

TEACHERS' VIEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT THE STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE THE MALPRACTICES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS SYSTEM IN BOARDS OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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ABSTRACT

This study is being conducted to "investigate the views and opinions of teachers about the strategies to mitigate the malpractices in the secondary school certificate examination system in the boards of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa." The target population was all the teachers of secondary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a province of Pakistan. The data was collected through questionnaires, and the following five hypotheses were tested: (1) The installation of CCTV cameras in examination halls will minimize malpractices during examinations. (2) The appointment of good-character, dutiful, and honest teachers as exam supervisors will minimize the chances of malpractice during examinations. (3) The media can play a positive role in reducing examination malpractices. (4) Good and effective teaching in schools will minimize the chances of malpractices in examinations. (5) Strict punishment for individuals involved in malpractices will reduce the occurrences of examination malpractices. The data was tabled, analyzed, and a conclusion drawn. All the hypotheses were proven true and accepted.

Keywords: Teachers, malpractice, CCTV cameras, hypotheses, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

INTRODUCTION

Destroying a nation does not necessitate the use of destructive weapons. But malpractices in the examination system and letting the students cheat in examinations will destroy the nation automatically (Dzitse, 2017). Examination is defined in a number of ways by the researchers. Kawugana (2017) defined examination as a tool to measure the extent of learning and skill that an examinee has gained. Adewuye (2019) defined examination as a method of determining the examinee's level of knowledge. It is a formal test that is taken by the students after receiving a particular level of learning, and successful candidates are awarded a certificate or degree. But some candidates adopt an illegal method and commit malpractice to pass the examination (Birks et al. 2020). Examination malpractice is an illegal act that gives advantage or disadvantage to an examinee (Amadi & Opuiyo, 2018). Examination malpractice is defined as misconduct done by anyone at any stage of the examination process (Akaranga, 2013). It is an international problem that exists more or less everywhere in the world.

Examinations are considered an integral part of an education system, and every stake is connected to them (Mulongo et al. 2019). Therefore, students want to pass examinations at all costs. Parents want their children to do well in their exams as well. There are three main types of examinations in Pakistan: internal examination, external examination, and sample-based assessment. Internal examinations are those examinations that are developed and conducted internally by the school, college, or educational institute. External examinations are those examinations that are developed and conducted by an external organization, such as BISEs. Sample-based assessments are those assessments that are developed and conducted by an external organization throughout a country or province. These assessments are conducted for the purposes of evaluating an education policy or program. These organizations grant no certificate or degree to the examinee.

Malpractices are deeply embedded in the examination systems of many countries around the world. Rules and regulations are made. Measures and strategies are adopted. However, examination malpractices do not appear to be abating. The main cause is that the rules and regulations are not implemented properly, and examination malpractice cases are occurring everywhere in Pakistan (Haq

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et al. 2020). Media report malpractices every year. For the purpose to investigate the problem through the teachers point of view, the present study is conducted.

Statement of the Problem

The matriculation examination has an important role in the education system of Pakistan. Unfortunately, malpractices prevail everywhere in BISE's examination system in Pakistan. The present research study investigated the views and opinions of secondary school teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa about the strategies to be taken to reduce malpractices in the SSC examination system of BISEs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Significance of the Study

This study focused on the shortcomings of the current BISE examination systems in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as the steps to be taken to reduce malpractices therein. The results of this study provided an important knowledge base for improving the examination system, which is the critical need of the day. The research study provided a base for BISEs concerned with making a standardized examination system in the future. It provided a base for further research at a national and international level. This study may help policymakers and higher-ups make sound decisions about the secondary school certificate external examination system.

Research Objective

To investigate the views and opinions of teachers about the strategies to mitigate malpractices in the SSC examination system of BISEs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,

Research Question

The following question is examined in this study:

1. What are the views and opinions of secondary school teachers about the strategies to mitigate the malpractices in the SSC exam system of BISEs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

Hypotheses

1. The installation of CCTV cameras in examination halls will minimize the malpractices during examination
2. The appointment of dutiful, honest and well reputed teachers as exam supervisors will minimize the chances of malpractices during examinations
3. Media can play positive role in reducing examination malpractices.
4. Good and effective teaching in schools will minimize the events of malpractices in examination
5. Giving strict punishment to individuals involved in malpractices will minimize the events of malpractices in examination

Review of Literature

This section examines literature from different academic outlets. Any effort has been made to compile the most important literature for research purposes. The information from academic works or some other sources provided and analyzed here has been properly cited.

Definition of Examination

According to the Lexico dictionary, "examination has been defined as "a formal test of an examinee's knowledge and skill." Malpractice is defined as an intended illegal act and a violation of examination rules that gives the examinee an advantage or disadvantage (World Bank, 2022). Combining both definitions, "examination malpractice" means an illegal advantage or disadvantage that an examinee gains. As described by O.P. Koliwole (ary, "examination" has been defined as "a formal test of an examinee's knowledge and skill." Malpractice is defined as an intended illegal act and a violation of examination rules that gives the examinee an advantage or disadvantage (World Bank, 2022). Combining both definitions, "examination malpractice" means an illegal advantage or disadvantage that an examinee gains. As described by O.P. Koliwole (2019), examination malpractice is a deterioration that destroys the validity and reliability of examinations.

Stakeholders of the Examination Malpractice

The literature reviewed identifies a number of stakeholders affected by examination malpractices, including the government, the community, teachers, students, parents, and supervisory staff. Only students are not involved in examination malpractices, as C. O. Onyibe (2015) observed that with students, a number of stakeholders are also involved in this corruption. [W. Phiri, 2015] and (Q. Suleman, et al., 2015), revealed in a study that incomplete preparation and students' fear of failure in examinations are the main causes of examination malpractices. Parents, as described by M. M. Chilala (2019) and Q. Suleman et al. (2019), have a responsibility to assist in the development of a

transparent examination system. But instead, they are involved in examination malpractices. Teachers are responsible for teaching students the relevant syllabus and preparing them for examinations. But there is a shortage of competent teachers in schools, almost in every developing country in the world, due to a lack of economic resources. So the teaching and learning processes are badly affected. Consequently, the teachers may assist their students to have them pass an examination illegally. Moreover, if the remuneration of teachers is insufficient, they may resort to taking bribes from students and parents to assist the students in malpractice. The government has the responsibility to develop a standardized examination system (Ministry, 1996). But carelessness and the involvement of government officials and other stakeholders in corruption cause examination malpractices.

Forms of Examination Malpractice

A number of forms of examination malpractice are found when reviewing the related literature. These can occur prior to, during, or following the examination [W. Phiri, 2015] and (Q. Suleman et al., 2019). In a study, Ugochukwu et al. (2021) found that some frequently occurring malpractices are bringing illegal material into the exam hall, giraffing, i.e., looking at another student's answer sheet and copying from it, getting help from parents, teachers, and others, impersonation cases, leakage of examination papers and questions before the examination, and so on. With the advancement of technology, the forms of examination malpractice have also changed.

Causes of Examination Malpractice

Several causes of examination malpractices have been found by the researchers in different research studies. The main causes are, as Onyema et al. (2019) found in their study: corruption, lack of learning facilities, lack of supervision, misuse or no use of technology, running after certificates and degrees, poor parental roles, immorality in society, and poor teaching and learning conditions. The authors discovered that lack of confidence in students, inadequate preparation, the influence of the community and society, and parental support are some well-known causes of malpractice in their study (Jimoh & B. O. 2009). Similarly, Maduka (2002) also described that the school environment, the teaching-learning process, running after certificates, and immorality in society are the main causes of examination malpractice. Lack of guidance and counseling in schools is also a cause of malpractices (Q. Suleman et al. 2015). The cheaters seem to be opportunists. They change their ways of cheating according to the available opportunities (D. A. Woche, 2020).

Strategies Used for Mitigating Examination Malpractices

The following strategies can be used to curb malpractice in examinations: strict supervision, punishment for the guilty, an effective teaching-learning process, selecting honest superiors, body searches of examinees, and the introduction of examination rules and regulations.

Strict Supervision

Unfair means or examination malpractices are so common in the world that they are known to everyone. The supervisory staff should perform their duties strictly to eradicate this problem, as stated (Alabi, 2014). If the examination supervisory staff is sincere with their duties, it is assured that exam conduction will be transparent. He added that the invigilation staff should be honest, sincere, and of good moral character to curb examination malpractices.

Guilty to be Punished

According to Adhora, A. M. 2009, on-the-spot punishment for wrongdoers will be effective; when invigilators find any wrongdoers and file a case of unfair means (UFM) against them, they will be discouraged and will not commit such an act again. He adds that the candidates should be aware of the rules, regulations and their consequences. A study conducted by Nyamwang, et al., (2013), founded that in a number of developed countries the examination results of cheaters and students who do wrongs cancelled. The researcher adds that if an invigilator finds a wrongdoer, he should report him.

Effective Teaching-Learning Process

Education is essential for a country's progress. So the teachers should be serious about promoting effective teaching and learning conditions. Omemu (2015) believes that they should contact their parents and the government for support in this regard. He added that if teachers succeed in promoting an effective teaching-learning environment, there will be no or very rare cases of cheating in examinations.

Selecting Honest Supervisors

The supervision of examinations is pivotal to the examination system. Therefore, the examination supervisors should be carefully selected. Therefore, the examination supervisors should be carefully selected, as Jokthan (2013) and Onyibe, Uma, and Ibina (2015) state that honest, diligent, and sincere individuals should be selected as exam invigilators. They should be able to prevent examination malpractices. (Njeru, 2008) is also of the opinion that if the invigilators are sincere with their duties, there is no doubt the examination will be transparent.

Body Search of Examinees

A body search of examinees when they are entering halls is an effective strategy for curbing examination malpractice. According to Mucheke (2014), invigilators should conduct proper body searches of candidates before they enter halls. Examinees should be aware of the rules, regulations, and consequences of malpractice. Guidance and counseling services for students may be helpful in curbing malpractices (Madara & Sitati, 2016).

Use of Technology for Curbing Examination Malpractices

A number of modern technology devices can be used for the prevention of examination malpractices, as Curran (2011) states that CCTV cameras can be used effectively for preventing malpractices in examinations. These will be records that can be used later as evidence if the offenders deny the charges. The researcher added that the examinees will be cautious about doing anything wrong as they will be aware that their actions are recorded. Similarly, Ahmed (2018) says that nowadays electronic devices are used for examination malpractices. As a result, electronic devices such as CCTV cameras should be used to reduce malpractice. Achio et al., (2012) recommend that technological devices, such as CCTV cameras, can be successfully used to mitigate examination malpractices. E-invigilation, according to Fayom, et al. (2015), can be used for monitoring examinations. (Sulaimon, 2010) and (Eghafona, 2011), also recommended the installation of CCTV cameras in examination hall, due to the poor conditions therein.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the study has been discussed in this chapter. The techniques adopted—population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection tools, and procedures—are all discussed here.

The population of the study is a complete and whole set of individuals and objects intended to be collected data from in a research study. The teachers of all public secondary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a province of Pakistan, are the target population of the present study. Sampling: The sample is a miniature that represents a smaller portion of a larger body. Many times, it is difficult or impossible to collect data from the entire population. In such a case, the researcher selects a small representative portion of a larger group, which is called a "sample." In KP, the province of Pakistan, there are eight BISEs managing and administering secondary and higher secondary schools' examinations. This is a larger area with a larger population. For researchers, it is difficult, expensive, and time-consuming to collect data from such a large population. So the only way is to take its sample. The results are then generalized to the entire population. In statistics, many sampling methods and techniques are used. Here, the researcher used multistage sampling techniques. In the first step, the BISE in Peshawar was randomly selected from the eight BISEs in KP province through a simple random sampling technique. In the second step, 05 teachers from each GHS, GHSS, GGHS, and GGHSS under the jurisdiction of BISEP were randomly selected. Thus, 2550 teachers made up the sample size. The schools' and teachers' data was collected from the EMIS office in Peshawar. Data collection tools: A number of data collection tools are used in research projects. All have their own advantages and disadvantages. The researchers use these tools according to their choice and according to what they consider appropriate for their research. In the present study, the researcher wanted to collect data through questionnaires. The area for the present study is very large and widely spread. Hence, questionnaires will be suitable and feasible tools for this population. A self-developed five-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers. It starts from strongly agreeing to strongly disagreeing, and the middle point is kept neutral so that one can remain neutral if one wants. Data Collection Procedure: In research projects, data is gathered for processing and obtaining results. In this study, the researcher gathered data through postal mail. A total of 2550 questionnaires were distributed to secondary school teachers in the jurisdiction of the BISE Peshawar. Along with the questionnaires, an extra envelope was also sent to each school on which my address was written

for returning the forms. Only 2250 completed questionnaires from teachers were returned, accounting for 88% of the total. The same data was processed.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this section the data collected from the respondents is analyzed through various methods and techniques. The data is collected from public secondary schools' teachers. After that the data is tabulated, analyzed inferentially as well as statistically, and the conclusions are drawn.

Table No. 1. The installation of CCTV cameras in examination halls will minimize the malpractices during examination

NO	LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	SA	811	36%
2	A	1013	45%
3	N	40	2%
4	DA	302	13%
5	SDA	84	4%
TOTAL		2250	100%

Table No. 01 shows that 81% of the respondents opined that the installation of CCTV cameras in examination halls will minimize malpractices during exams, 17% opposed the idea, and only 2% were neutral. The higher positive opinions show that hypothesis 01 is accepted and that the installation of CCTV cameras in exam halls will minimize malpractices during examinations.

The respondents are of the opinion that if CCTV cameras are installed in exam halls and at every sensitive position, examinees and other concerned parties will be careful of doing wrong, as Mulongo et al. (2019) are of the opinion that the use of ICT and CCTV cameras in exams will be very effective. Due to the recording of their acts, the individuals will not have the courage to do wrong. Chala et al. (2022), also recommended the use of ICT in exams. Onyema et al. (2019) say that CCTV cameras and the use of other ICT tools such as biometrics can be very helpful in the mitigation of examination malpractices. Mulongo (2020) suggested a number of malpractice mitigation strategies, one of which was the use of CCTV cameras in examination halls and other sensitive positions.

Table No. 2. The appointment of having good moral characters, dutiful, and honest teachers as exam supervisors will minimize the chances of malpractices during examinations

NO	LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	SA	1045	46%
2	A	860	38%
3	N	55	3%
4	DA	290	13%
5	SDA	---	
TOTAL		2250	100%

Table No. 02 shows that 84% of the respondents are of the opinion that the appointment of good moral characters and dutiful and honest teachers as exam supervisors will minimize the chances of malpractice during examinations; 13% oppose the idea, and only 3% of them are neutral. The higher positive opinions show that hypothesis 02 is accepted, and the appointment of dutiful, honest teachers as exam supervisors will minimize the chances of malpractice during examination.

The appointment of honest and diligent teachers will minimize the chances of examination malpractices. Because a fair person will do his duty honestly and will give no chance to anyone doing wrong, Viriri and Makaye (2020) opined that honest invigilators should be selected to mitigate examination malpractices. Mulongo (2020) is also of the same view that the supervisory staff role is crucial in exam conduction, so invigilators should maintain integrity throughout the examination process. Ugochukwu et al. (2021) recommended that the selection of supervisory staff should be on merit and invigilators should respect morals, not letting anyone do wrong.

Table No. 3 media can play a positive role in reducing examination malpractices

NO	LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	SA	566	25%
2	A	1245	55%
3	N	47	2%
4	DA	392	18%
5	SDA	-----	
TOTAL		2250	100%

Table No. 3 shows that 80% of the respondents opined that the media can play a positive role in reducing examination malpractices, 18% opposed the idea, and 2% were neutral. The higher percentage of positive responses indicate that hypothesis #3 is accepted and that the media can play a positive role in reducing examination malpractice.

The respondents opined that when a person thinks that his or her offenses will be displayed in the media, he or she will be careful and not commit malpractices. It means that the media should expose and bring the offenders to justice.

Table No. 4 Good and effective teaching in schools will minimize the events of malpractices in examination

NO	LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	SA	397	18%
2	A	1080	48%
3	N	93	4%
4	DA	410	18%
5	SDA	270	12%
TOTAL		2250	100%

According to Table 4, 66% of respondents believe that good and effective teaching in schools will reduce the occurrence of examination malpractices, 30% disagree, and 4% are neutral. The higher positive opinions show that hypothesis 04 is accepted and that good and effective teaching will minimize the occurrence of malpractices in examinations.

The respondents opined that good and effective teaching in schools will prepare students for examinations. When students are well prepared, they will not need to turn to malpractice. As Viriri and Makayeined noted, good and effective teaching in schools will prepare students for examinations. When students are well prepared, they will not need to turn to malpractice. As Viriri and Makaye (2020) note, it is recommended that teachers teach effectively and build students' character. If students are well taught and have good characters, they will not turn to malpractice. In this respect Mulongo (2020), he urged that teachers should have command of their subject so that they may be able to deliver their knowledge to students. Students will be able to express themselves effectively in examinations, and they will have no need to commit malpractice. In most cases, the syllabus is not completed or is poorly completed. Students are pressured by their parents and their schools to perform better in exams. So students want to pass their exams at all costs and turn to malpractice. Adzrolo et al. (2021) stressed that the school environment should be conducive to learning and teachers should complete the syllabus on time and do revision.

Table No. 5 Giving strict punishment to individuals involved in malpractices will minimize the events of malpractices in examination

NO	LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	SA	815	36%
2	A	1057	47%
3	N	30	1%
4	DA	348	16%
5	SDA	-----	
TOTAL		2250	100%

According to Table No. 05, 83% of respondents believe that harsh punishment for individuals involved in malpractices will reduce the number of malpractices during examinations, 16% disagree, and only 1% are neutral. The higher the positive opinions, the more likely hypothesis 05 is accepted, and strict punishment for individuals involved in malpractice will reduce the occurrences of malpractice in examination.

The findings show that the proper punishment will be effective. The rules and regulations are excited about any violation. But we need to implement these rules and regulations. Baji (2021) urged that the offenders should be given strict punishment and that rules and regulations be fully implemented. As a result, one will lack the courage to do wrong. Onyema et al. (2019) recommended that before the implementation of punishment, the examinees as well as the supervisory staff should be given moral training.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Exam malpractice is destroying the education system of a country. The current study looked into teachers' perspectives on strategies for reducing examination malpractice. The study revealed that the installation of CCTV cameras in examination halls, the appointment of honest and fair invigilation staff, giving a role to media in exams, creating an effective and conducive teaching and learning environment, and the implementation of proper punishment for wrongdoers are the measures that will mitigate examination malpractices. On the basis of the present study, it is recommended that such a study be conducted at the country level with a larger sample size.

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