Sapientia Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies (SGOJAHDS), Vol.6 No.2 June, 2023; p.g. 155 – 163; ISSN: 2695-2319 (Print); ISSN: 2695-2327 (Online)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF ESTEEM AND EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENUGU STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was on the relationship between self-esteem and examination malpractice of public senior secondary schools in Enugu State. The correlation survey design was adopted for the study. Five research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. The population of the study was all the public senior secondary schools in Enugu State. The correlation survey design was adopted for the study. Five research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. The population of the study was all the (SS II) public senior secondary school students in Enugu State, Nigeria totalling 10,269. The sample size consisted of about 800 students drawn through simple random sampling techniques. The research instrument was a questionnaire made up of 40 items arranged into three clusters. Cluster one which was adapted from Glopal Swainatha (2016) was a structured instrument used to access the levels of self-esteem of the students. Clusters two and three were research developed instrument used to measure the relationship between Examination malpractice and self-esteem. Research question one was answered using aggregate scores, Research question 2 – 5 were answered using Pearson's product moment of correlation, while hypothesis (i) was tested using -t- test for correlation. The findings reveal among others that only about 30% of the students from public secondary school in Enugu state were satisfied with their self-esteem, the healthy and high self-esteem correlated negatively with examination malpractices, the low and poor self-esteem correlated highly with

examination malpractices. The following recommendations were made, and they include: Parents should step-up in their socialization patterns and styles. Schools should create forums to boast students' confidence, morning assembly should be re-established in schools, and the Government should seek active collaboration of the mission/moral institutions to help uplift the students' sense of self.

Keywords: Relationship, Self-esteem, Examination Malpractices, Students, Public Secondary Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Examination malpractices in recent time is topical in most literatures. This is because it has become a canker worm that has eaten deep into fibrous of our academic system. It has become an "a' la monde" a trade every dick and harry ply's. Encouraged by institutions, supported by parents and practiced by students. It has so made education and learning very cheap and at the verge of losing its impact to the society.

The Examination malpractices act issued in 1999 stated that examination malpractice is any act of omission or commission by an individual who in collaboration of, before, during or after any examination fraudulently secures any unfair advantage for himself or any other individual in such a manner that contravenes the rules and regulations to the extent of undermining the reliability, validity, authenticity and the integrity of the certificate issued. (Agunbiade & Ajayi, 2018). According to Ekeh and Oladayo (2016) examination mal-practice is defined as an illegal attempt or action of an individual or groups of individuals to benefit self or others through evil means which violates the regulations governing the conduct of examination. Supporting this view, Ifeakor and Ukozor (2016) defined it as practices of wrong doing, misconduct or dishonesty associated with examination for personal gain or violation of rules and regulations of examination conduct, Onuka and Durowoju defined examination malpractice as any dishonest or unauthorized action or misconduct committed by the student or any significant agent of socialization such as teachers, parents, guardians, examination supervisors or the institution itself during examination in other to obtain an undeserved grade.

Based on the above definitions, examination malpractice is any fraudulent act committed by a student singly, in collaboration with fellow student or any principal member of the agencies responsible for socialization either through copying or other nefarious activities in other to obtain cheap and unmerited grade. (Onyibe et al, 2015) noted the following as ways students can cheat during examination and they include: impersonation, giraffe, leakage of question papers, copying from fellow students, collusion, use of mobile phones, copying into the hall, smuggling answers into the hall, sorting of teacher etc.

Furthermore literature has proffered a lot of reasons which can cause examination malpractices and they include, truancy, craze for certificate, choosing occupation by parents, fear of failure, trend in the society, lack of facilities, including qualified teachers, laziness, personality disposition, psychological distress e.t.c. (Peters & Ukpongs 2013). According to sharp and Theiler (2018) students who experiences severe psychological distress have a reduced capacity and potential for study and achievement, since elevated level of distress leads to greater disability. Supporting this view, Sharif and Armitage (2014) noted that

prevalence of psychological distress can lead to the following, poor academic achievement, impaired ability to work, poor relational ability and unhealthy self-esteem consequently may lead to cheating.

According to Orth et al (2014) self-esteem is the feeling of being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worthy of happiness. It affects every aspect of life including academic achievement (Sharif Armetage, 2014). It is a psychological trait that expresses an individual's competence worth and ability to overcome existential challenges. Malekkiha and Abedi (2012) noted that self-esteem is a significant psychological element related to wellness, quality of life and achievement. This view was supported by Magro et al (2018) who maintained that self-esteem is a feeling of sense of capability, sense of acceptance, sense of worth, ability to surmount life obstacles. Akram (2017) defined it as a stable sense of personal worth. Self-esteem tends to portray ones worth and ones view about oneself. In simpler term it is the worth and view an individual held of oneself. It is fundamentally influenced by the following namely: your independence and ability to stand on your own, your achievement, your strength and weaknesses etc.

Self-esteem can be view as follows namely, high self-esteem vs low self-esteem, healthy self-esteem vs poor self-esteem implying that self-esteem could be categorized into high self-esteem, low self-esteem, healthy self-esteem and poor self-esteem.

High self-esteem is the type of self-esteem characterized by high level of organizational ability confidence, right attitude towards values and are highly motivated. These categories of persons are motivated by challenges (academic performance inclusive) and they struggle to achieve great success. The low self-esteem is the opposite of high self-esteem. This category is characterized by low potential, live in constant fear, disregards authorities, blames others, breaks rules and regulations, unable to cope, indifference to responsibilities and are underachievers. (Malekiha & Abedi, 2012).

The healthy self-esteem is one based on the individual's ability to assess oneself realistically and being able to accept oneself unconditionally. This implies that the individual is able to accept his/her strength and limitations and struggles to overcome such challenges. The poor self esteem are categories of persons whose present state of achievement is determined by how they feel about themselves. Such people are very often under-achievers and they try to cut corners (Orth et al, 2014). Again, the prevalence of examination malpractices has made it common in the urban or rural set up and among genders, male or female. All have been found to engage actively in malpractices even though it can vary and based on factors such as disposition, nurturance, social status and location of the groups involved. In similar manner, the self-esteem of students can also vary according to their location. Rural students has been shown to exhibit higher degree of timidity more than urban adolescents exposed to the trend and fashion current in the society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Educational sector is currently besieged with multiple value deterioration which many stakeholders rouse voices against. Such value deterioration is visibly seen in the various underachievements which characterises the teaching and learning environment of our time. Significant among them is examination malpractice and the associated evils. Examination

malpractice is the act of seeking to obtain unmerited grades through false means. So many causes have been advanced as factors causal to these ills rampant in the academic sector. Among them is the psychological state of the individual. Reduced psychological state of an individual can lead to underachievement and a reduced capacity and potential to perform well in the academic field. State of an individual which can cause underachievement has been predicated to an individual's self-esteem. Therefore, the main problem of this study is to examine how an individual's self-esteem relates to the individuals engagement to examination malpractices.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to study the relationship between self-esteem and examination malpractices. The study sought specifically to determine their levels of self-esteem generally, the relationship between high self-esteem, healthy self-esteem, low self-esteem, poor self-esteem and examination malpractices among secondary school students in Enugu State Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the students' assessments of their levels of self-esteem generally?
2. What relationship exists between high self-esteem and examination malpractices among students in Enugu State?
3. What relationship exists between healthy self-esteem and examination malpractice among secondary school students in Enugu State?
4. What relationship exists between poor self-esteem and examination malpractices among secondary school students in Enugu State?
5. What relationship exists between low self-esteem and examination malpractices among secondary school students in Enugu State Nigeria?

HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant relationship between urban and rural students rating of their levels of self-esteem.

Method of Study

The design was correlation survey design and the area of study was Enugu State. The population of study was all the public senior secondary school students (SS II) in Enugu State Nigeria. The total population is 10,269 and the sample size consisted of 800 students drawn through simple sampling techniques. The reliability of the study was established using split half method and was found to be (0.67). The researchers designed and adapted questionnaire was used and distributed through three assistants who helped in the distribution and collection of the questionnaire. All the distributed questionnaires were retrieved. The questionnaire consists of three clusters made up of 60 questions. Cluster one was adapted from Glopal Swainatha (2016) and modified to measure self-esteem. The data collected was analysed using aggregate scores for research question one and Pearson product moment of correlations for research questions 2, 3, 4 and 5. With respect to research question one, measuring the self-esteem levels of students in Enugu State, the maximum obtainable score is an aggregate score of 100 points grouped into a range of scores at ten interval scales to obtain 10 aggregate score intervals. Ranges of scores between the first and second point on the

interval scales were considered as very poor self-esteem, third and fourth point on the interval scale were considered poor, fifth and sixth were considered fairly good, seventh and eighth were considered good self-esteem and above the eighth point was considered very good self-esteem. -t- tests for correlation was used for the hypothesis

Results

The data collected from the field of study was analysed and the findings were presented in table form as follows:

Research question one: what are the levels of self-esteem of public senior secondary school students from Enugu State.

Table 1: Aggregate scores on students rating of their levels of self-esteem.

Aggregate scores at interval range	Points at interval scale	No of Students	Remarks
0 – 10	1	Nil	VP
11 – 20	2	60	VP
21 – 30	3	84	P
31 – 40	4	164	P
41 – 50	5	156	FG
51 – 60	6	94	FG
61 – 70	7	110	G
71 – 80	8	89	G
81 – 90	9	20	VG
91 - 100	10	13	VG

n = 800
VP = Very Poor
P= Poor
FG= Fairly Good
G = Good
VG= Very Good

The table above revealed the students rating of their self-esteem. No score was recorded at the first interval scale, sixty students scored at the second interval scale, 84 students scored at the third interval scale, 164 students scored at the fourth interval scale, 156 students scored at the fifth interval scale, 94 students scored at the sixth interval scale, 110 students scored at the seventh interval scale, 89 students scored at the eight interval scale, 20 students scored at the ninth interval scale and 23 students scored at the tenth interval scale. The data also revealed that 60 students scored their self-esteem very poorly, 148 students scored theirs poorly, 150 students scored theirs as fairly good, 199 students scored theirs as good while 43 students scored their self-esteem rating as very good.

Research question two

What relationship exists between malpractice and high self-esteem of public secondary school students from Enugu State Nigeria?

Table 2: Pearson on Students rating of the relationship between high self-esteem and examination malpractice.

Source of variation	N	High Self Esteem	Examination malpractice	Remarks
High self esteem	800	1.00	- 0.79	
Examination malpractice	800	- 0.79	1.00	

The result from the table above reveals that a high negative correlation of (-0.79) exists between high self-esteem and examination malpractices among secondary school students.

Research Question three

What kind of relationship exists between healthy self-esteem and examination malpractice among public secondary school students in Enugu State?

Table three: Pearson's on students rating of the relationship existing between healthy self-esteem and examination malpractice.

Source of variation	N	Healthy self esteem	Examination malpractice	Remarks
Healthy self esteem	800	1.00	- 0.72	
Examination malpractice	800	- 0.72	1.00	

The table above revealed that a negative correlation coefficient of -0.72 exist between healthy self-esteem and examination malpractice among senior secondary school students in Enugu State.

Research question four

What kind of relationship exists between poor self-esteem and examination mal-practice among public senior secondary school students in Enugu state, Nigeria?

Table four: Pearson on students rating of the relationship existing between poor self-esteem and examination malpractices.

Source of variation	N	Poor self esteem	Examination malpractices	Remarks
Poor self esteem	800	1.00	0.78	
Examination malpractices		0.78	1.00	

Table four reveals the students rating of the relationship between poor self-esteem and examination malpractice. The table indicated that a coefficient of 0.78 exist between the two variables.

Research question five
What kind of relationship exists between low self-esteem and examination malpractices among public secondary school students in Enugu State?

Table Five: Pearson on students rating of the relationship existing between low self-esteem and examination malpractices.

Source of variation	N	Low self-esteem	Examination malpractices	Remarks
Low self-esteem		1.00	0.76	
Examination malpractice		0.78	1.00	

The table above indicated that a high positive correlation of (0.76) exists between students rating of low self-esteem and examination malpractice among student from Enugu State of Nigeria.

Hypothesis (1)
There is no significant relationship existing between the urban and rural students rating of their self esteem.
Table six: -t- test of correlations between the urban and rural students rating of their self-esteem

N	R	Df	Cal -t-	Crit -t-	P > -0.5
800	0.72	798	17.89	2..69	S

The table above revealed that at 0.05 level of significance and a differential freedom of 798, the calculated -t- (17.89) is greater than the -t- critical t (2.69). Hence, there is a significant relationship existing between the urban and rural adolescents rating of their self-esteem.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
The findings of the study were discussed according to the following sub-headings: determining the self-esteem of the students generally and the relationship existing between healthy self-esteem, high self-esteem, poor self-esteem, low self-esteem and examination mal practice.

Concerning the students assessment of their self-esteem generally, the result reveals that 60 students representing 7.5% of secondary school students rated their self-esteem very poorly, 248 students representing 31% of the students scored their self-esteem poorly, 250 students representing about 31.25% of students scored theirs as fairly good, 199 students representing 24.88% of students scored theirs as good while 43 students representing 5.38% rated their self-esteem level as very good. Implying that about 69.7% students were not satisfied with their self-esteem while the remaining 30.25% were satisfied with their self-esteem. Peters and Ukpong (2013), Sharp and Theiler (2018) all noted that students who experiences severe psychological problems such as distress and lack satisfaction with their self-esteem have reduced capacity to study, they break rules and regulations (Malekiha and Abedi, 2014) and they try to cut corners (Orth et al, 2014). Such Malpractices as it is visibly seen currently to be

very rampant in our education system. With respect to the hypothesis which sought to determine the relationship existing between self-esteem rating of both urban and rural students reveals that a significant relationship exist between the urban and rural students ratings of their levels of self-esteem. This is because, location has been noted by scholars to have great influence on the psychological adaptation of adolescents. Students in the urban setting are privileged certain basic amenities that supports their proper adjustments unlike the rural students who experiences the contrary.

Concerning the relationship between the self-esteem of students, (high, healthy, poor and low) with their examination mal practices, the tables reveals a relationship coefficient of -0.79, -0.72, 0.78 and 0.76 respectively. The table further revealed that high and healthy self-esteem correlated negatively with examination malpractices while low and poor self-esteem correlated positively with examination malpractices. This goes a long way to confirm the assertions of Sharirf and Hermstage (2014) who notes that self-esteem is a psychological trait that affects competency. This view was supported by Magro (2018) and Akram (2017). All noted that self-esteem is a feeling of sense of worth and that it can help an individual to surmount obstacles. The students whose self-esteem level were found to be good (high and healthy) self-esteem were those whose correlation coefficient with examination malpractices were found to be negative and it rates –0.79 and -0.72 respectively indicating that such were positive about their self-worth, were competent, believed in themselves, trusted their decisions, were good oriented, were happy about themselves, can stand on their own and have confidence in self etc. on the contrary the low and poor self-esteem group which was found among 69.75% students in Enugu state expressed distressed and lack of satisfaction with their self-esteem. Within this category were found students who were afraid of failures, loses confidence in examination hall, do not accept challenges, are not realistic over issues of importance, cannot trust their decisions etc. Peters and Ukpong, (2013), Sharp and Thailer (2018), Malekeha and Abechi (2014) and Orth et al (2014) all noted that such people do not possess the necessary psychological disposition to overcome distress and obstacles consequently resulting in poor self-esteem which leads them to break rules and regulations, cut corners and indulge in examination malpractices.

CONCLUSION

The study above reveals majority that majority of the senior secondary schools students from public secondary school in Enugu State were not satisfied with their self esteem. About 30% of the students from the state expressed satisfaction with their self-esteem. The consequences of the above could explain the rampant and incessant malpractices replete in school system. It therefore the onus of the stakeholders to give these children the proper training that will impact positively in their sense of self.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Parents should step up in the socialization pattern, styles of parenting and acculturation realising that the school is only one of the agents that nurtures the child.
2. The schools/institutions should create forums that will boast the confidence of students
3. Morning assembly and recitations/presentation should be re-instituted in the school system.

4. The government should seek collaboration with other social institutions such as the mission to help uplift the standards in schools.

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