

Influence of Examination Rules and Regulations on Students' and How to Reduce Examination Malpractice in the University for Development Studies

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Accepted 22 July, 2019

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigated the influence of the Handbook on “General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma Programmes” on students in the University for Development Studies (UDS) and the way forward in reducing examination malpractice. Two hundred and eighty students out of the total population of 6,729 of the Tamale Campus of UDS were randomly selected. The findings of this research showed that the Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma programmes” can influence students to some extent. Apart from a significant number of the respondents having a copy of the Handbook, they also know what constitutes examination malpractice. Also, majority of the respondents hold the view that persons found culpable of cheating in the examination should be sanctioned. They also think that the sanction should depend on the level of the offense committed. On how to reduce examination malpractice, the topmost views of respondents are that: Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras should be placed in examination centers, sitting arrangements should be spacious, scanning machines and e-search software should be used during examinations. Results of our investigations further showed that when examination questions are within the course outline and do not fall outside the scope of what has been taught, students would not indulge in acts of cheating to get high and undeserving grades.

Keywords: Cheating, Penalties, Misconduct, Students and Examination Malpractice.

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INTRODUCTION

Students in tertiary institutions whether public or private have rules and regulations that they must abide by in order to become governable. One way by which students' activities and academics can be regulated, while in school, is for them to become abreast with the Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma Programmes”. At the University for Development Studies, every first-year student is given a copy of the Student Handbook either on the day of orientation or day of matriculation and most importantly, before the start of the first university examinations. Students are required to read the Handbook which serves as a guide to help regulate them on the dos and

don'ts regarding their academics. We assume that every student who has a copy of the Handbook will read it as a guide. The Handbook has two major sections as indicated in its Table of Content; the first is on “Regulations on First Degree and Diploma Programmes” and the second is on “Regulations on the Conduct of University Examinations”. Both sections of the Handbook are very important because the first section for example, would guide students with respect to their studies. It would also enable them to know whether they are in good standing or not and further help them know the grading system, grade points, and the computation of the grade point average, among others. The second section of the

Handbook which talks about the responsibility for conducting an examination to evaluation of courses, student performance, and teaching programmes, has other aspects where our interest lies, with regards to this study.

The conduct of examinations, misconduct during examinations, procedural actions on the conduct of examinations, and penalties for misconduct, all play important aspect of this research. By being well-informed with the Handbook, we expected acts of examination malpractice that occur during examinations to have reduced but, unfortunately, that is not the case. Our concern, therefore, is why the incidence of examination malpractice among students of the University continues to recur at the end of almost every trimester examination. We noted that there are varied views of examination malpractices among educators. According to Makaula (2018), an examination is generally accepted as the best means of assessment. For Olatunbosum (2009), the worth and functionality of any educational system lie in its ability to actualize the goals of education, hence he avers that the examination process world over, makes the difference through the educational systems. Amadi and Opuiyo (2018) assert that examination has become a vital tool that is used by players in the education industry to ascertain the level of knowledge of students. In their view, this aids in proper planning and progress and, accordingly, argues that examination is administered for the purpose of determining among the students those who have learned and those who have not. At the UDS, when reports are made about alleged students' involvement in examinations malpractices, a Fact-Finding or an Investigative Committee is usually set-up by the Dean of the Faculty or School whose student has been alleged to have involved him/herself in the malpractice to investigate to ascertain the truth of the report by the invigilator(s).

Statements are taken from students who are alleged to have misconducted themselves in the examinations. The invigilator who alleges that a student has indulged in examination malpractice is also required to write his/her statement. Students are further given the opportunity to appear before an Examination Malpractice Committee or a Fact-Finding Committee to defend themselves. The Committee, usually adopts a methodology which it uses in conducting its findings or investigations. It is expected that this will help it establish substantive evidence to determine the veracity or otherwise of the reported examination malpractice to enable it to make recommendations with reference to section VIII of the General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma Programmes, based on its findings. The initial findings of the Committee are submitted to the respective Deans of Faculties/Schools concerned who forward the report to the Registrar.

The Registrar will then submit the report to the Vice-

Chancellor who is the chief disciplinarian of the University. The Vice-Chancellor will direct the University Disciplinary Board to investigate the allegation further and make appropriate recommendations for consideration. In taking action on the recommendations, the Vice-Chancellor may choose to send the Disciplinary Committee's report to the Executive Committee for approval.

The Disciplinary Committee can either uphold or reject the sanctions and recommendations of the Fact-Finding Committee and consequently make new recommendations. Related to the regulations on the first degree and diploma programmes and as enshrined in the Student Handbook, all first-year students who trail up to three courses should retake such courses at the next available opportunity and move on. Such trailed courses should be registered before any new course can be added up to the allowable maximum credit load of 24. Also, first-year students who trail in four or five courses shall be made to repeat the Academic year. Such students shall register as external candidates. Our informal interaction with a cross-section of students on why students may not want to take a resit indicates that some of them choose the risk of cutting corners (using foul means) to get the grades instead of going through the stress associated with resit examination, perhaps because of the associated cost. We were also informed that when a final year student trails in a paper, he or she is required to resit or re-write the examination to enable him/her graduate with his/her colleagues. The resit paper or examination to be written has cost implications because students are required to register and pay a prescribed amount before they can write the examination. The approved fees charged for resit papers were approved by the Executive Committee of the Academic Board with effect from the 2013/2014 academic year, and are as follows:

- a. Registration fee of three hundred Ghana cedis (GHS300.00) per student.
- b. Examination fee of seventy Ghana cedis (GHS70.00) per a resit paper.

We are of the view that some students may want to avoid going through the stress of taking a resit paper and rather take the risk of indulging in examination malpractice to pass and get the grade.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

We observed that examination malpractices continue to occur despite Management's effort to curtail it. Accordingly, we decided to look at exhibits of students' involvement in examination malpractices across Faculties of the University from Faculty files to ascertain the levels of the malpractices. We found out that during the second trimester of the 2012/2013 academic year,

seven (7) students from the Faculty of Applied Sciences (FAS), Faculty of Agribusiness and Communication Sciences (FACS), Faculty of Mathematical Sciences (FMS) and School of Business and Law (SBL) were involved in examination malpractice. Also, during the first trimester examinations of the 2013/2014 academic year, seven (7) candidates were caught to have involved themselves in examination malpractices at four Faculties/Schools across three Campuses of the University. The Faculty/School that the examination malpractice occurred was FAS and FMS, all at the Navrongo Campus, FACS at the Nyankpala Campus, and the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) at the Tamale Campus. Another case of examination malpractice occurred during the end of first trimester examinations of the 2013/2014 academic year involving thirteen students of the Faculty of Education (FoE).

Related to the above, twelve students of FoE offering Diploma in Development Education were found to have miscondacted themselves during the writing of the first trimester examination of the 2014/2015 academic year. During that same trimester examinations, it was alleged that one student from the Wa Campus who was offering Social Science Education was caught with prepared notes in his answer booklet during the examinations. Also, during the second trimester examinations of the 2014/2015 academic year, ten (10) students of the Department of Social and Business Education, Wa Campus, were caught to have involved themselves in examination malpractice. During that same academic year (2014/2015), another student of the Department of Basic Education Studies, Tamale Campus was caught copying from prepared notes during the end of second trimester examinations. Furthermore, during the first trimester examinations of the 2015/2016 academic year, three students of Development Education Studies, Tamale Campus were found to have miscondacted themselves during the examinations. Three students of the Department of Social and Business Education at the Wa Campus of the University were caught cheating during the second trimester examinations of the 2016/2017 academic year. Another case of examination malpractice occurred during the end of first trimester examinations of the 2013/2014 academic year involving thirteen students of the Faculty of Education. Also, twelve Diploma students in Development Education of FoE were found to have miscondacted themselves during the first trimester examinations of the 2014/2015 academic year. Further, during the end of second trimester examinations of the 2014/2015 academic year, ten (10) Social and Business Education students of the Wa Campus were reported to have cheated in the examination.

It was further reported that three students of Development Education Studies of the Tamale Campus were involved in examination malpractice during the first

trimester examinations of the 2015/2016 academic year. It is a well-known fact that cheating in an examination is illegal and should be condemned in no uncertain terms because it assists one to attain high scores or grades which the person does not merit. It is also believed that persons who use dubious and nefarious means to get high scores or marks should be exposed and appropriate sanctions meted out to them. This is because such acts are unacceptable, could destroy the education system, and may end up churning out products that do not have adequate knowledge and skills to become productive at their various workplaces. With this mindset, we wanted to ascertain from students whether they have copies of the Student Handbook. We also wanted to find out whether they have read the portion of the Handbook on "Misconduct during examinations" and the "Penalties for Misconduct". Finally, we wanted to know the views of students on how examination malpractice in UDS could be reduced. Our interest to carry out this study was driven by the negative perception that people have about examination malpractice.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

The study considers whether students understand what constitutes misconduct during examinations and the penalties for misconduct. It further sought out the views of students on the way forward in addressing the malpractice. The evidence of students' involvement in examinations malpractice retrieved from Faculties files shows that the act was very high in the University and needed to be checked. This explains the reason for our decision to delve into the issue to ascertain the reasons for its occurrence.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to examine the purported incidence of examination malpractices among students of the University for Development Studies. The specific objectives which the study sought to achieve are:

1. To discover whether the use of the Handbook can have any influence on students regarding examination malpractice.
2. To ascertain student's awareness about misconduct during examinations and the penalties for misconduct.
3. To solicit the views of respondents on the way forward in reducing examination malpractice in UDS.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The under-listed are the research questions for this

study:

1. Can access to the Handbook on “General and Examination Rules and Regulations have any influence on students regarding examination malpractice?
2. Are students abreast with issues of misconduct during examinations, and penalties for misconduct?
3. What should be the way forward in reducing examination malpractices in UDS?

LITERATURE

In this section of our work, we looked at studies relating to examination malpractices and noted that all forms of examination malpractice have been introduced into the education system. As Makaula (2018) posit, this has made this all-important means of assessing students to become ineffective. Petters and Okon (2014) cited in Makaula (2018) observes that examinations are no longer a true test of one’s ability. Akaranga and Ongong (2013) also averred that the validity and reliability of the education system is in a state of disrepute because of the threat posed by examination malpractices. Anderman and Midgley (2000) cited in Mutinda (2017), assert that education is an essential incentive to study and a means of getting feedback on selection, placement and for employment. They went on to argue that it is also a yardstick for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional delivery. Balogun (1999) cited in Mutinda (2017), describes examination as the process through which pupils are assessed or tested in order to know the worth of knowledge that they have acquired within a specified period. Phiri and Nakamba (2015) posit that the first examination malpractice was believed to have been reported in 1914 during the Cambridge Local Examination papers which were leaked before the scheduled date of the examination. They find indulging in examination malpractice to be an unacceptable behaviour because as they argue when students who cheated in examinations find work in future and are given leadership positions, they are likely to be dishonest and exhibit acts such as corruption and laziness. We think that this can negatively affect the workforce of the organization, slow its output, growth, and development. Writing on the topic ‘why examinations are losing meaning in Nigeria’, Jakiyinta (2006) found out that most institutions in Nigeria are unable to cover the syllabus, so the tendency is for pupils to resort to cheating during examinations.

In their study titled ‘Undergraduate Cheating: Who does what and why’, Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (2009) observed that majority of students who do not prepare adequately in the subjects they perceive to be difficult, are usually caught engaging in examinations malpractices. Wilayat (2009) defines examination malpractice as a deliberate wrongdoing contrary to

approved rules aimed at placing a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage. For Fasasi (2016), any misconduct or improper practice before, during or after an examination by an examinee with the aim of obtaining good results dishonestly constitutes examination malpractice. Salami (1998) asserts that examination malpractice is an unsuitable and fraudulent act related to examination with a view to obtaining an undeserved benefit. Jega (2006) on the other hand, views examination malpractice as an act of misbehaviour where a conscious and deliberate attempt is made to alter or tamper with the approved way of conducting an examination in a given system. For Ugwu (2012) cited in Eneh and Eneh (2014), examination malpractice is a deliberate wrongdoing contrary to official examination rules and postulated that examination malpractice is designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage. He identified copying other candidates work or giraffe as a form of examination malpractice. Evers and Walberg (2003) opine that one of the common social ills threatening the educational sector at all levels of the curriculum is examination malpractice. For Mutinda (2017), examination malpractice is even more worrisome when primary school pupils are found to be involved in the act. Bello et al. (2010) state that cheating in examination is an act of deception by pupils to gain an unfair advantage over others by using unauthorized materials and information. For Berliner (2008), the pressure to attain marks on a single test is so intense that it pushes candidates to indulge in despicable practices such as cheating on the test. Oko and Adie (2016) also explain examination malpractice as any deliberate act of wrongdoing, contrary to the rules of examinations designed to give a candidate an unfair advantage. They aver that the act of indulging in the malpractice is tantamount to cheating and illegal because instead of learning to get the grades, students rather choose to cut corners to make undeserving grades. Oko and Adie (2016) identified the following as forms of examination malpractice; leakage, where prior to the examinations, some part of the content of the examinations is disclosed; impersonation, where an individual takes the risk and decides to write the examination for another person, usually with the collusion between the Chief Examiner and the Chief Supervisor; smuggling of foreign materials or unauthorized materials such as from copied notes, parts of a textbook or notebook; copying from another person(s) work without the person’s notice or without permission, and finally, collusion resulting from the limited spaces between the seating arrangements which make it possible for papers to be passed between candidates. Some of the numerous recommendations Oko and Adie (2016) made included, the need for invigilators to be more vigilant and fairer to all students during invigilation.

They also recommended that mobile phones should not

be used in the examination hall, and also that there was the need to carry-out thorough check on the new wave of e-cheating during examinations. Anderman and Midgley (2000) cited in Mutinda (2017) are of the view that cheating in examinations is a worldwide phenomenon. This, they argue, is because examination tests have become a high stake due to the various uses made of candidates' results. For example, selection, admission, placement, upgrading and promotion, all depend on the results or grade that one obtains. We are also of the view that individuals who think that they have not prepared adequately enough for the examination but still want to meet the selection or placement criteria, may take the risk to cheat to get there. As Mutinda (2017) observes, the results that one obtains at examinations most likely assist that individual to gain employment at the workplace or gets admission into institutions that they seek for. There is, therefore, the tendency for one to cheat to get the scores, grades or the ultimate results. Writing on the Forms and Causes of Examination Malpractice among University Students and using the case of Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Amadi and Opuiyo (2018), found out that mobile phone was the most frequently used form of examination malpractice, among the students. They also found out that copying from a colleague during examinations and the use of textbooks in examination halls were also used to indulge in examination malpractice. Ojonemi (2013) cited in Amadi and Opuiyo (2018), states that each time examination malpractice occurs, the validity and ensuing consequence becomes questionable. Ndifon and Cornelius-Ukpepi (2014) argue that examination malpractice is a phenomenon that is now fast growing among students at all levels of the educational system. They recommended that sitting arrangement of pupils during examination should not be too close to each other and that pupils should be thoroughly checked before starting any examination (Obodigha, 2010; Ndifon and Cornelius-Ukepepi, 2014). Enumerating on Examination Malpractice in Nigeria, Its Origin, Consequences and the Wayout et al. (2015), observed that the level of examination malpractice in Nigeria was not one-sided and blamed all stakeholders including teachers, students, private proprietors, parents and the government for the canker. They, therefore, called on all and sundry to develop the will power to tackle the problem which they deemed serious. Hounvenou and Hounvenou (2015) trace the genesis of examination malpractices in Nigeria to the 1990s and damn the act as a criminal offense which students who are not serious with their studies but want to pass their examination at all cost decide to carry out. Furthermore, examination malpractice "is a deliberate wrongdoing contrary to the laid-down examination rules mapped out to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage" (Fowoyo, 2012; Hounvenou and Hounvenou, 2015).

Fowoyo (2012), further argued that examination malpractice was recorded even during the era of the white men in the country, and was not peculiar to Nigeria alone. Eneh and Eneh (2014) argue that learners struggle to pass examinations in order to obtain certificates that simply tag them as school leavers or graduates. In their view, this explains why examination malpractice has become a median for those who have not abandoned schools but struggle to get certificates without skills. We believe that persons who attempt to use fraudulent and unacceptable means to get undeserving scores/grades are cheats and should suffer the consequences for their actions. It is expected that this will serve as a deterrent. Writing on the topic "Concerns on issues of examination malpractices: A case study of Accra Polytechnic", Achio et al. (2012) argued that various rules and regulations and corresponding sanctions for various forms of malpractice are normally enlisted by examination bodies, but hardened and daring candidates try to find innovative ways to outwit authorities. The long-term effect of indulging in examination malpractice is churning out students who may not have adequate knowledge and skills to perform at their various workplaces. Sommers and Satel (2005) aver that students cheat in examinations because of blatant disregard for rules and regulations in academia, and accordingly argue that the act is only a mirror of the bigger society.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design used for this study is the survey research method. Survey research is used "to answer questions that have been raised, to solve problems that have been posed or observed, to describe what exists, in what amount, and in what context" (Isaac and Michael, 1997 in Glasgow, 2005). The target population for this study was all undergraduate students of the Tamale Campus of the University for Development Studies. Out of the total population of 6,729 students of the Tamale Campus of UDS (UDS, Academic Affairs Section, 2018), 280 of them were randomly selected for this study. The field work was conducted from January to May, 2019. The main instrument of data collection in the survey was a close-ended questionnaire, where respondents were only required to tick the correct answer. The questionnaire was in two sections. Section A was used to elicit information on the Student Handbook with regard to misconduct during examinations and penalties for misconduct whilst Section B was used to solicit the views of respondents on how to reduce examination malpractice in UDS. The quantitative data was coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 programme for Microsoft Windows. Descriptive Statistics such as frequencies and

Table 1. Responses on the influence of Handbook on “General and Examination Rules and Regulations” on students’ and their knowledge about what constitutes examination malpractice.

Variable	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Do you have a copy of the Student Handbook on “General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First degree and Diploma programmes”	235	83.9	45	16.1	280	100
Have you read the portion of the Handbook on “Misconduct during examinations” on pp. 16-17	203	72.5	77	27.5	280	100
Have you read the portion of the Handbook on “Penalties for Misconduct” on p. 19	207	73.9	73	26.1	280	100
Do you know what constitutes ‘examination malpractice’	259	92.5	21	7.5	280	100
Do you think one should cheat in an exam because he/she has not studied enough for the paper	58	20.7	222	79.3	280	100
Should persons found culpable of cheating in an examination be sanctioned	234	83.6	46	16.4	280	100
If the culprit is to be sanctioned, should it depend on the level of the offense committed	234	83.6	46	16.4	280	100
In your view, should a person found culpable of cheating in an exam be reported by the invigilator	223	79.6	57	20.4	280	100
If you were an invigilator, would you have reported a student for cheating in an exam	209	74.6	71	25.4	280	100
Do you think students who cheat in examinations have deliberate disrespect for rules and regulations	231	82.5	49	17.5	280	100
Do you think sanctions are not severe and deterrent enough that is why students continue to cheat in exams	168	60.0	112	40.0	280	100

Source: Survey Data (2019).

percentages were used to present the results of the data analyzed.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The analysis sought to consider responses as they relate to the objectives in the text.

Students’ Knowledge about Examination Malpractice and other Examination related Issues

This section of the study dealt with the influence of the Handbook on General and Examination Rules and Regulations on students’, their awareness about misconduct during examinations, penalties for misconduct, and what constitutes examination malpractice.

A critical glance at the findings presented in Table 1 indicates that majority of the respondents have adequate knowledge about issues relating to examination malpractices. From the results of the investigations, 259 respondents representing 92.5% responded that they know what constitutes examination malpractice. Also, the findings revealed that a substantial number of respondents (n=235) representing 83.9% have a copy of the Student Handbook on “General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First degree and Diploma Programmes”.

Results of the investigations further show that 234 respondents representing 83.6% responded in the affirmative when they were asked whether persons found culpable of cheating in an examination should be sanctioned.

The same number of respondents was of the view that the sanctions for students found cheating in an examination should depend on the level of the

offense committed. On whether students who cheat during examinations have deliberate disrespect for rules and regulations, 231 respondents representing 82.5% answered in the affirmative. This implies that the sanctions might not be severe enough to act as a deterrent. Perhaps, a jail term of five years or more for culprits of examination malpractice could do the trick. On the question of whether sanctions are not severe and deterrent enough that is why students continue to cheat in examinations, 168 respondents representing 60.0% answered yes and 112 respondents representing 40.0% replied in the negative.

This implies that there is the need to take a second look at the penalties for misconduct especially so when cheating in examinations has taken a nose dive and become more sophisticated. Also, on the probe, whether one should cheat in an examination because that individual has not studied enough for the paper, the study results of the

investigation revealed that only 58 respondents representing 20.7% responded in the affirmative whilst the remaining 222 respondents representing 79.3% responded in the negative. This again implies that other factors possibly influence one to cheat in an examination. So, our question is why do students take the risk to cheat knowing the consequences of their actions as spelled out in the penalties for misconduct in the Handbook.

Students' Views on how to Reduce Examination Malpractice in UDS

This section of the study dealt with students' views on the way forward in reducing examination malpractice with the responses ranging from strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), not sure (NS), agree (A) to strongly agree (SA). From Table 2, our findings show that 261 respondents broken down as 150 (53.6%) and 111 (39.6%), respectively, strongly agree and agree with the assertion that the installation of CCTV cameras in examination centers can help reduce examination malpractice in UDS. The results also show that well-spaced sitting arrangement can help reduce copying, communication and giraffe during examinations. From the results, 253 respondents made up of 140 representing 50.0% and 113 representing 40.4%, respectively, strongly agree and agree that spacious sitting arrangement during examinations can help reduce examination malpractices. Furthermore, 260 respondents consisting of 134 representing 47.9% and 126 representing 45.0%, respectively, strongly agree and agree with the assertion that the use of scanning machines and e-search software during examinations can curb examination malpractice. Perhaps, it is because students may not want to be caught in the act of cheating or as 'scapegoats' when it comes to examination malpractice. Results of the investigations also show that 134 respondents representing 47.9% and 125 respondents representing 44.6%, respectively, strongly agree and agree that examination questions should be set within the course outline and not out of the scope of what has been taught if we want to reduce examination malpractice. It was also evident from the results that one-third of respondents (n=101) are not sure whether severe and deterrent sanctions can make students refrain from examination malpractices. Further, 104 respondents were not sure that encouraging students to use the Handbook on examination rules would make them desist from cheating during examinations. As further revealed in our findings, there is a divergent view regarding the use of digital watches to cheat during examinations. From the results, whereas 128 respondents representing about 46% disagree with the view that students should be prevented from using digital watches in examination centers, 125 respondents representing about 45% agree that students should be prevented from using digital

watches to examination centers. A critical glance at the findings presented indicates that placing of CCTV cameras in examination centers, spacious sitting arrangement, use of scanning machines, and e-search software are the topmost factors that can help reduce cheating during examinations. Results of our investigations further show that when examination questions are set within the course outline and do not fall outside the scope of what has been taught, students are likely not to 'cut corners' to get high grades.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that majority of the respondents (n=259) representing 92.5% know what constitutes examination malpractice. Also, a significant number of the respondents (n=235) representing 83.9% have a copy of the Student Handbook on "General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma Programmes". Further, about three-quarters of the respondents answered that they have read the portions of the Handbook on 'Misconduct during examinations' and 'penalties for misconduct'. One would have expected that by being abreast with the rules and regulations regarding examinations, students would have refrained from acts of cheating during examinations, but unfortunately, this is not the case. From the findings in Table 1, 231 respondents representing 82.5% responded yes to the assertion that students cheat during examinations because of deliberate disrespect for rules and regulations. This view is consistent and agreed with the study by Sommers and Satel (2005) who argued that students cheat in examinations because they have a blatant disregard for rules and regulations in academia. In supporting this view, Achio et al. (2012) posit that various rules and regulations and corresponding sanctions for various forms of malpractice are normally enlisted by examination bodies, but hardened and daring candidates try to find innovative ways to outwit authorities. They, therefore, aver that a most important factor responsible for examination malpractice is the desire by candidates to pass at all cost. This view is supported by Makaula (2018) whose findings on the perceived student-related causes of examination malpractices included laziness to work hard and the desire among students to pass at all costs. Results from this study also showed that 234 respondents representing 83.6% answered yes to the assertion that persons found culpable of cheating during examinations should be sanctioned, and that the sanction should depend on the level of offense. This view is consistent with Oko and Adie (2016) who argued that students preferred light penalties such as cancellation of examination, and rustication for an academic session as against stiffer punishment such as

Table 2. Responses on how reduce examination malpractice in UDS.

Variable	SD	%	D	%	NS	%	A	%	SA	%	Total	%
Prevent students from smuggling foreign materials into the exams	5	1.4	5	1.8	17	6.1	127	45.4	126	45.0	280	100
Severe sanctions for misconduct during exams	5	1.8	12	4.3	101	36.1	116	41.4	46	16.4	280	100
Installation of CCTV cameras in exams centers	5	1.8	5	1.8	9	3.2	111	39.6	150	53.6	280	100
Use of Scanning machines and e-search software	5	1.8	5	1.8	11	3.6	126	45.0	134	47.9	280	100
Spacious sitting arrangement during exams	5	1.8	5	1.8	17	6.1	113	40.4	140	50.0	280	100
Exam questions should not be set out of scope	6	2.1	5	1.8	10	3.6	125	44.6	134	47.9	280	100
The strict application of exam rules and regulations	42	15.0	25	8.9	63	22.5	119	42.5	31	11.1	280	100
Enough invigilators who should be strict	10	3.6	13	4.6	47	16.8	160	57.1	50	17.9	280	100
Preparations for exams should be adequate	22	7.9	11	3.9	62	22.1	135	48.2	50	17.9	280	100
Students should be counselled before exams	7	2.5	5	1.8	87	31.1	142	50.7	39	13.9	280	100
Prevent use of digital watches in exam centers	85	30.4	43	15.4	27	9.6	41	14.6	84	30.0	280	100
Encourage use of Handbook on exam rules	35	12.5	20	7.1	104	37.1	106	37.9	15	5.4	280	100

Source: Survey Data (2019).

imprisonment and expulsion from the University. Some people have argued that it is possible that sanctions are not severe and deterrent enough that is why students continue to indulge in examination malpractice. Perhaps, the tangent to go is to institute stiffer punishment which should go beyond mere cancellation of a paper and rustication for one academic year. Phiri and Nakamba (2015) in their study on the effect of examination malpractices (leakages) on pupils' academic performance in Geography in Secondary Schools of Kitwe District of Zambia, made some recommendations, one of which was the need to institute a stiffer penalty for students found culpable of indulging in examination malpractice. They suggested that the penalty for culprits found to have engaged in examination malpractices should be increased from two to five years. The study also revealed that well-spaced sitting arrangements could help reduce copying, communication and giraffe during examinations. From the findings in Table 2, 253 respondents

representing 90.4% agreed that spacious sitting arrangements during examinations can help reduce examination malpractice. This view was consistent with that of Obodigha (2010) who recommended that sitting arrangements of pupils during an examination should not be too close to each other and that pupils should be thoroughly checked before the start of any examination. The view is also supported by Oko and Adie (2016) who identified collusion resulting from the limited spaces between the sitting arrangements as a form of examination malpractice. In their view, this made it possible for papers to be passed between candidates. Accordingly, they argued that there was a need for sitting arrangements in the examination hall to be spacious enough to prevent copying. They also recommended that there was a need for universities to stage a war against over-crowding. In supporting the assertion that sitting arrangements during examinations should be spacious enough, Phiri and Nakamba (2015) recommended that the

government of Zambia through the Ministry of General Education of that country should build more infrastructure to help improve the sitting during examinations. We also think that sitting arrangements should be spacious enough and students offering the same programme should not be allowed to sit closer to each other in the examination hall but rather mixed with others offering different programmes. It is expected that this arrangement would help prevent students from copying in the examination hall. Moreover, our findings revealed that 261 respondents representing 93.2% agreed that placing CCTV cameras in examination centers can help reduce examination malpractice.

The findings again showed that 260 respondents representing 93.1% agreed that the use of scanning machines and e-search software can help reduce examination malpractice. This finding is consistent and supported by Oko and Adie (2016) who recommended that there was the need to enforce

the ban on the use of mobile/cell phones and IPAD in examination halls as a check on the new wave of e-cheating.

Considering the fact that students have adopted sophisticated ways of cheating during the examination, the placing of CCTV cameras in all examination centers and the use of e-search software would not be out of place but will greatly help in the fight against examination malpractices. Nevertheless, we still expect invigilators to be more vigilant and fairer to all students when invigilating at examinations. Results of our investigations also showed that 253 respondents representing 90.4% agreed that students should be prevented from smuggling foreign materials into examination centers. This view is consistent with Oko and Adie (2016) who identified the causes of examination malpractices to include smuggling of foreign materials or unauthorized materials such as from copied notes, parts of a textbook or notebook, and copying from another person(s) work without the person's notice or consent.

The findings further revealed that 259 respondents representing 92.5% agreed that examination questions should be set within the course outline and not out of the scope of what has been taught in the course. This implies that when students anticipate that questions are likely not to be set from the course outline and what they have been taught, there is the tendency for them to want to cheat in the examinations. This view is supported by Jakiyinta (2006) who argued that there is the tendency for pupils to resort to cheating during examinations if they anticipate that their institutions are unable to cover the syllabus before the examinations. This finding is also consistent and agreed with Makaula's (2018) study on perceived causes and methods of examination malpractice in the Malawian education system.

It was observed that perceived teacher/ examination official related causes included insufficient teacher preparation for examinations, and adequate coverage of the syllabus (Makaula, 2018).

CONCLUSION

Findings from this study show that the Students Handbook on "General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma programmes" can influence students to some extent. Apart from a significant number of the respondents having a copy of the Handbook, they also knew what constitutes examination malpractice.

It was also revealed that students appreciate that persons found culpable of cheating in examinations should be sanctioned. Furthermore, it was revealed that students cheat during examinations because of deliberate disrespect for rules and regulations, and also because sanctions are not severe and deterrent enough.

Again, our findings revealed that the topmost factors that can help reduce

cheating during examinations are placing of CCTV cameras in all examination centers, and ensuring that sitting arrangements are spacious enough. That apart, the use of scanning machines and e-search software to scan/search students before and after examination would greatly help.

Results of our investigations went on to show that when examination questions are set within the course outline and do not fall outside the scope of what has been taught, students would not try to indulge in examination malpractice to get undeserving high grades. Our view is that any form of examination malpractice is fraudulent, unacceptable, condemnable and tantamount to academic dishonesty.

Hence, it was prudent to make the conscious effort to address the menace. In short, this study shows that the way forward in reducing examination malpractices are numerous and worth noting, so Management should consider implementing them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Management should continue to be firm in taking prompt action when cases of examination malpractices are reported.
2. All Examinations Officers should ensure that examination materials are properly taken care of to prevent unauthorized persons from having access.
3. Any Invigilator who catches a student with prepared notes should endeavour to compare the notes with what the student has written to confirm whether copying has taken place before making a formal report.
4. Invigilators should be very strict in searching students who arrive late for examinations and in a rush manner because of reported cases that such students often times carry along prepared notes.
5. Counselling sessions should be organized for fresh students on the writing of First University Examinations before the start of trimester examinations.
6. Students should continue to make judicious use of the Handbook on "General and Examination Rules and Regulations on First Degree and Diploma Programmes".
- 7.
8. Enlarged copies of 'misconduct during examinations' and 'penalties for misconduct' spelled out in the Handbook should be pasted in lecture halls during examinations.
9. Furthermore, we recommend the use of e-search software during examinations to help curb the new forms of examination malpractices adopted by students.
10. Lastly, we recommend the installation of CCTV cameras in all examination centers/halls to deter students from cheating.

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