination.
VIII. Students are advised in their own interest to remove any piece of paper by their side or inside the desk/table in an examination hall that may incriminate them.
IX. Student must also be vigilant while in the examination hall so those fellow students that carry extraneous material into the examination hall do not drop such materials beside them.
X. When you are removed from one seat to other, make sure that you check the surrounding and see that no pieces of paper have been dropped. In case, you see any paper, call the attention of invigilator.
XI. Students must ensure that they acquaint themselves with the rules and regulations governing the conduct of examination with reference to the student Handbook information.

“Examination malpractice”

Examination malpractices is the failure to carryout properly or honestly conditions specified by the examination body (School Authority for Example) for the evaluation of students in a programme of studies. Also, any student who before, during, after, or in anticipation of any examination or test goes against the rules and regulations guiding the conduct of an examination is said to have committed examination malpractice. Igwe (1990) views examination malpractice as any act intended to benefit or give undue advantage to oneself or another by deceit or fraud during and after an examination. This act could be that of the student or the teacher or any others person. Asuru (1997) describes examination malpractice as a bad practice applied in an examination hall in order to make the examinee earn an unmerited advantage. It is any conduct contrary to the rules and regulations governing the conduct of an examination, especially, if the conduct is aimed at securing undue advantage in the performance of such an examination. Ongon (1994) defines it as a wrong doing in an examination which involves misconduct, irregularity as a situation which is contrary to the established rules and directives to be followed in order to jeopardize the conduct of examinations. He views misconduct as an improper behavior by candidates within or around the examination hall and dishonesty as an unfair practice devised with intention to cheat in examinations.

Salami (1994) amplified the definition of examination malpractice by viewing it from both legal and moral perspectives. He views examination malpractice as an “improper and dishonest acct associated with examination with a view to obtaining an unmerited advantage. It is therefore a misdemeanor and for some of its perpetrators, it is an abuse of their position of trust”.

Oluyebi and Daramola (1992) view examination malpractice as any irregular behavior exhibited by candidates or anybody charged with the conduct of examination in or outside the examination hall before, during or after such an examination. Incidences of malpractice are not confined to WAEC conducted examination only; other examining bodies have had their own bitter experiences. What goes on within the school system is even worsen than the public conducted examinations, though they may not attract media attention. That malpractice has become a nightmare to many educationalists is born out by the views expressed by some of them. It constitutes one of the biggest problems facing JAMB. Ojikutu (1987) expresses disappointment at the way university students contravene examination regulations and think that the more regulations were toughened, the more sophisticated the students become at devising means to beat them.

A recent comment on examination malpractice according to Maina (1998) cited in Asuka (1999) reveals that examination malpractice is now a multi million naira business for examination officials and racketeers. He identified the sale of fake forms, leakage and illegal sales of question papers and answer sheets to candidates and fraudulent admission exercise by University Administrators as clear cases of examination malpractice. Others identified as active collaborators include the custodians of exam papers such as Bank Managers, security
officials, teachers and principals. According to Asuru (1999), Asuka (1997), Akaninwor (1997) and Wanton in Asuka (1999), some methods of cheating in exam have been revealed, which are classified as pre-clinical and clinical. Other scholars refer to these as pre-examination, examination and post-examination phases. The pre-clinical stage involves the discreet opening of parcels containing live questions, sneaking away question papers during typing, the replacement of candidate’s passport pictures, exposing some or all live questions to a favoured group of candidates. The clinical stage involves dictating and copying of answers on the chalkboard or handing over writer answers to candidates. Allowing extra time, inflating candidate’s scores, engagement of mercenaries and giraffing are veritably ways of cheating during examination.

**Causes of Exam Malpractices**

The causes of exam malpractice are many and varied. Some of them include the following:

1. **The Students:** Irregular attendance of students to lectures is one major cause of exam malpractice. Academic laziness on the part of the students, failure to respond to given assignments and tests, the settlement syndrome, absenteeism and truancy are major causes of student’s inefficient performance in schools thereby resulting to sorting and other examination crimes. Also dependence of students on teachers’/lectures’ textbook or handout as a condition to pass a course results to lazy approach to studies. Instead of buying and reading the books, they hope that they will pass the course, as long as they bought the book. Some students even complicate matters by joining anti-academic societies, which keep them unnecessarily busy in school doing nothing particularly good to their education. At the end they resort to evil ways to passing the course which they did not prepare for.

2. **Economic Hardships:** The poor conditions of service teachers in Nigeria find themselves create in some of them the spirit of survival of the fittest in which case, examination malpractice becomes a way out. In other words due to the delay in salary payment, most teachers resort to alternative means of survival, usually exam malpractice. Since some of the students are ill-prepared due to strike, they will have no option than fall back on cheating during examination. This position was well portrayed by Kosemani. (1997) when he posits that “as long as Nigerian teachers live in penury and die in want, exam malpractices will produce a life-line for them”

3. **Societal values system:** The Nigerian society nurtures cheats and mediocre and turns them to celebrities. The school being a mirror of the larger Nigerian state cannot be less involved since its members are not in anyway protected from the influence of the society. The hidden curriculum and other agencies of socialization in the larger society definitely interact and influence them. Onuegbe (2003) promptly observes that examination malpractice is a reflection of the degeneration moral bankrupt in our society, a form of social protest and a manifestation of a warped national psyche that endorses reaping where one did not sow

4. **Credentialism and Certificate Racketeering:** Undue emphasis is placed on paper qualification to the utter neglect of performance of ability. Certificate is regarded as an indication of success with education playing an extrinsic role or value. The need for students to excel in examination and obtain a certificate and be gainfully employed, get promoted, gain admission for further studies inform them to indulge in examination malpractice in Nigeria. The acquisition of certificate(s), irrespective of the processes adopted to get is a symbol of success and an end in itself. It does not necessarily matter whether there is congruence between the grade of one’s certificate and one’s actual performance or ability. This phenomenon encourages the tendency to get certificates through hook or crook at all cost. Credentialism therefore encourages cheating in examinations. The issue of certificate racketeering is equally rampant in today Nigeria. In a bid to gain admission into a tertiary institution, students parade fake certificates.

5. **Inadequate infrastructure:** Ill-equipped schools are breeding grounds for examination malpractice. This is so because ill-equipped and ill-prepared students must pass examinations? The school building apart from protecting students from sun, rain, heat and cold, represents an environment which has a tremendous impact on the contort, safety and performances of students. A properly constructed and equipped school environment provides an affective teaching and learning situation. Most school buildings in Nigeria are poorly ventilated and inadequately lit. These problems are obvious, mainly in the rural areas where these facilities are lacking. The result is ill prepared students for examination. The tendency is to fall-back on cheating.

**Effect of examination malpractice**

1. Examination malpractice in all its various forms engenders frustration and loss of self-confidence in candidates who are involved in it. When invariably these culprits are caught, they are usually punished. Some have their results partially or entirely cancelled while some are barred from future examinations.
Others in addition, face prosecution which might lead to imprisonment or paying heavy fines.

2. Engaging malpractices in examination not only destroy the moral integrity of the culprits, but also gives them false sense of value and false impression of their capabilities. Akinpelu (1992) calls it a “practice in self-deception in spite of the temporary gain”. If however, those involved in such misconduct are not caught or punished. It might have a demoralizing effect on others who are hardworking and honest. Those who are less principled might be tempted to join in the cheating game.

3. Engaging in any form of examination malpractice has negated one of the vital objectives of conducting examinations. It has deprived both the assessor and the candidates alike the opportunity of determining how much knowledge a learner has acquired in relation to the desired objectives of the curriculum. The candidate is therefore unable to know what adjustments or what remedial action to take in case the objectives are not being achieved. The teacher too is denied the opportunity of knowing how effective his teaching strategy has been. This means that, examination malpractices is very destructive to the whole purpose of education as it becomes quite difficult if not impossible to diagnose student’s difficulties, weaknesses and deficiencies in learning.

4. Examination malpractice can in the long run lead to a total loss of trust in the examination system and also total loss of confidence in the certificates derived from such examination.

5. Huge amount of money are lost yearly to examination malpractice due to cancellation of results.

6. It promotes unethical values, low quality manpower, comparative disadvantage and dependence on others.

7. It endangers the future of the society and increased cult activities in the school. Examination malpractice leads to weak background, joining of bandwagons on campus, social misfits and professional killers.

8. Examination malpractice has wasted our resources, fractured our economy and shaken our confidence.

9. Examination fraudsters, if graduated will portray to institutions across the nation with disastrous consequences.

10. The trauma and devastation to the hardworking students whose results are withheld in error or by coincidence of being in the same center with offenders is psychological.

11. The corruption, if not checked, is carried forward by the student into his/her future. The society suffers because the student continues to cheat in all other endeavours of life.

12. Society might be the victim of the seed they are planting today (examination malpractice). It will make the system produce incompetent graduates like doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, etc, who would be liabilities to the society rather than assets.

Measures Adapted to Checking Examination Malpractice:
To check examination malpractice in Nigerian school system, the government and other stake-holders have at one time or the other put some measures on ground:

1. The Government: The Federal Government had made serious effort to put an end to this cankerworm in the past-judicial commission of enquiry or tribunals were instituted in 1967 and 1977 to look into the causes and prevention of examination malpractice in WAEC conducted examination. The recommendations made by these tribunals had made Federal Government to enact laws, such as Decree 27 of 1973 and Miscellaneous Offences Decree of 1984 which spelt out serious punishment for offenders. Unfortunately, even the tough legislation have not succeeded in curbing the various forms of malpractice. There has been the lack of will to enforce the laws and so the problems persist.

Recently, Government vowed to adopt a comprehensive and proactive approach to flush out cultism and examination malpractice in secondary and tertiary schools in order to restore the ethics and integrity of education in Nigeria, yet these have not changed the stage.

2. Administrative Sanctions By the Examination Bodies: Each examination institution has put up its own internal administrative measures to prevent occurrence of malpractice and punish offenders. These measures include:

- Cancellation of the entire or part of the results of candidates caught in the act.
- Baring of candidates for taking any examination conducted by the body and if schools are involved in encouraging such acts, they are derecognized and prevented from presenting candidates for a period of time.
- Candidates are sometimes handed over to the law enforcement agents for prosecution especially in cases involving leakages, impersonation or act of hooliganism.
- Dismissal/termination of appointment and or prosecution of officers of such examination bodies, involved in the malpractice.
Examination which is today one of the greater nightmares at all levels of our nation’s institutions of learning is
Grandaunts are presented at the convocation arena as being found worthy in character and learning. This would
individuals, which mean the production of the total man in the cognitive, psychomotor and affective.
anti-education. It reflects a down drop in quality education. Quality education must assure and ensure quality
The run down then suggests that there is a visible decline on quality of education. The onus therefore is that if quality assurance is established and maintained at all levels of our education system, the
much feared examination malpractice will be relegated, without much stress. To achieve quality education
therefore is that if quality assurance is established and maintained at all levels of our education system, the
Methodology:
Monitoring and Supervision:
The Learner:
Methodology:
The school environment:
Monitoring and Supervision:

Conclusion
Examination which is today one of the greater nightmares at all levels of our nation’s institutions of learning is
Grandaunts are presented at the convocation arena as being found worthy in character and learning. This would
have meant that they were not in any way involved in examination malpractice as well. But it does not seem to be so to all.

It is unfortunate that various forms of measures taken to discourage, prevent, or even stop examination malpractice in the country have not yielded the expected results. The reason being that adequate pro-active measures are not in place to produce well disciplined, prepared and committed pupils and students to stand against the temptation of malpractice. Hence, the paper proffers that teachers, the student (learner), the curriculum, the environment, the methodology and supervision factors must be reviewed adequately to ensure quality education, devoid of all forms of malpractice in the system.

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