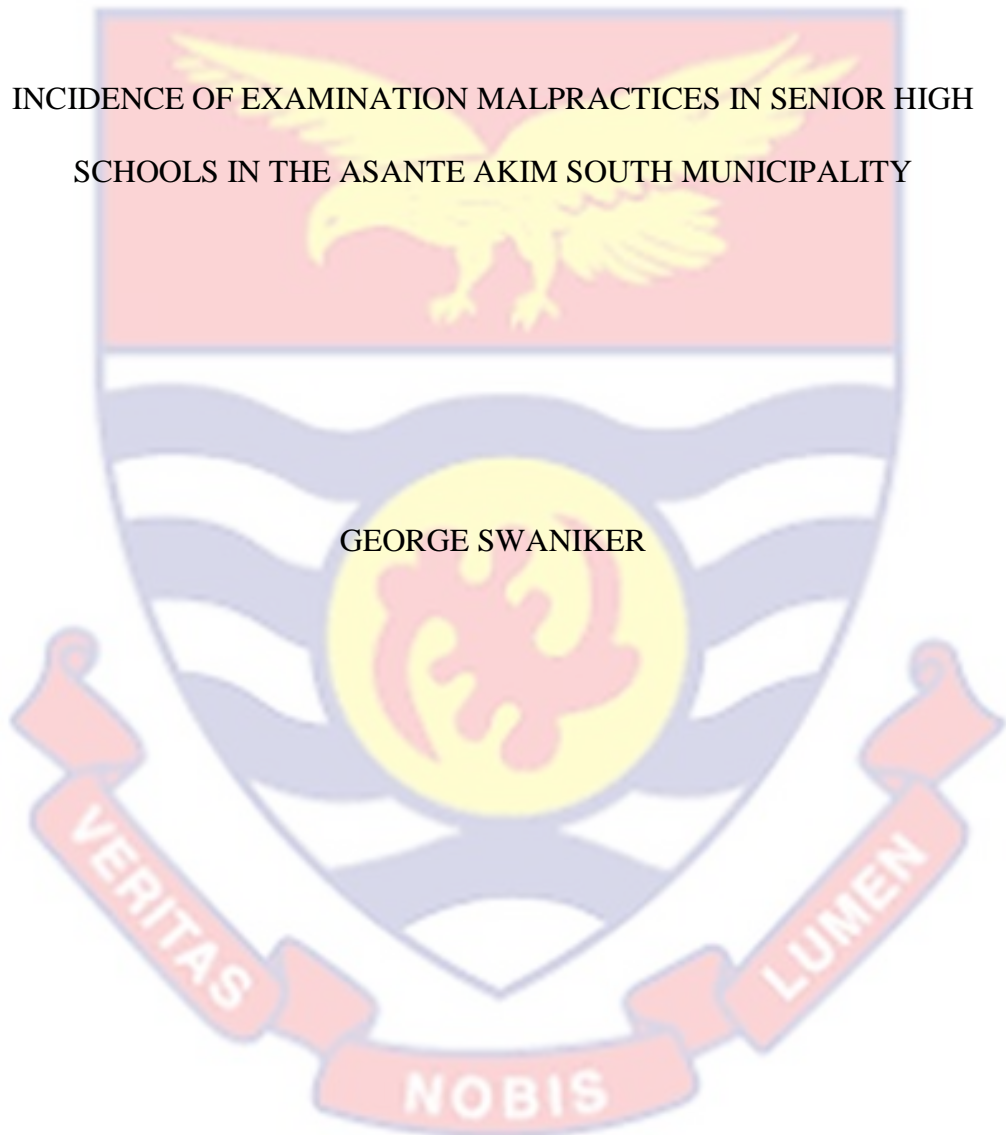


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



INCIDENCE OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES IN SENIOR HIGH  
SCHOOLS IN THE ASANTE AKIM SOUTH MUNICIPALITY

GEORGE SWANIKER

2022

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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SCHOOLS IN THE ASANTE AKIM SOUTH MUNICIPALITY

BY

GEORGE SWANIKER

Thesis submitted to the Department of Business and Social Sciences  
Education of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Education,  
College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Social  
Studies Education

MARCH 2022

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the output of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: George Swaniker

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature..... Date: .....

Name: Dr. Isaac Atta Kwenin

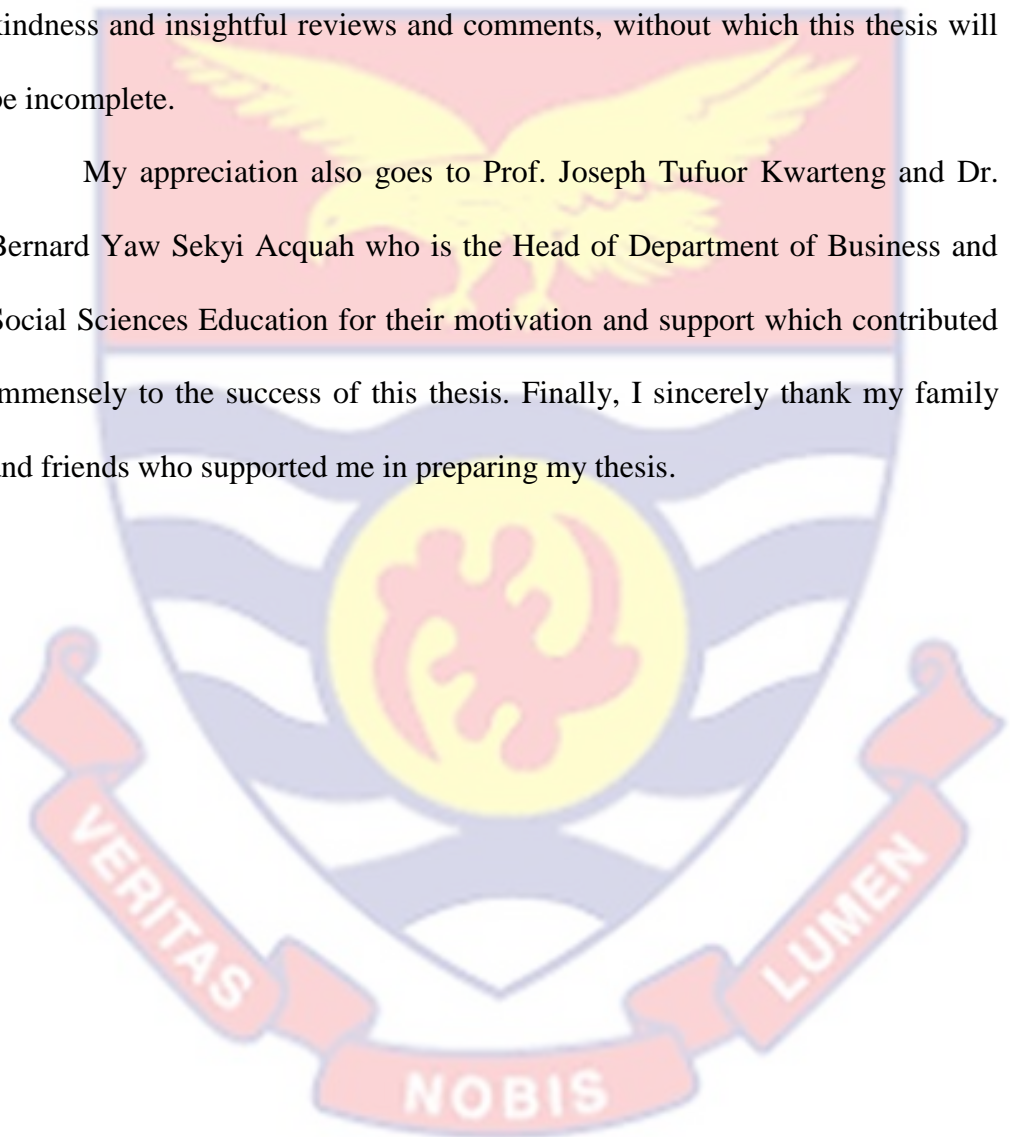
## ABSTRACT

This study explored the incidence of examination malpractices in Senior High Schools (SHS) in the Asante Akim South Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. Using a questionnaire and an interview guide, primary data were sourced from SHS students and head teachers within the Asante Akim South Municipality. The population of the study comprised 5,497 students and 5 head teachers. The simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling technique were used to select 361 students and 5 head teachers respectively. The findings showed that most students engage in examination malpractice due to their desire to score high marks, poor preparation towards the exam, fear of failure, and low self-esteem. The findings also indicated that students engage in various forms of malpractices such as smuggling of notes written on tiny pieces of paper into the examination room, writing of short notes on their palms, and thighs. The findings revealed that poor performance at the workplace, high cost of conducting examinations due to the possibility of cancellation of examination results, dishonest attitude of students which will later lead to corruption and nepotism at workplaces were some of the major effects. It was concluded that students desire to be successful and pass their examination causes them to engage in malpractices. It was recommended that headteachers through the school guidance and counselling programmes should intensify sensitizations to learners on the dangers of engaging in examination malpractices.

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## DEDICATION

To my wife, Mrs. Anita Swaniker and my inspirational sister, Evelyn Sarpong



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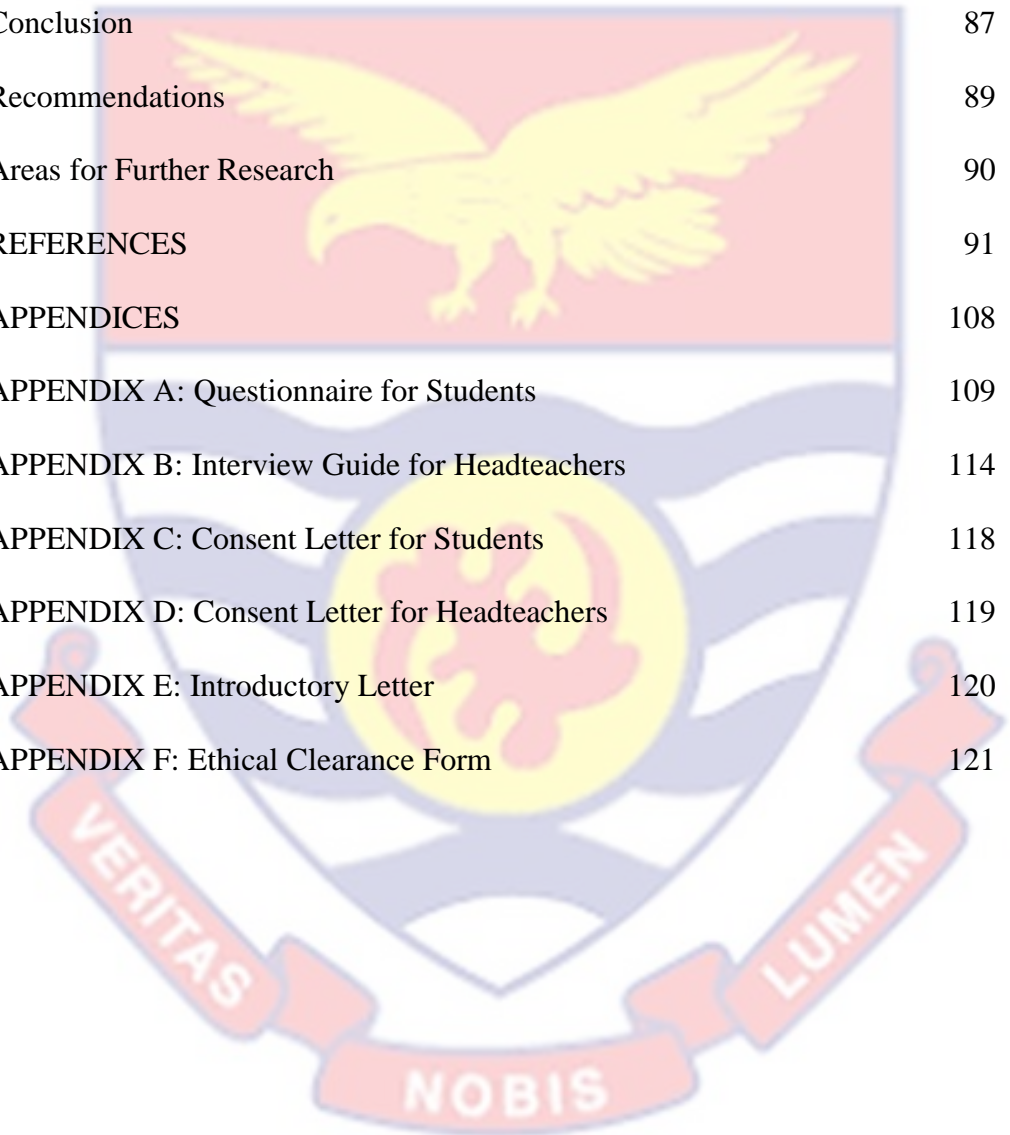
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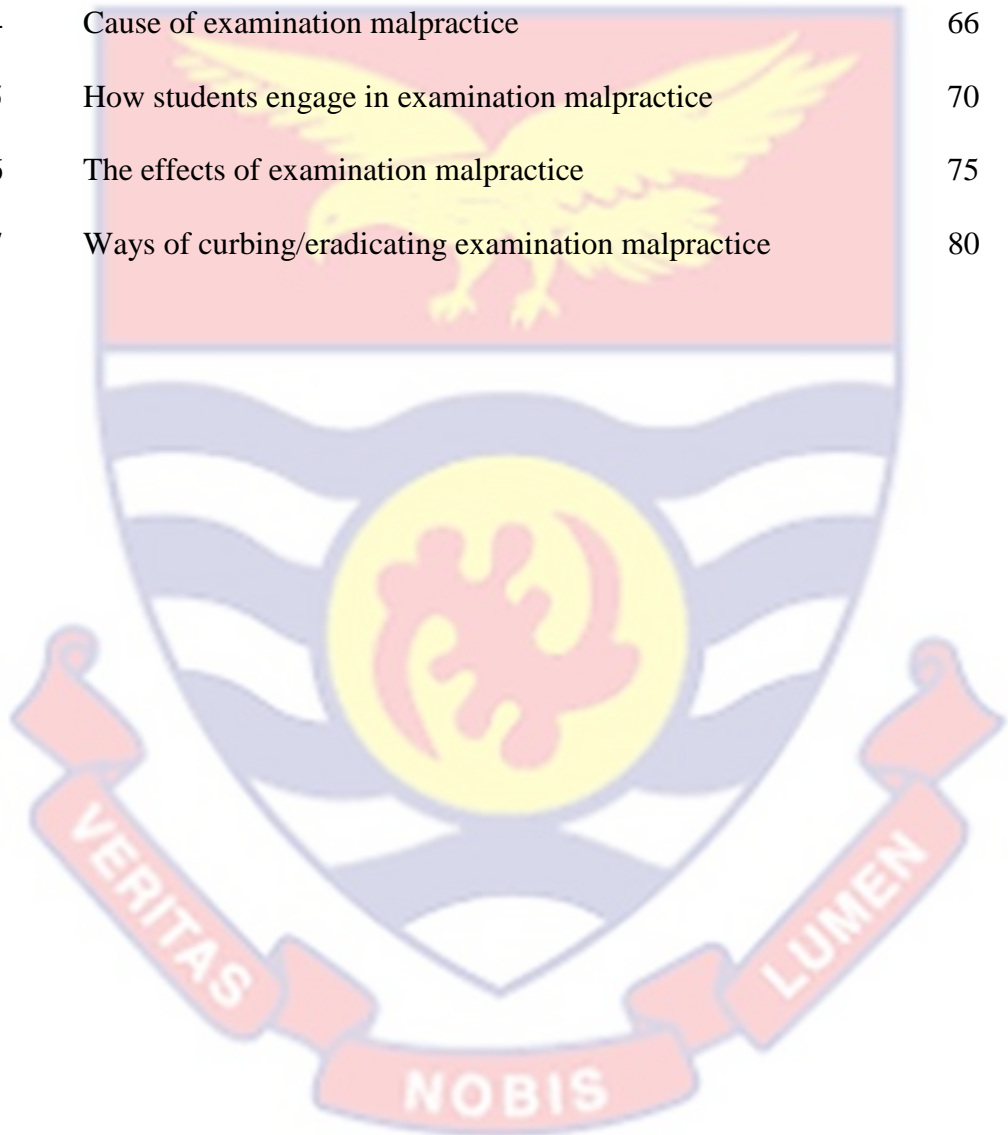
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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

The educational system of Ghana is increasingly deteriorating, because the purity of the education system has been tainted by examination malpractices. The purpose for which this research was carried out was to explore the rate of examination malpractice in Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study specifically focused on the perception of students on the causes of malpractice in examination within the Senior High Schools, the effects of examination malpractices, and ways of eradicating examination malpractices within Senior High Schools in the Municipality. This chapter, hence, discusses the background to the study, statement of the problem; objectives of the study, research questions, the scope of the study, the delimitation, limitations, and relevance of the study.

#### Background to the Study

Training remains a required mechanism through which young people are equipped with depending on their talents and interests, to lead productive lives (Akaranga & Ongong, 2013). Learners are trained and properly directed to gain the appropriate skills and knowledge through education. Likewise, they are taught to adjust to appropriate social life through education. Education represent a way through which certain individuals persist through handicaps, gain higher equality, and accumulate affluence and prestige. Nnam and Inah (2015) opined that a test remains one of the criterion upon which the performance and success of students or candidates in the field of education is

formally evaluated and assessed. According to Emaikwu (2012), this assessment is aimed at appraising the level of skilfulness or intellectual capability and understanding of a learner after going through a training process.

As noted by George and Ukpong (2013), an examination remain a common instrument based on which the whole education system circles and the mechanism for determining who enters the subsequent academic level. Malik and Shah (1998) cited in Akaranga and Ongong (2013) noted that examination not only depicts a means of measuring student development but a means to motivate and allow students understand their strengths and weaknesses as far as their academic progress is concern, aside offering teachers the prospects to explore new methodologies to teaching. But the expected input will not be obtained when the test is not properly performed. The outcome of such an assessment tool thus result in incorrect choices and conclusions that affect teachers, learners, the whole education system, and society (Ojonemi, Enejoh, Enejoh & Olatunmibi, 2013). The validity and subsequent outcome are doubtful if there is irregularity or malpractice in the test (George & Ukpong, 2013).

An examination may be considered as one of the main methods of testing the understanding and abilities acquired in schools. It is carried out to assess, appraise and test the intellectual, emotional, and psychomotor domains of students (Antoh, 2018). Examination is an old-age activity which dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to Agbodeka (2002), “Imperial China has been conducting formal competitive examinations for the past 1,500 years” (p.1). Africa was not oblivious to examination. Traditional social and

economic activities such as craftsmanship, weaving, basketry, etc. demanded a master-learner relationship. The learner who agrees to be taught, placing more emphasis on the psychomotor domain, acquires this training for several years depending on the number of years the learner is expected to complete the training. At the end of the training, the master has to certify the learner and based on his or her performance, may either graduate or otherwise. For example, a learner who came to be taught how to weave kente, at the end of his or her training, he or she would be given the tools and materials and will be expected to weave kente before the master, other learners, or apprentice(s), other masters aside the learners immediate master or sometimes at the gathering of a whole community. Agbodeka relates, “the examining body that was the community, and the examination was a display or an exhibition of talent, skills and indeed knowledge” (Agbodeka, 2002, p.1). According to Suping, Mokgothu and Garegae (2012), “the master as it were, would satisfy himself of the performance of the student before the student is released to stand on his own. Thus, the student graduated upon mastery of skills and demonstration of such” (Suping, Mokgothu & Garegae, 2012, p. 114).

In West Africa, school external examinations date back to the eighteenth century (Agbodeka, 2002). To provide examinations in British West African colonies, provision was made to have one body responsible for examining students in the colonies (Agbodeka, 2002). The colonial masters of West Africa provided a common examination model for schools in the colonies. Lewis (1965) relates, “common provisions were made for these countries to use some facilities which initiators believed such services should be provided for all West Africans and not individual countries. It was easier

and economically prudent to have one system, which could easily be managed and financed instead of setting up a single autonomous Council for each country” (Lewis, 1965, pp107-108). Having a West African examination in the sub-region was, therefore, a colonial legacy.

In Ghana, at the pre-tertiary level of education, both the internal and external examinations are conducted. The internal examination is mainly organised by particular schools and is supported by the school authorities. The internal examination is made of class exercises, assignments, group discussions, class tests as well as end of term examinations. These take place in schools throughout the study. Because this examination is limited to a particular school, it differs from one school to another. The external examination, currently West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) for the second cycle, on the other hand, is not organized for or by a single school. Rather, it is a standardized test for all schools in West African countries. These examinations, therefore, attract national concerns, and all stakeholders such as parents, students, teachers, and the government are anxious about it. As the internal examination aids students’ progress from one form to another, the external examination helps them to progress to the next level of their education.

The external examination has gone through no less than three transitions. Beginning from the common entrance examination, serving as a ticket to enter into a particular school. Ghana had the General Certificate Examination and Advanced (O/A) Level examinations (Foster, 1965). Also, the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) came into existence with the 1987 educational reforms. Students currently have to write

the WASSCE, adopted in 2006. These external examinations are officially supposed to be written once to ensure school completion and certification. However, students who are unable to pass this examination can write it again as private candidates, with some joining other schools for reregistration for the examination (Agbodeka, 2002). The latter is rare since most schools find it hard to accept a new student into their final year cohort.

Examination assigns grades to students based on their performance. In the tertiary institutions, students are categorized into classes such as First-class honors, Second (upper and lower), or Third class degree after going through successive examinations. These grades are measures of success since an esteemed student with a better aggregate in school certificate examination will be regarded as academically intelligent. He/she is likely to have a place in an institution of higher learning or be favored when seeking a job within the society as compared to his/her colleagues with lower grades (Agbodeka, 2002), and these situations have combined to influence students' attitude towards examination; the attitude of trying to engage in examination malpractice to obtain a higher grade in any particular examination. The frequency with which examination malpractice happens in the African educational structure is quite worrying, hence urgent attention by all stakeholders is required.

As a result of examination malpractice, academic excellence in Ghana appears to be relegated to the background and half-baked graduates are pushed into the employment market (Adeyemi, 2010; Akapule, 2015). The examination procedure has become threatened leading to low credibility of the certification. Certificates no longer appear to reflect the skills and competence



of the bearer of the certificate. Some researchers have listed the school principal, teachers, parents, students, examiners, and security as the culprits of negligence (Adeyemi, 2010). It is therefore imperative that a study is conducted on examination malpractices to reveal its nature and causes, effects, and how to manage this canker. It is in view of this context that the researcher deems it appropriate to conduct this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the past decade, there have been issues of examination malpractices in successive examinations in Ghana. Empirical literature suggests that since 2009, there has been a high incidence of examination malpractices, particularly in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) (WAEC, 2012). For instance, WAEC reported that the figure for students involved in examination malpractices stood at 525 in 2009; 1,083 in 2010 and 1,127 in 2011. Similar revelations were made between 2012 and 2015 (WAEC, 2016). According to the West African Examinations Council, 453 students who sat for the 2015 WASSCE had their whole results cancelled (WAEC, 2016).

In 2012, WAEC acknowledged that examination malpractice amongst students was on the rise at an alarming rate and advocated for a collaborative effort among stakeholders in Education to assist in dealing with the problem because WAEC fail to independently deal with it. The extent of the menace has attracted several concerns from the majority of stakeholders. At the Eleventh National Delegates Conference held in Bolgatanga in September 2015 by the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT), a

communique was released by NAGRAT, voicing their dissatisfaction with the bad performance of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) over the years and made suggestions (Akapule, 2015).

Dosu, Gotan, Deshi and Gambo (2016) assessed the incidence of examination malpractice of health technology students and found that students involved themselves in illicit conducts during examination. However, this study was conducted in Nigeria and also involved health technology students. Akaranga and Ongong (2013) also found similar findings by soliciting for the responses of students. These studies did not involve headteachers in the study. Hence, this current study augments the literature in this field of research by exploring the causes and effects of examination malpractices at the SHS level.

Despite all these meetings examination malpractices are still being recorded at various levels in our various Senior High Schools (SHS). A casual survey by the researcher in three SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality revealed series of cases of examination malpractices at that level and even during class test and end of term examinations. One amazing revelation was the fact that even some of the Head Teachers were moles aiding malpractice in their schools. The question stakeholders mostly fail to answer is how do we manage these occurrences till we completely deal with them?

The current study, therefore, sought to explore the causes and effects of examination malpractices at the SHS level. Moreover, there seems to be limited research on the causes and effects of examination malpractice in SHSs within the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Hence, the need for this study to contribute to filling that vacuum in literature.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main drive of the study was to explore the causes and effects of examination malpractices in Senior High School in the Asante Akim South Municipality. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. explore the perceptions of SHS students in the Asante Akim South Municipality as to the causes of examination malpractices.
2. explore how students engage in examination malpractices in the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana.
3. identify the effects of examination malpractices within the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana.
4. suggest ways to eradicate the incidence of examination malpractices in the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by these research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of SHS students in the Asante Akim South Municipality as to the causes of examination malpractices?
2. How do students engage in examination malpractices in the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana?
3. What are the effects of examination malpractices within the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana?
4. What measures could be put in place to eradicate the incidence of examination malpractices in the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipal in the Ashanti region of Ghana?

### **Significance of the Study**

The study generated information on the causes and effects of examination malpractices in SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The findings of this study may assist the District Education offices in devising appropriate strategies for curbing examination malpractices. It may further help policymakers and decision-makers in the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service to make informed policies on the causes and impacts of examination malpractice as well as measures to eradicate these examination malpractices in our Senior High Schools.

### **Delimitation**

The study covered all SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality. The study covered areas such as respondents' perception of the causes of examination malpractices within the SHSs, effects of examination malpractice, and ways to eradicate the incidence of examination malpractices in the SHSs in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The study focused on these issues because they helped in letting teachers and headteachers know the ways of managing the re-occurring cases of examination malpractices at the SHS level. The target population of this study comprised SHS students and Headteachers within the Asante Akim South Municipality. The research instruments used in the collection of data was questionnaire (for the students) and interview guide (for the Headteachers). The study was conducted in the Asante Akim South Municipality because no systematic study (research) has been done to

investigate ways of managing the re-occurring cases of examination malpractices in the Ashanti Akim South Municipality.

### **Limitations**

The data was collected with the use of questionnaire. The problem that the researcher faced is that some students were reluctant in responding to the questionnaire in the way the researcher expected. This phenomenon was partly overcome by persistent persuasions and assurances of the anonymity of their responses. In addition, the study did not involve invigilators seek their views about the causes of examination malpractices, this could affect the findings of the study. However, headteachers of the selected schools were interviewed to find out the causes of examination malpractices. Also, since the research was conducted only in the Asante Akim South Municipality, the results cannot be generalized to all Senior High Schools in Ghana. However, the results presented a detailed description of examination malpractices which is and can be expected in most of the Senior High Schools in Ghana.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined as used in the study:

**Examination:** This term is used in this study to mean end of term examination that students take part in.

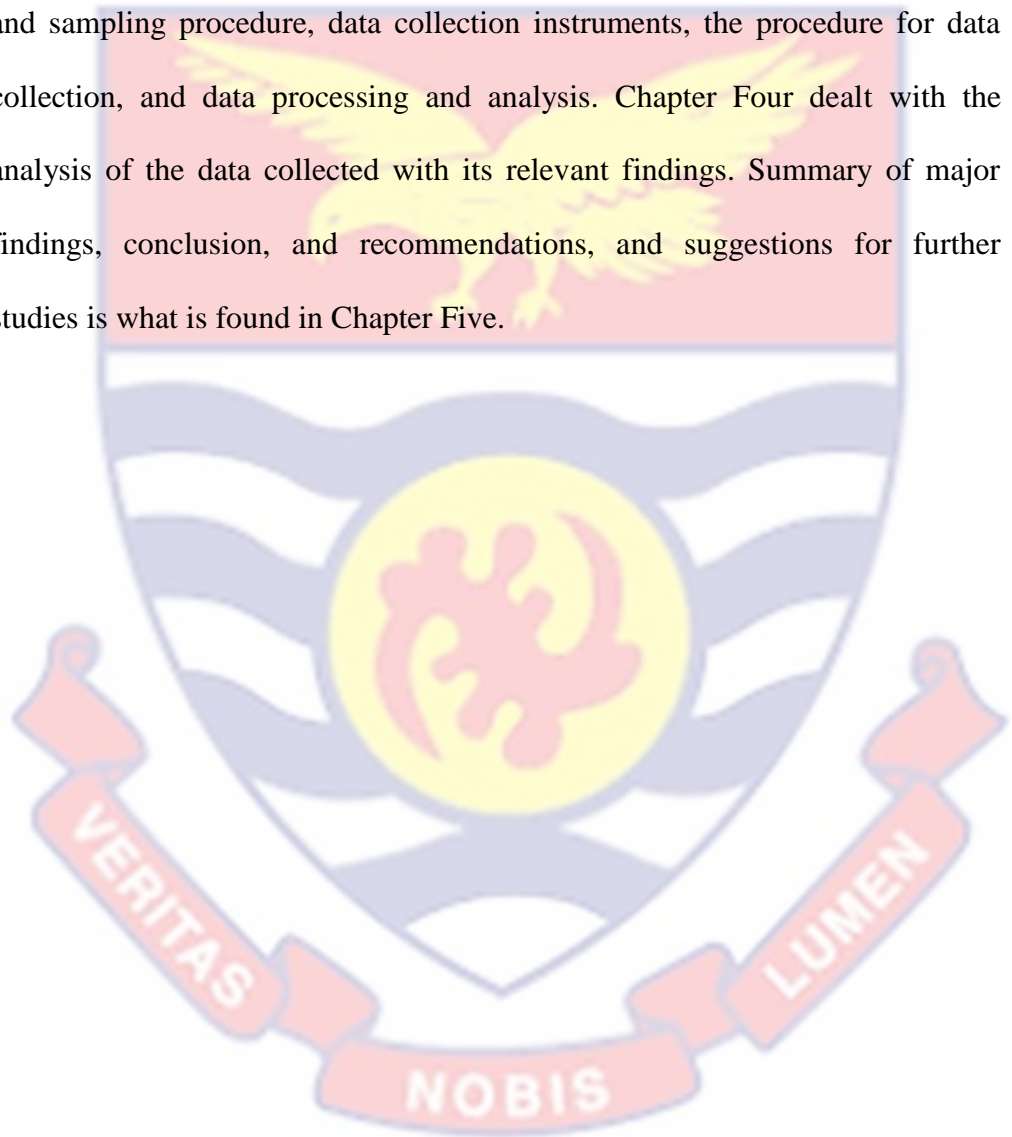
**Examination Malpractices:** It is an intentional misconduct exhibited by students that conflicts with the authorised rules and regulations set for the examination.

**Students:** These are form two and three SHS students.

### **Organisation of the Study**

The study was made up of five chapters. The first chapter comprised the introduction which consisted the background to the study, statement of the

problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, delimitation, limitations, and organisation of the study. Relevant literature on the topic was reviewed in Chapter Two, dealing with the ideas of some researchers and authors on a similar study. Embodied in the third chapter included the description of the research design, data and sources, target population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instruments, the procedure for data collection, and data processing and analysis. Chapter Four dealt with the analysis of the data collected with its relevant findings. Summary of major findings, conclusion, and recommendations, and suggestions for further studies is what is found in Chapter Five.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Overview

This chapter reviewed conceptual issues, theoretical issues, and empirical studies related to the study. The empirical review was done with the aim of comparing the findings of this research to that of other related studies to either confirm or disprove conclusions drawn by these related studies by earlier researchers. In conducting this review, the variables that were of utmost importance were, the deontological theory and anomie theory, the meaning of examination malpractice, methods of examination malpractice, the effects of examination malpractice, and ways of eradicating the incidence of examination malpractice.

#### Theoretical Review

##### Deontological Theory

The deontological theory was propounded by Immanuel Kant in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The theory was based on the idea that special emphasis should be placed on the relations between duty and the morality of human actions. Moral ethics or deontology in moral philosophy refers to a theory of ethical standards. Morality of behaviour should be based on whether the conduct is correct or incorrect according to a set of rules, and not on punishing the conduct. It is occasionally termed as a duty, obligation, or rule-based ethics (Waller, 2005).

Kant (1947) based his moral philosophy or theory on the moral principle he called the categorical imperative. Kant's theory calls for the development of a will that is esteemed for itself. He was referring to goodwill.

The “will” in this sense referred to an individual’s ability to make decisions based on reason. Kamm (1996) believes that duties and obligations have to be objectively determined. The concern of the deontological theory is with people performing the right action even if it may produce harm or not. This, therefore, means that for an individual to make the right moral choices they would have to know the rules that regulate those duties and they should also understand their moral duties as well (Maureen, 2014). That is, if the moral duty of an individual is not to insult, then an insult is always considered wrong regardless of whether the outcomes are good or bad (Maureen, 2014). It is considered not correct because it is against the two formulations of the Kantian moral law, which is also referred to as the categorical imperative:

1. “Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law” is a purely formal or logical statement and expresses the condition of the rationality of conduct rather than that of its morality.
2. Act in such a way that you treat humanity, both in your person and in that of another, always as an end and never merely as a means (Maureen, 2014).

According to Kant, then the action is wrong because

- 1) I am not willing to have everyone do it
- 2) It treats other humans merely as means and not also as ends; it does not treat them with respect as normal thoughtful human beings (Maureen, 2014). There is no temptation to think of "man" as referring to something in a person, or a characteristic of a person, though "humanity" can be so understood, for example, when we contrast a



person's animality with his humanity or when a theologian contrasts the divinity of Jesus with his humanity (Hill, 1980).

This theory is important in this study because it classifies cheating as a wrong act. After all, the product of that act is not a good one as indicated by Kant. To this theory, cheating in an examination is wrong because if everyone practices it, it would go against the very reason for conducting examinations. It also means disrespecting other human beings by playing smart with them. That is knowing the solutions to the examination questions when in reality we do not and even do not understand the questions.

### **The Anomie theory**

Anomie is the lack of ethical or social standards. The inception of this concept was the publication of the book (*The Division of Labor in Society*) by Emile Durkheim in 1893. In his book, Durkheim asserted that individuals were not able to determine how to interact with others because the rules on how people interact with each other were disintegrating. Due to this, Durkheim indicated that anomie was a situation or state where the system has broken down and that the expectation of behaviour is unclear. This, he termed, 'normlessness' and the cause of deviant actions such as cheating, stealing, suicide, and many more.

Metiboba (2002) asserted that each culture has interests and goals which people are expected to achieve and also there is a prescribed method by the society to be followed in achieving those goals. An individual, therefore, becomes socially disorganized when methods set out by society to achieve the desired goals fail to match the goal of the individual in question. Marton (2008), also believes that anomic results in deviant behaviour and non-

conformity which is a sign of disconnection between the cultural rules in society and the means of achieving those rules. This theory sees examination malpractice as a product of the social structures of the society that put pressure on some individuals in the society to engage in deviant or conforming action. The advantages of the theory of anomie are rooted in criminal, abnormal and violent acts. The theory of anomie highlighted inequality as the driving force behind crime. However, its weakness lies in its inability to clarify the responsibility of an individual.

The Anomie theory is very significant to the study because it classifies examination malpractice as emanating from a poorly structured society both morally/ethically and physically. This happens to be true because currently, most Ghanaian societies tend to accept the achievements of individual goals by all means without using legitimate means of attaining them. Since material acquisition is now an accepted sign of success in Ghanaian societies, most individuals appear not to be concerned with how one “makes” it. All that is important is that one has “made it”. This attitude invariably results in varied forms of corruption and deviant acts such as embezzlement of public funds, bribery, examination malpractice, etc. To understand the causes, effects, and strategies for curbing examination malpractice, both the deontological and anomie theories will be adopted.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **The meaning of examination Malpractice**

Examination malpractice is defined differently by several scholars but with similar meaning. The World Bank (2001) characterizes examination malpractice as intentional misconduct and helps students gain unfair

advantages or disadvantages. Onyibe, Uma and Ibina (2015) described malpractice as the performance of negligence or behaviour that does not completely rely on their independent ability to expect to pass the test. This definition assumes that candidates ignore the exam alone or with others in order to obtain improper grades or scores.

Igwe (2002) defined examination malpractice as: “any act aimed at benefitting or giving unwarranted benefit to oneself or another by deceit or fraud, before, during and after examinations.” The problem with this definition is that it does not capture the illegality and perhaps the immorality of the act. However, this was accounted for by Fatai (2005) in his study where he observed examination malpractice as any improper act that a student or any individual charged with the conduct of examinations engage in that constitutes a breach of the rules governing examinations. Fasasi (2006) asserted that examination malpractice denote all form of bad behaviour or inappropriate practice, before, during, or after any examination by students or others to attain better grades through fraudulent means.

According to Onah (2012), malpractice in examination is any behaviour of the examinee that may render the evaluation useless. This may make the assessment or test invalid or meaningless. In addition, Umaru (2005) defines it as any type of deception that aims to enable a candidate to achieve better results than the real candidate's intelligence and efficiency. Same as any damaged demonstrations shown before, during and after the next exam; typists, students, caregivers, principals, communities, teachers/course leaders, etc.

Hudson (2006) saw examination malpractice as “the act as to cheat ones’ way to success in an examination”. He equated examination malpractice with ‘Expo’ which he explained as a form of misconduct in examination halls. Hudson’s definition ignores what happens before the entry into the examination hall and after leaving the examination hall. A more comprehensive definition was proposed by Daramola and Oluyeba (2007) who believed that any abnormal behaviour shown by a student or any individual who are responsible for conducting examination inside and outside of the examination hall, during or before an examination can be classified as examination malpractice. They classified paper leakage, results/certificate forgery, cheating, impersonation, collusion, and physical/verbal assault on examination administration as malpractice in examination.

Examination misconduct is generally defined as deliberate misconduct conflicting with the authorized examination rules designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage (Wilayat, 2009). From Wilayat’s definition, the word is introduced into the narrative. The word rules here indicate that what constitutes exam malpractice may be specific to the rules governing the particular exams. This idea was somewhat supported by other researchers. For example, Naere (2009) opined that malpractice in examination is an act of omission or commission by a person who in expectation of, before, during, or after any examination falsely gain unfair gain for himself or someone in a manner that violates the rules and regulations to the level of undermining the validity, reliability, authenticity of the examination and eventually the veracity of the certificates issued (Naere, 2009). In addition, malpractice in examination is defined as any unlawful act

committed by students at any level of education, to gain an advantage in examination over their colleagues in the same examination (Akpama, Bassey, Idaka & Bassey, 2009). Similarly, Joshua (2008) asserted any unsanctioned act or exercise which is associated with preparing, conducting, and handling of examination may be categorised as examination malpractice.

Onunuaga (2009) emphasized that execution of examination malpractice is a disgraceful act that involves parents, students and teachers, and even some authorities. He also said that society is corrupt. He further explained that since parents always want the best for their children, they become the main culprits of examination malpractice by doing anything possible to get the best for their wards even if it means paying a bribe. He further said that these corrupt parents and their wards become the target for those that establish private schools or tutorial centers. These private schools support examination malpractice to attract more students and financial gains. The unequivocal point from this is that examination malpractice is not unique to the actions of students but includes actions of stakeholders like parents, schools, leaders (for political benefits), private enterprises (tutorial centers) among others.

Ifijeh, Michael-Onuoha, Ilogbo and Osinulu (2015) asserted that it is an unfair practice to ignore exams, including any activity by individuals or groups of college students, with the purpose of adding an unreasonable advantage to any type of assessment, whether in courses, or exams). Malpractice in exams is bad and exploitative behaviour, the ultimate goal is to obtain an unfair advantage (Makaula, 2018). In addition, Bruno and Obidigbo (2012) described exam negligence as any activity performed by stakeholders,

such as administrators, teachers, guardians/parents, or students, who may give invalid or useless exams or scores.

Olusola and Ajayi (2015) define exam malpractice as any illegal or improper conduct that violates exam rules and guidelines during the exam; therefore, it violates the rules and regulations for conducting the test. In addition, examination negligence may include any misleading or dishonest behaviour by candidates or others in violation of prevailing rules/regulations in order to obtain undue compensation or disadvantages in any form of educational examination evaluation system. In other words, if you violate the exam regulations, the exam will be considered negligence. Accordingly, any unintentional behaviour for the purpose of fraud or gaining profit before, during or after the exam is included in the examination malpractice (Starovoytova & Arimi, 2017). It is mentioned by various names and expressions, including exams violations, cheating, extortion, etc.

To Obidigbo (2011), examination malpractice is any irregular behaviour that is undertaken prior to, in the course of, and after examination with the aim of cheating to have an advantage. Because of the tenacious increase in the instances of examination malpractice, the validity and reliability of the examination system have been questionable (Onuka & Durowoju, 2010). Likewise, Keter (2021) defined examination malpractice is like any form of misconduct, allowing students to cheat during the examination.

### **Effects of Examination Malpractice**

The educational and social consequences of malpractice will eventually be disastrous, and candidates/students who usually struggle to pass

the exam will now be at the mercy of scammers. Such agreements rarely fail. Over time, fraud or negligence may arise. Examination students trained in this way are adults and teachers or examiners who believe that there is no problem with this complex and high-level examination operation, thus destroying the educational goal by cultivating qualified illiteracy.

The malpractice increases the students' distrust. Students who should have passed the test become frustrated and lose self-confidence because of being deceived, because students with low IQ perform better, which leads to a dispossession of confidence in themselves and the test, and the negligence system in the test will cause some students to other.

It may also lead to prostitution and armed robbery, female students who have no money to fund foreign aid or pay bills for scores can engage in prostitution, while men can make money to pay for their studies through robbery or armed robbery.

Several common effects of examinations malpractice can be summarized as follows:

1. The products of examinations malpractice are square pegs in round holes. They lack the required knowledge and experience to carry out their assignment and professional duties effectively.
2. Examinations malpractice produce candidates with low moral and academic values.
3. The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career
4. Examinations malpractice is a negative orientation for future leaders who may end up being fraudulent and corrupt in their various offices.

5. Anyone who engages in examinations malpractice is building on a false foundation which can lead to serious professional errors.

### **Efforts in Curbing Examination Malpractice**

Various approaches are embraced by different examination bodies, federal, state and local government, NGOs and interest groups. A good example is the census in Oyo State where the commissioner for education called a team to schools to ascertain the number of students in each school in Oyo state to curb misconducts in examination. The WAEC also has embarked on public campaign on the effects of examination malpractices and the punishments attached to each offence using handbills, posters, jingles, seminars and workshops. NECO also conducted workshops, seminars and public enlightenment campaign and NGO known as exam ethics project has worked tirelessly on curbing examination malpractices. Concerned individuals like Jegede (2003) have made effort to check these vices. The federal government in the bid to curb examination malpractice enacted laws prohibiting examination malpractice. The most recent one is the computer based examination conducted by JAMB.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework for this study. From Figure 1, it can be seen that examination malpractice has various factors that fuel its existence in our societies. These range from teacher-related issues down to the home and community of students. This, therefore, leads to some negative effects such as the cancellation of results, imprisonment, and many more. If not dealt with, will lead to the creation of misfits in our societies and country as a whole. To combat this giant, several studies have recommended the use of



computer-based tests in examinations, guidance and counselling services, and strict enforcement of the rules governing the conduct of examinations.

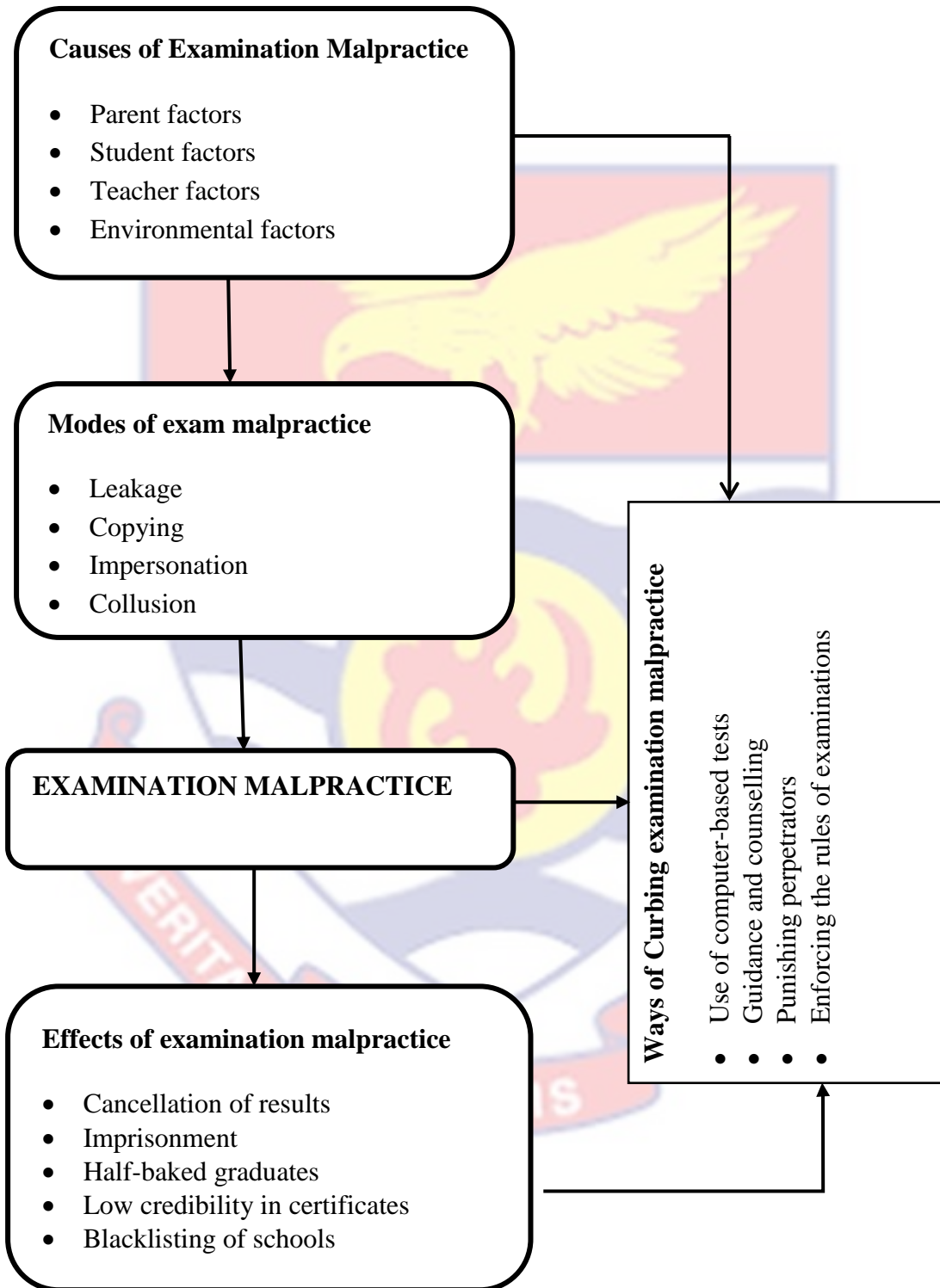


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on examination malpractice  
Source: Researchers own construct

From the conceptual framework in Figure 1, it can be observed that the causes of examination malpractice are as follows: parent, student, teacher and environmental factors. These factors that causes examination malpractice will lead to students involving themselves in forms or modes of examination malpractice such as copying, impersonation, leakage and collusion. The involvement of students in these acts are some of the various forms of examination malpractice. Consequently, there will be cancellation of results, imprisonment, half-baked graduates, low credibility in certificates and blacklisting of schools because of examination malpractice. The effects of examination are harmful or detrimental to the student, school, community and the country as a whole.

In Figure 1, it has been suggested that the following are the ways of curbing examination malpractice: use of computer-based tests, guidance and counselling, punishing perpetrators and enforcing the rules of examinations.

### **Empirical Review**

#### **Perception of the Causes of Examination Malpractice**

From my experience as a teacher, several reasons have surfaced as the causes of examination malpractice. Bandura (1997) believed that the low self-esteem of students also caused them to cheat in examinations. Some other factors identified to provoke examination malpractice in Ghana are inappropriate preparation of students for examination, poor pedagogical skills of teachers, congestion of candidates in some of the examination centers, poor handling of examinations materials by examination officers, and also parents encouraging their wards to cheat (Daniel, 1998). Adeyemi (2010) also

believed that poor study habits, anxiety, low reinforcement, and poor academic ability all tend to cause examination malpractice.

Researchers have identified many potentially increasing academic dishonesty contributing factors in Ghana. These factors were briefly classified in Asuru (1996). Society-influenced factors include the system of communal value that tolerates corruption and success as certificates rather than outstanding academic success. Economic factors encourage instructors and exam managers to accept bribes in order to supplement the low wages for admission and the certification exams. The system of education influences include poor teaching, poor learning environments, inadequate facilities and unskilled examination candidates. Finally, the factors examined include peer pressure and dread of failure.

Other researchers have cited the fear of failure as well as Asuru (Okoh, 1996; Onuka & Obialo, 2004) and the lack of faith that people have in their ability to cheat exams. The paper focused on the factors that helped investigate malpractices.

In fact, the anxiety of not performing well in the exam was listed as one of the main reasons why students were engaged in examination errors in both Nigeria (Onuka & Obialo, 2004). Students in Australia reported cheating as the second most frequent reason for cheating was because the test was too difficult (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005). Studies have found that one's own efficiency for the test is a major correlation of cheating behaviour. Self-efficacy is defined as a measure of your ability to achieve the necessary skills to achieve the desired result (Murdock & Anderman, 2006). In other words, the self-efficacy of a student in an exam could be the degree they believe that

they will receive the exam based on their own skills. If a student does not think that examining malpractices are very good for the examination, then the self-efficacy of the examination is low.

McCabe and Trevino (1993) said that 80% of their respondents (students) found the fundamental reason for their non-ethical conduct in examinations to be their aim to achieve higher levels of education. Their research showed that the primary reason for cheating among the candidates was higher grades. Oduwaiye (2004) also noted that students cheat because their parent, teacher and others are motivated to have a good degree and succeed in schools, and that all means including cheating are all right to do it.

Adeyemi (2010) carried out a study in Ondo States, Nigeria on the perception of exam malpractice by teachers. The study was conducted in 481 high schools in Ondo State using the descriptive approach. This included 281 people and 200 private individuals. Nine hundred and sixty (960) teachers of 4250 in total were sampled in the study. In the study, the collected data was analysed by means of proportions and t-tests and the data were obtained with a questionnaire. Indiscipline was revealed to be the root cause of student abuse of examination. The failure to follow rules to punish students who find themselves cheating and also ineffective supervision during examinations are further reasons that have been identified. Adeyemi's study failed to consider the effects and remedies to examination malpractice. This study, therefore, sought to contribute to literature in that regard by investigating the effects and remedies to examination malpractice.

Bandura (1997) noted low self-efficacy as a cause of examination malpractice. Self- efficacy in this sense is the belief in your capability to

accomplish a particular task successfully without having to compare one's ability with others. Bandura asserted that self-efficacy is a social cognitive theory stating that the interrelations between personal factors, environmental factors, and one's behaviour are a determinant of human achievement. McCabe, Trevino, and Butterly (2001) also contended that students are likely to see cheating as a way of achieving success in the examination when they tend to believe that the only reason why they are learning is to get higher marks and vice versa. Similarly, Duyilemi (2003) noted that anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of failure leads to high rate of examination malpractice by students in Nigerian schools.

Igboanusi, Ihurulam, Opara, and Ikeh (2009) investigated the patterns of examination malpractice among undergraduates. A survey design was adopted and percentages were used in the data analysis. Their study indicated that dubbing and technological methods were some ways employed in examination malpractice by students. Moreover, they noted that the admission of unqualified students, irregular class attendance, and influence by society were the reasons students engaged in examination malpractice. A research titled 'curtailing the rate of examination malpractice in our schools' by Eromaka and Ihemefuna (2012) added that the desire of students to achieve excellent results to please their parents, also pressure them to engage in examination malpractice.

Ikwueke (2011) explored the prevention of examination malpractice in secondary schools through student voice. The study was aimed to explore the effectiveness of preventing examination malpractice by consulting students on schooling and by using a community approach in its prevention. A mixed

methods approach was employed for the study. Data was collected through questionnaires, interviews, focus groups and observations. The results of the study showed that examination malpractice is normally determined by academic or institutional factors.

Dosu, Gotan, Deshi, and Gambo (2016) assessed the re-occurring incidence of examination malpractice in Plateau State College of Health Technology Pankshin, Nigeria. Their study explored the types and incidence of examination malpractice and the perception of students concerning the factors that illicit misconducts during the exam. Using a questionnaire, data was sourced from second and third-year students. Their results revealed that copying from other students (43%) and the possession of foreign materials (32%) represented the most common and predominant type of examination malpractice. Again, it was noted in their study that poor sitting arrangement, over strictness of some of the lecturers, and social distraction were other causes of examination malpractice. This particular study failed to discuss the effects of examination malpractice. The current study, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by investigating the effects of examination malpractice.

Agbo (2003) investigated the factors behind examination malpractice using survey design and the study solicited responses from SS1 students and remedial students of the University of Jobs. Agbo used a questionnaire gather data from the field after which percentages were subsequently used in the analysis of the data. It revealed from the study that the non-seriousness on the part of students and parents stressing too much about certificate was the major stimulant for parents bribing authorities concerned in examinations. Supporting the findings of Agbo (2003), Offorma (2006) pointed out that

malpractice in examination has had a profound impact on society, and parents generally believe that their students perform abysmally in school and external examinations. Therefore, they are prepared to put in extra effort, including hiring staff to write exams for students, and bribing teachers and examiners with expensive gifts to help students pass the examination.

The fear of abysmal performance or of low-level exams in Achio et al. (2012) push students into exam malpractice. Students who do not prepare adequately for tests try to cheat or cut corners in order to get a good rating in their opinion. Ndifon and Cornelius-Ukpepi (2014) hold a similar position because they argue that students who are unwilling to study or work hard in their studies when they feel they can indulge in exam malpractice and get a high level.

In Nigeria, Petters and Okon (2014) examined the perception of university students on the sources and effects of malpractices in examination. The cross-sectional survey design was employed for the study. A questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument to elicit response from four hundred (400) students that were randomly selected for the study. The study's findings revealed that societal preference for paper qualification, lack of positive self-concept, lack of effective study skills, inadequate preparation and laziness are some of the causes of examination malpractice among university students. However, the discoveries of the study cannot be generalized to Senior High School students since they partake in different examination. The reliability of Nigerian certificates outside the country is another implication of examination malpractice (Ukpor, 2005).

Similarly, Maheka (2015) studied the nature and causes of examination malpractices in some selected secondary schools in the Kitwe District. The descriptive design was used. As instruments of data collection, the researcher adopted an in-depth questionnaire, focus group discussion, and a questionnaire. The sample for the study was one hundred and forty-eight (148). The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used in discussing and interpreting data from the questionnaires while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The study revealed that examination malpractice took the form of leakages, impersonation, smuggling foreign materials into examination centers, collusion, writing of short notes on body parts, hiding of textbooks at washrooms, and finally giraffing. Maheka went on to say that students desire to get higher grades, their lack of confidence, their fear of failure, their thought of getting certificates that they do not wish to get, improper guidance by teacher on how to face examination pressure, and finally truancy and laziness on the part of students were all causes of examination malpractice. This study also failed to discuss the effects of examination malpractice.

Tyokyaa (2016) conducted a study on the extent to which school administrators try to contain the menace of examination malpractice. The study used the descriptive survey approach and also adopted a questionnaire in soliciting responses from respondents. The study used 90 public secondary schools and private schools. A mean statistic was used to analyse the research questions. The study revealed that examination malpractices could be caused by the school location as well as the type of school whether private or public or rural and urban. Also, Jega (2006) indicated that societal-related factors



such as the grave for certificate or paper qualification are responsible for examination malpractice.

Makaula (2018) also conducted a study to examine the perceived causes and methods of examination malpractice in the Malawian education system. The target population comprised 200 respondents consisting of teachers, headteachers, and students at the secondary school level. A questionnaire and a focus group discussion guide relied upon as instruments for data collection. The data was analysed by themes using open coding, axial, and selective coding processes. On student-related causes of examination malpractice, it was revealed that laziness and the desire to attain higher grades and pass at all cost was the primary reason for students cheating during examinations. On the teacher-related factors, it was revealed that insufficient preparation of the students for examination and inability of teachers to complete a syllabus was also a reason for students to engage in misconduct during examinations. Also, the study revealed that some school authorities colluded with examination officials to assist students and leak examination questions.

In an in-depth evaluation, Udim, Abubakar and Essien (2018) examined the issue of examination malpractice in Nigeria. The study used secondary sources of to analyse data from materials like newspapers, magazines, journals, government publications etc. It was found that t fear of failure, craze for certificates, desire of parents to choose the profession and university, pressure on students to pursue courses which they have no aptitude for were some of the causes of examination malpractice in Nigeria.

Ijaya (2001) argued that when there is a separation between parents it leads to a serious indelible mark on a child's mental development. He went on to say that when parents' divorce, their wards become dropouts and truants. Such children become a menace in societies and eventually, they will not be able to cope with their peers academically making them resort to cheating in examinations.

Ojerinde (2002) also showed that some causes of examination malpractices include problems between parents, poor upbringing of children in the home, improper supervision, lack of learning aids for students, and low level of commitment to studies. When students lack the proper materials to study it reduces their level of commitment to studies. This, therefore, leaves such a child no choice but to cheat to pass an examination. Also, since many parents would want their wards to pass examinations, they normally go to the extent of using any means possible for them to pass. This issue is backed by Mashanyare and Chinamasa (2014) who reported an instance in Zambia where a minister of education bought examination questions for her daughter. In such instances, some parents even bribe examiners and many illicit acts.

Olaewe (2003) believed cheating to be fuelled by the excessive edge of some students to obtain greater marks, the need to avoid failure, insufficient time spent in school work, and parents' unconcerned attitude to cheating. A glaringly obvious reason why many students cheat in an examination is that they believe they cannot satisfactorily pass an examination on their own. Now since a final certificate serves as an index of educational achievement and examination most students see examination as a survival of the fittest and as such see cheating as an effective way of surviving (Olabisi & Abiola, 2014).

The environmental climate in which students interact may sometimes lead students to cheat in the examination. According to Oluyeba and Daramola (1993), the crowded nature of some classrooms, few invigilators in an examination center, poor sitting arrangements all create an environmental condition necessary for cheating.

McCabe and Trevino (1993) in a study found that about 80% of the sampled students admitted that yearning for good grades represent the most frequent reason for cheating in examination. From a motivational viewpoint, many students cheat because of the perception they gather from their teachers, parents, and other external sources to get good grades in school are factors that motivates students to engage in cheating (Oduwaiye, 2004). McCabe as cited in Olaleye (2006) noted that, getting good grades remained the primary motive for cheating among students.

Ojerinde (2002) believed that poor teaching methods, teachers' low mastery of subject matter, inadequate teaching materials, unqualified teachers, and teachers' inability to finish up the specified syllabus were all causes of examination malpractice. This is an indication that for an educational program to succeed it needs well qualified and dedicated teachers.

In a systematic review, Amadi and Opuiyo (2018) looked at examination malpractice among Nigerian university students. It was discovered from the review that emphasis on certificate and paper qualification, fear of failure, inadequate preparation for examination, teachers related factors such as extorting money from students in order to upgrade scores, poor teaching, and teachers' unfriendliness were some of the causes of

examination malpractice. Likewise, Phiri and Nakamba (2015) opined that the dread of failure by students drives them to engage in cheating in examination.

### **The Effects of Examination Malpractice**

Examination malpractice has dangerous effects that cut through/destroy the very fabric of our societies. A research carried out by Akintunde and Selzing-Musa (2016) on the realistic techniques of curbing examination malpractices in Nigerian secondary schools. The study used the descriptive survey method and adopted questionnaires for the data collection. The study revealed that examination malpractice may result in losing of integrity of certificates and blacklisting of schools. Other effects listed are cancellation of results, low job performance, blacklisting of schools or examination centers that are known for examination misconduct, and imprisonment.

Nepotism is believed to be a complex product of examination malpractice. This happens in the examination when relatives are given undue advantage to have access to examination questions before they write them. This is then translated into various workplaces where people, because of their private interest, divert public funds for personal gains. Paradoxically, this very fact of diverting "funds of the general public for use of the limited primal public by officials whose kinship roots are from such smaller enclaves," shows a loss of respect for the law (Edward & Kibiru, 1994). This leads to a loss of credibility regarding the development goals of the country.

Examination malpractices have the potential to result in massive deviation from moral norms which can stifle development ambitions. According to Gakwandi (1995, pp13), such deviation is endorsed when "innocent students begin to see their colleagues erect huge houses, purchasing

different types of cars and spending huge sums of money obtained through corrupt means upon using certificates gained through malpractices in examinations.” Instead of coming from hard work, wealth is gained through corrupt means which further deters development.

Augustine (1999) indicated that examination malpractice produced corruption and fighting such a canker need changing institutional arrangements. The limitations of focusing only on modifications in institutional provisions and political structures were that the human aspect was left out. The human factor usually performed out of unrestricted options and moral conviction. It could, therefore, not to be assumed that if what had so far been proposed were implemented, examination malpractices fostered by communal relationship, kinship, and extended family obligations and loyalties would stop corroding behaviour in examinations, (ibid).

Khanje (1999) contended that examination malpractice had many adverse effects that may be felt now even though it had taken place long ago. He believed that examination malpractice negatively affects the reputation of a school and also increases the cost of education as a student who has been dismissed or has his/her results may want to go to a different school to write again. Khanje further noted that immorality results directly from examination malpractice. He asserted that when students (our future leaders) learn corruption in schools (cheating) they are likely to practice it at their workplaces, communities, and homes as adults. This would breed a lot of criminals in our communities in the future. Our societies in the future will then become a dangerous place to live in. He also noted that examination

malpractice makes students lazy as they would always want to achieve a task in the shortest and an unethical way.

Mulenga (2020) explains that examination malpractices corrode the smooth functioning of the public service. The attention of most public servants is distracted from their duties and responsibilities to activities that will benefit them only. Some of these public servants will even refuse to be posted to other places just because they fear they will lose their chance of enjoying more of their private benefits. If such attitudes are given a fertile environment for growth, economic development would be very difficult to maintain.

Eckstein (2003) contended that examination malpractice may sometimes lead to disorder and violence in a country. He cited the riots in Bangladesh as an example. He reported that the riot started because college professors and administrators attempted to ensure a sound examination process. He further detailed that about 321, 000 students at 602 testing centers remained tangled and tried to counter negatively to the efforts by the professors and administrators in stopping them from cheating in the exam. This resulted in the dismissal of more than 3,000 students and 100 students got injured in the process.

Eckstein (2003) reported that due to educational malpractice in Malawi there has been a rise in the cost of conducting examinations in the country. He identified that the cost involved in putting security measures in the conduct of national examination had risen above average. He indicated that in the year 2000, the government incurred a cost of about 30 million Kwacha (US\$400,000) to organise for the unsuccessful examinations. It was indicated

by the government that that new examination would have to be done in a hurry so it needs more money so they have to spend more than the USD 400,000.

Martins (2013) noted that certificates given out by schools that are well-known for examination misconduct regularly lack recognition both nationally and internationally. As a result, most organisations put holders of such certificates into tough aptitude tests and interviews when they are trying to secure a job. Onuka and Durowaju (2013) also posited that due to examination malpractice, graduates often lack the necessary knowledge, skills, and competence to function effectively in their job. Oduwole et al. (2013) also asserted that examination malpractice results in the blacklisting of schools and centers known for examination malpractices. For instance, in 2013, WAEC blacklisted 113 secondary schools in Nigeria due to examination misconduct. Fapohunda (2015) buttressed this claim when he noted that WAEC approved the de-recognition of certain schools as centers for examination for some years while indicted supervisors were blacklisted. Oduwole et al. further stated that this ultimately leads to the cancellation of results annually.

The risk of examination malpractice is that those responsible who get jobs because they have high scores and have been chosen by their counterparts do not work and cannot work at their places of employment. Phiri and Nakamba (2015) believe that examine mismanagement is evil, with long-standing effects including the production of corrupt individuals and who lack morality to criticize those who commit mismanagement. This is because they have benefited from the practice of achieving their current position and position in society. Aullo (2004) agrees in his statement that examination abuse had helped higher education institutions to churn out incompetent

graduates. Likewise, Petters and Okon (2014) also postulated that not only are students cheatable, but also lazy, during exams.

Maureen (2014) conducted a study on the causes and effects of examination malpractices on educational standards, the moral character of those involved, and socio-economic performance from an ethical perspective. The study used the case study approach and adopted interviews and focus group discussions in collecting data from respondents. The study involved five secondary schools in Lusaka. The sample size was 190 respondents. The study revealed that examination malpractice results or could corrupt society with an untruthful and incompetent future workforce. He went on to further state that when examination malpractice is left unchecked it will render any kind of examination valueless in the eyes of society. In such a case it would only be seen as a mere means for gaining social acceptance. This will result in genuine civil servants feeling frustrated thereby limiting innovation and subverting trust.

Petters and Okon (2014) researched the effects of examination malpractice on society and undergraduate students. They indicated that examination misconducts discouraged students from taking their studies seriously which they believe consequently leads to poor performance on the job field when they graduate. Again, they indicated that examination malpractice leads to the denial of admission by students who genuinely deserved a place in an institution.

Nwaba and Nwaba (2005) indicated that examination malpractice leads to half-baked graduates, low productivity, and poor job performance. Kayode (2012) asserted that many graduates can no longer defend their certificates. He



went on to further explain that the way such graduates earned their degrees it tends to have a negative psychological effect on them. This makes them unable to perform the task assigned to them on the jobs they secured with such certificates. Chaminuka and Ndudzo (2014) on the other hand lamented that examination malpractice had serious economic, political, and social consequences that have a high tendency of crippling a country. They further stated that examination malpractice discourages good and genuine students from studying hard in their studies. They may then feel tempted to also practice what everyone is doing. Such a feeling may be fuelled when these innocent students see their colleagues who cheat escape punishment. Chaminuka and Ndudzo believe that if undealt with, examination malpractice can deprive a nation of their chances of engaging the best brains in any kind of development.

Also, Burke, Polimeni, and Slavin (2007) found that electronic devices, such as cell phones, iPods, electronic calculators, and personal data assistants are used for assisting with formulas and other crucial information. According to Clabaugh and Rozycki (2009), the art of examination malpractice has now become so sophisticated. They contended that the smuggling of written notes on pieces of paper into the examination room is now considered an ancient form of cheating and that now students write or copy the notes on specific parts of their body where the invigilators or examiners would never know or suspect. They went on to further state that the common form of malpractice by learners is writing notes on the bottom of shoes, inside hats, or inside a necktie, or belt. Also, they indicated that some of the students may hide these copied notes in their wristwatches by emptying

the content of those wristwatches. They further stated that some students wrote notes on their hands and covered them with their shirts or blouse. Most girls preferred copying the notes on sensitive parts of their bodies where the supervisors would ignore. This will then give them a chance to cross their legs and copy them during the exam.

Akaranga and Ongong (2013) observed a similar case where some students wrote notes on examination desks, walls, palms, clothes, and electronic devices. During the school days of the researcher, this was perhaps the common type of cheating in exams. This involved sending in already prepared notes on pieces of paper, at the back of mathematical sets, the back of calculators, notes written on palms, thighs, on belts, etc. Most materials that are inscribed on pieces of paper are normally smuggled into the examination room through the shorts of the boys, panties, brassieres, shoes, belts, and the hem of clothes. Munachonga (2014) confirmed this when he asserted that in Ghana, as a form of examination malpractice, students smuggled foreign materials into the examination rooms. He went on to say that some of the students took already prepared notes into the examination rooms through their pants, brassieres, and the hem of clothing. Some too were copying notes on their thighs and palms, this trick was very common with the girls.

Tambawal (2013) observed that cheating in examination leads to limited confidence and academic morals, beneficiaries of examination malpractice end-up with unsatisfied visions in their selected professions, leaders who cheated to attain future leadership roles are more likely to be corrupt and unprincipled in their line of profession.

Moreover, Lebeloane and Nyaumwe (2014) established that there were five different forms of crib media used for cheating by candidates in examinations namely crib notes on paper, rulers, calculator covers, hands, and cell phones. This was not different in Zambia as Munachonga (2014) indicated that candidates also smuggled written notes in the examination centers and some too wrote notes on their thighs and palms. In another study, Suleman et al. (2015) noted that the majority of students brought electronic devices to the examination centers. They went on to further say that some instructors and parents sent already answered scripts to students during examinations. Nnam and Inah (2015) in their study indicated that at the Ebonyi State University in Nigeria, most students were noted sending in illegal tiny pieces of paper into the examination center. Some students were also reported using mobile phones and other electronic gadgets in the examination centers.

This is the situation where a candidate hires someone to pose as them during examinations and write on their behalf. Munachonga (2014) indicated that in Kenya, students who afraid to cheat normally opted for impersonation. Suleman et al. (2015) reported a similar case wherein their study 74.5% of the participants believed that impersonation was reported during examinations.

Normally collusion is done between candidates and candidates and between candidates and examiners. Between candidates and candidates is when candidates unlawfully pass information to themselves usually by exchanging notes or scripts. Ingram and Parks (2002) revealed the dimension of cheating where students had developed codes that they use in copying and passing on information. They also noted that some of the students used sign languages to enable them to cheat. For instance, some of the students may use

sounds or drop a thing to signal their other counterparts in exchanging information. Other candidates also used their hands in signalling their other colleagues in copying. Automated devices like cell phones, iPods, electronic calculators, and personal data assistants are used for helping with formulas and other crucial information (Burke et al., 2007).

Akaranga and Ongong (2013) stated that, occasionally students practise what is referred to as “giraffing,” this is the case where candidates stretch their necks to copy other candidates. Munachonga (2014) indicated that copying responses from fellow students in the same examination hall were very common among students in Kenya. Also reported was communicating by students through electronic gadgets during examinations and also whispering to one another, shares notes with each other, and strategically uncovering their work for other students to copy.

### **How Students Engage in Examination Malpractice**

Examination malpractice has been a feature of many Ghanaian institutions of learning as far back as the early 21<sup>st</sup> century (Naere, 2009) and it has become a “present-day shame”. One clear form of examination malpractice that compromises the quality of education in Africa and notably Ghana, is leakages of examination questions. Onuka and Durowoju (2010) examined the perception of teachers and students on the causes of examination malpractice revealed that examination malpractice rather than being halted is on the increase in the African education system.

Leaking of examination question papers is regarded as one of the normal form of malpractice before the examination. Achio, Ameko, Kutsanedzie, Alhassan, and Ganaa (2012) indicated that leakage usually

comes from lecturers/examiners, Examinations Officers, Heads of Departments, and academic Deans since they are considered people who directly have access to examination questions and/or the marking schemes. They further stated that people who are close to such individuals (Children, spouses, other family members, their secretaries, cleaners, and messengers) could also leak examination papers.

They again asserted that sneaking into a staff office secretly for examination question papers and/or answer scripts, writing of project(s) or report(s) for the student(s) by staff or co-students, falsifying candidates' details to qualify them to take an examination, plagiarism, unauthorized adaptation of someone's work to earn marks for promotion, or commercial ventures, and allotment of choice of examination centers or appointment of choice of invigilating staff to specified centers are all forms of cheating before the examination (Achio, Ameko, Kutsanedzie, Alhassan, & Ganaa, 2012 as cited in Makaula, 2018).

The different types of academic misconduct highlighted by Omonijo, Oludaio, Uche, and Rotimi (2014) include networks, macrochips, and conspiracies. Most learners smuggle illegal materials into the examination room through jeans, bras and bags. Researchers also pay attention to the obstacles or obstacles of others. There is a serious academic dishonesty among students. Any plan to prevent the test from being overlooked is considered an obstacle/obstacle. In order to maintain the unscrupulous motive of cheating, some unscrupulous schools have replaced large classrooms with small classrooms to supervise examinations.

Katoch (2013) introduced another form of academic dishonesty that is considered to be forgery, including falsifying information through authorized or unauthorized gain and treating it as reliable; in many institutions, when academic performance changes, this will happen. Katoch (2013) provides fabrication types, such as changing the answer sheet to improve grades or viewing colleagues' answers, collecting materials related to prohibited materials, and thirdly, using speakers for exams.

Besides examination leaks, students also copy each other directly during examinations. This appears to be common in Ghana and is known in the student community as dubbing. The problem of sex for marks is another very shameful way of examining malpractice. This is very pronounced in the higher education institution where the exchange of the doctors with female students for sex is becoming a norm in a quid pro quo relationship (Awaah & Abdulai, 2020). It should be noted that some students sometimes produce foreign materials for the examination to be extracted. Such materials are mainly maintained or printed on the palms or laps in their socks, brassier. This is an advanced form when students store answers and transfer to each other via the WhatsApp etc. on their mobile phones (Awaah & Abdulai, 2020).

Akaranga and Ongong (2013) reported that in Nairobi students succeeded in swapping an already answered script with the ones given to them. Akaranga and Ongoing indicated that it was possible because the students colluded with some examiners and supervisors before the start of examinations. Similarly, Munachonga (2014) indicated that in Rwanda examination malpractice took on a different dimension in some aspect but most of the time there were like the ones observed in other parts of Africa. He

noted that there were instances where examiners were threatened in case they refuse to cooperate with perpetrators. Also noted was students copying from sheets of paper, textbooks, etc., students have also reported copying from their neighbours in the examination room due to the congestion in the classrooms, illegal assistance from invigilators, and insertion of already answer sheets into their answer booklets.

When it comes to cheating during the examination, different forms have been identified. Achio et al. (2012) as cited in Makaula (2018) indicated that examination malpractice can also take place during examinations. He believed that among the common forms of examination malpractice during examination included: impersonation; writing on objects (sheets of papers, handkerchiefs, erasers, and covers of calculators); writing notes on some parts of the body (arms, thighs, palms); use of programmable calculators; hiding notes and textbooks in washrooms, pockets, private parts, or pen corks; writing answers on question papers and exchanging them with others; and communicating orally or through gestures (Makaula, 2018).

The common type of cheating in exams is sending foreign materials into the examination center. This involved sending in already prepared notes on pieces of paper, at the back of mathematical sets, the back of calculators, notes written on palms, thighs, on belts, etc. Most materials that are inscribed on pieces of paper are normally smuggled into the examination room through the shorts of the boys, panties, brassieres, shoes, belts, and the hem of clothes. Munachonga (2014) confirmed this when he asserted that in Ghana, as a form of examination malpractice, students smuggled foreign materials into the examination rooms. He went on to say that some of the students took already

prepared notes into the examination rooms through their pants, brassieres, and the hem of clothing. Some too were copying notes on their thighs and palms, this trick was very common with the girls.

Akaranga and Ongong (2013) observed in a study where some students wrote notes on examination desks, walls, palms, clothes, and electronic devices. In Zambia as Munachonga (2014) indicated that candidates also smuggled written notes in the examination centers and some too wrote notes on their thighs and palms.

In another study, Suleman et al. (2015) noted that the majority of students brought electronic devices to the examination centers. They went on to further say that some instructors and parents sent already answered scripts to students during examinations. Nnam and Inah (2015) in their study indicated that at the Ebonyi State University in Nigeria, most students were noted sending in illegal tiny pieces of paper into the examination center. Some students were also reported using mobile phones and other electronic gadgets in the examination centers.

According to Clabaugh and Rozycki (2009), the art of examination malpractice has now become so sophisticated. They contended that the smuggling of written notes on pieces of paper into the examination room is now considered an ancient form of cheating and that now students write or copy the notes on specific parts of their body where the invigilators or examiners would never know or suspect. They went on to further state that the common form of cheating by learners is writing shorts notes on the bottom of shoes, inside hats, or inside a necktie, or belt. Also, they indicated that some of the students may hide these copied notes in their wristwatches by emptying



the content of those wristwatches. They further stated that some students wrote notes on their hands and covered them with their shirts or blouse. Most girls preferred copying the notes on sensitive parts of their bodies where the supervisors would ignore. This will then give them a chance to cross their legs and copy them during the exam.

Burke, Polimeni, and Slavin (2007) found that electronic devices such as mobile phones, iPods, electronic calculators, and personal data assistants were used to help calculate formulas and other important information. Similarly, Lebeloane and Nyaumwe (2014) found that there are five different types of baby carriers used to test fraudulent candidates, namely paper baby notes, rulers, calculators, hands and phones. Cell phone. In Kenya, students who are afraid of being deceived often choose to pretend (Munahonga, 2014). Sulaiman et al. (2015) reported that 74.5% of participants believed that their research reported phishing during the test period.

Ingram and Parks (2002) revealed another dimension of cheating where students had developed codes that they use in copying and passing on information. They also noted that some of the students used sign languages to enable them to cheat. For instance, some of the students may use sounds or drop a thing to signal their other counterparts in exchanging information. Other candidates also used their hands in signalling their other colleagues in copying. Burke et al. (2007) indicated that electronic devices like cell phones, iPods, electronic calculators, and personal data assistants are used for helping with formulas and other crucial information. Akaranga and Ongong (2013) stated that sometimes students use what is called “giraffing,” this is the case where candidates stretch their necks to copy other candidates. Munachonga

(2014) indicated that copying answers from other candidates in the same examination room were very common among students in Kenya. Also reported was communicating by students through electronic gadgets during examinations and also uttering to a colleague learner, sharing notes to each other, and strategically exposing their work for others to copy.

Sometimes examination malpractice happens right after the examination. According to Achio et al. (2012), the most common ones may include: perpetrators teaming up with some employee of examination bodies, departments, and academic offices to swap original scripts with fake/newly answered scripts that were answered after the examination, paying for marks or bribing to get marks changed. Similar to the above discussion is what Munachonga (2014) pointed at. He said in Rwanda the most common form of examination malpractice after an examination was the insertion of foreign material in an already answered script or making corrections in already answered scripts. Also noted by Munachonga was the deliberate addition of marks to some students, swapping of originally answered scripts with new ones, bribing examiners to inflate marks, and changing already recorded marks.

Okolie, Nwosu, Eneje and Oluka (2019) found that buying and selling real-time data is another type of malpractice in examination. In addition, individuals are employed to sit for examination for others with full awareness of the invigilators. Misuse, such as computer-assisted manipulation of students' grades or results in favour of students' grades and proving false certificates (Okolie et al., 2019). Thompson, Ansoglenang and Laar (2020) investigated the reasons why students engage in examination malpractice. The

study employed descriptive survey design through the use of questionnaire to collect data from 278 students. The results of the study showed that smuggling of prepared notes into the examination hall, writing of examination answers on palms and thighs, and communication with colleagues to seek answers are the ways by students engage in cheating in examination.

### **Ways of Curbing Examination Malpractice**

Tukamuhabwa and Apiku (2019) examined the perceived causes and methods of curbing examination malpractice using ICT in Uganda. The descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed for the study. The findings of the study showed that using ICT tools such as code security system and electronic control box.

In a quantitative study, Eckstein (2003) explored ways of curbing malpractices in examination in Cambodia. The study used descriptive survey design through the use of questionnaire to elicit response from 95 teachers. Eckstein pointed out that the Cambodian Government, in an attempt to prevent cheating at their national examinations, deployed hundreds of soldiers and police to foresee the examination process. The security personnel present kept parents and others from sending answers to students and also, they closed all nearby photocopying shops. Meanwhile in the USA, Eckstein (2003) indicated that several agencies had been put in place to ensure serene examination. He reported that certain programs have been conducted which are connected to legal rights and responsibilities within the academic community.

In Kenya, Ramani, Ngala and Ochichi (2010) found that the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) banned phones in the examination room; and they reviewed their examination timetable and eliminated

examinations in the afternoons. Still on the issues of how Kenya is dealing with examination malpractice, Ramani et al. (2010), indicated that the KNEC barred offenders for at least two years from sitting for national examinations. They also realized that most of the examination malpractice happened in the afternoon so they moved all their examinations to the morning.

Mallum (2009) maintained that most students know that there is no gain in obtaining a certificate which is not defensible if paper qualifications are de-emphasized. Public information campaigns should also be organized to expose the ills of the malpractices of the examinations. Unless the entire society exhibits its great responsibility, integrity and sincerity, examining malpractice cannot be curbed by fighting this threat with all the vigor and rigour that it deserves.

Bamusananire (2010) conducted a study on the ways of dealing with examination malpractice in Rwanda. The study indicated that the Rwanda National Examination Council (RNEC), in their quest to dealing with examination malpractice has decided to print their examination questions abroad. This is done according to Bamusananire, to secure storage and packaging. Again, Bamusananire went on to say that rules governing the process of examinations are made known to the examiners and students concerned in advance and also examination documents are escorted by police and military personnel to and fro the various locations where the examination is to take place. He finally hinted that Rwanda has now introduced and modified the certificates of students by the printing of candidates' photographs on them in cases of impersonation.

Adeyemi (2010) conducted a study on instructors' perception of examination malpractices among secondary school students in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study used the descriptive approach and was conducted with 481 secondary schools in Ondo State. This comprised of 281 publics and 200 privates. The study sampled 960 teachers from a total population of 4250. The study employed multi-stage and stratified random sampling techniques. The data that was collected was analyzed using percentages and t-test and the data was collected with the use of a questionnaire. He recommended the full implementation of the examination malpractices laws and also, he advocated productive supervision of students during examinations as well as the termination of the appointment of examination officials and teachers involved in examination malpractices.

Olatoye (2013) investigated the causes of bad exam practices among Nigerian high school students, the impact of bad exam practices, and Nigerian secondary schools that combat bad exam practices. Teachers and 100 (one hundred) students were selected from a simple random sample of 5 (five) secondary schools owned by Mushin City Council. The research tool used for research is the teacher and student perception questionnaire, and the collected data is presented in the form of distribution tables and simple percentages. Studies have found that the main reason for poor exam practice is parents' pressure to achieve good grades. And the value of the certificate. The study's recommendations urge parents not to put too much pressure on their children to achieve good grades, and not to overestimate the value of certificates.

Also, in Nigeria, Olabisi and Abiola (2014) examined the ways of curbing examination malpractices in senior high schools. Descriptive survey

design was employed for the study. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 85 teachers. The study found that as a way of curbing examination malpractice, parents and communities should train their children to love and cherish their traditional values honesty, and hard work. They also advocated the need for guidance and counselling in schools. They believed this would help students develop their self-esteem. It will enable them to see themselves as achievers rather than failures. Olabisi and Abiola further believed that to curb examination malpractice, instructional content must be well selected and good methods must be adopted in teaching.

Abubakar and Adebayo (2014) studied the use of calculation methods in the testing process. The results show that despite extensive research on neglect testing, there is an urgent need to pay more attention to research on curbing misconduct in the testing process in the United States. Institutions are now cracking down on exam violations through supervision, penalizing exam violations, and taking appropriate measures in the exam room; however, these strategies cannot help curb exam abuse because they do not take into account factors that affect students' participation in bad exam practice.

Maheka (2015) also believed that to address examination malpractice schools should conduct intensified sensitization to both teachers and learners. She also noted that the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) should intensify monitoring to ensure quality delivery of lessons to develop confidence in learners. She went on to state that school-based continuing professional development (SB- CPD) should be done regularly to enable the teacher to teach and handle challenging topics.

Akintunde and Selzing-Musa (2016) on practical ways to curb bad exam practices in Nigerian high schools. The study uses a descriptive survey method, with questionnaires as the main data collection tool. Including personal determination, educational achievement scores, parenting advice, use of computer-based tests, and biometric testing.

Dosu, Gotan, Deshi and Gambo (2016) also suggested establishing appropriate seating arrangements to reduce the number of students plagiarizing or exchanging brochures, and emphasized that religions, tribes, and other school clubs keep students away to prevent participation.

Board (2017) believes that legal guidelines and test rules must be effectively followed, so scholars with poor scoring behaviour should be severely punished according to the test rules and guidelines so that they can serve as a warning to classmates. In their respective examination rooms, fingerprint recognition devices are introduced to identify real students who are impersonating others, and to improve the relationship between tutors and student tutors in the examination room.

Muchemva and Alice (2017) explored practical ways to use content analysis techniques to curb bad exam practices in African countries. The research results show that there are different types of bad exam practice. Poor observation and student-generated coursework. There are also student activities such as bringing external resources into the examination room, using programmable calculators, writing corpses, impersonating others, and stealing test papers before deadlines. Fear of students, students' non-discipline, uncompromising, poor test conditions, and non-compliance with test rules are the reasons for poor test practice. The study concluded that ways to curb bad

exam practices at all exam-related levels (students, teachers, exam committees, exam storage and transportation) is to create the necessary conditions, develop strict exam guidelines, and provide all Participants are well prepared for the exam.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has covered two key parts. In the first part, it has discussed two relevant theories (Deontological Theory and Anomie theory) that explain examination malpractice and behaviour of those involved in the act. It also discussed the concept of examination malpractice. Secondly, it has provided a discussion regarding empirical literature, with emphasis on perception on the causes of examination malpractice, the effects of examination malpractice, how students engage in examination malpractice, and ways of curbing examination malpractice. This gives a good basis for the study since it provides background information on the perception, causes, effects, and ways of curbing examination malpractice.

Also, the literature reviewed that most of the studies used questionnaire to elicit responses from the respondents on the causes of examination malpractice, however, this study is intended to fill the gap by beefing up the quantitative aspect with an interview schedule/guide. Again, this current looked at some of the ways of curbing these malpractices. Moreover, there seems to be limited research on the causes and effects of examination malpractice in SHSs within the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Hence, the need for this study to contribute to filling that vacuum in literature.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### Introduction

This chapter examined the methodology that was used in carrying out this research work. It focused on the research design, data and sources, target population, sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, the procedure for data collection, and procedure for data processing and analysis.

#### Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to explore the causes, effects, and ways of eradicating examination malpractices. A descriptive survey tries to establish the range and distribution of certain social characteristics, which in this case is causes, methods, effects of examination malpractices as well as the solution to examination malpractices, and to ascertain in what way these characteristics may be linked to certain behaviour patterns or attitudes, which in this case is perception.

There are, nevertheless, some disadvantages to the use of the descriptive research design. For instance, once interviews are used as procedures of data collection, the target group may not be truthful due to the likelihood that confidentiality could be breached. As such, the researcher used questionnaire in the collection of the quantitative data. However, Murphy (2017) also draws attention to the issue of subjectivity in this instance. This originates from the point that respondents are coerced into choosing from predetermined and prescriptive preferences once answering the questionnaires. Nevertheless, descriptive design studies were well-thought-out as the ideal by the researcher since they could be used to gather data that can be generalized

for all populations. Again, they offer a comparatively simple and straightforward method to the study of values, attitudes, beliefs, and motives (Robson, 2002).

### **Population**

The target population for this study consisted of all teachers and students in the five Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The accessible population of this study consisted 5 Head Teachers and 5,497 students from the Senior High Schools (The Asante Akim South Municipal Education Office, 2020).

### **Sample and Sampling Procedure**

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of 361 is suitable for a population of 5,497 students. To ensure that the number of students selected from each school was representative of the population of each school, the ratio of each school was calculated and then multiplied by the sample size. This resulted in the number that was to be sampled from each school respectively. Now in selecting students from each school, the students were equally selected from each form. Thus, form two and three using the simple random sampling technique.

The simple random sampling procedure was relied upon to sample students from each school making 361 in total. The simple random sampling procedure was used for selecting the students since it guaranteed that each potential participant of the population group to be sampled had the same chance of being chosen as part of the sample (Maverick, 2015). Specifically, the lottery method was employed to select students from their various classes.

Also, the census method was used to involve all the 5 headteachers for the study. Therefore, in all, the total sample was 366.

Table 1- *Distribution of Population of students by school*

<b>Name of the school</b>	<b>Total number of Students</b>	<b>The ratio of each school</b>	<b>Number sampled</b>
Bompata Presby Senior High School	1660	0.30*361	108
Ofoase Senior High School	1149	0.21*361	76
Juaso Senior High School	1970	0.36*361	130
Jubile Senior High School	201	0.04*361	15
Banka Community Senior High School	499	0.09*361	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,497</b>		<b>361</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The study adopted a structured questionnaire (see Appendix A) and an interview guide (see Appendix B) as the instruments for data collection from the respondents and participants respectively.

### **Questionnaire**

The simple reason for adopting the questionnaire was because it is easy to administer and score, and when carefully constructed it gives objective and reliable information. The interview guide was also adopted because it allowed the researcher to explore areas that the questionnaire might not cover. The questionnaire was divided into various sections just as the interview guide. Section (A) was on demographic data; (B), (C), (D), and (E) focused on soliciting responses from the respondents in order to provide answers for the various research questions. That is respondents' perception of the causes of malpractice in examination, the effects of examination malpractice, forms of

examination of malpractice, and ways of eradicating examination malpractice respectively. The questionnaire consisted of only close-ended questions and it consisted of 32 items. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert Scale weighed as follows: “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Undecided”, “Disagree”, “Strongly Disagree”. Which was given weight, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The questionnaire as used in this study made the collection of data very standardized and systematic. In essence, questionnaires are more objective when used in a survey. Moreover, it made it easy to administer and was also relatively cost-effective and saved time as compared to other instruments (Kirakowski, 1997) as used in this study.

Despite the advantages associated with the use of a questionnaire, it became difficult to explain certain things to the respondents, as a result, they might misinterpret things. Unlike open-ended, close-ended questionnaire rather prevents the respondents from adding a piece of information that might be significant to your survey (Carter & Williamson, 1996). Despite all these flaws the researcher chose this instrument as ideal for data collection.

### **The Interview Guide**

The interview guide, on the other hand, had five (5) sections which were led by an introduction containing a brief background to the study, the purpose of the interview, and informed consent. The first section was used to gather data on the background characteristics of the participants such as their age, number of years as a teacher, and gender. Second B, C, D, and E of the interview guide dealt with causes of malpractices in examination, the effects of examination malpractice, forms of examination malpractice, and ways of curbing examination malpractice respectively. One of the advantages of

interview is that it is inquiry based and open-ended which allows participants to raise issues that matter most to them (Yauch & Steudel, 2003). Therefore, a qualitative data was collected through the use of interview.

According to Yauch and Steudel (2003) one of the weaknesses of an interview is that it allows the participant to have more control over the content of the data collected. Also, they further asserted that the process of interviewing is time-consuming and a specific important issue could go unnoticed.

### **Pre-testing of the instruments**

A pre-test was done at four selected Senior High Schools in Asante Akim North District, a different district but in the same Ashanti region. This began on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019. The schools used for the pilot test were Konongo Odumase Senior High School, Agogo State Senior High School, Agogo Collins Senior High School, and Owerriaman Senior High School. The researcher chose these schools for the pretesting because those schools were on the northern side of the district that the researcher chose hence those schools shares similar characteristics such as demography, exam malpractice pervasiveness among others. The pretesting of the research instrument was necessary because it revealed the weaknesses in some of the questions, specifically the forms of practice as well the effects of malpractice. The weaker questions were then restructured to get the right information to be used for the study.

The face and content validity of the instrument was determined by a team of experts in the Department of Business and Social Sciences Education. Also, the supervisor of this study further validated the content of the

instrument. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha coefficient. The reliability coefficients of the sub-scales are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Reliability for Each of the Sub-Scales on the Questionnaire**

Sub-Scale	Reliability Coefficient ( $\alpha$ )
Causes of examination malpractices	.781 (No. of items = 5)
Effects of examination malpractices	.732 (No. of items = 7)
Forms of examination malpractices	.745 (No. of items = 9)
Ways of curbing examination malpractices	.711 (No. of items = 4)

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

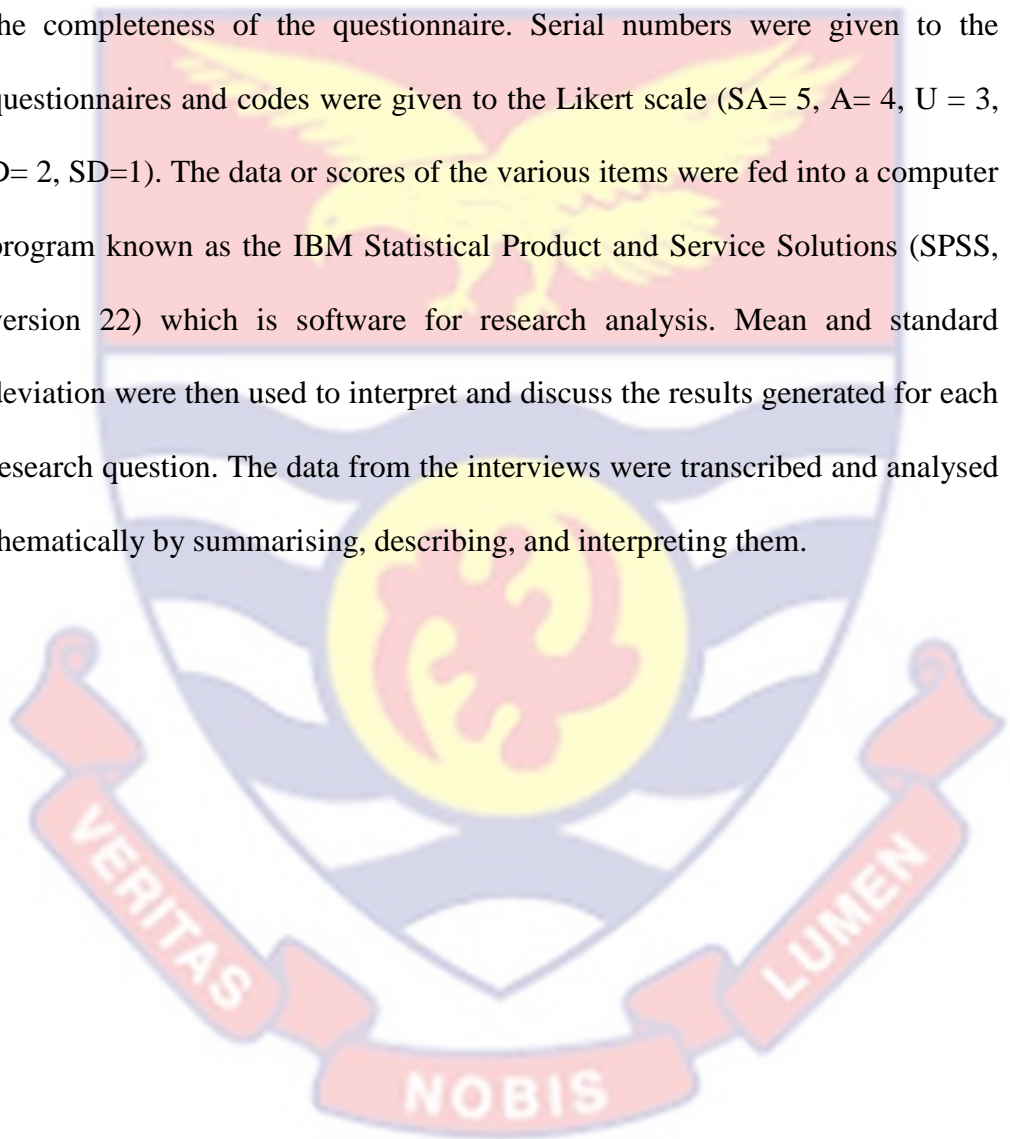
The overall reliability coefficient for the instrument was .812 (No. of items = 25). Therefore, the Cronbach's alpha for the sub-scales and the overall items suggested that the instrument gathered credible data (Huck, 2004).

#### **Data Collection Procedure**

A letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Business and Social Sciences Education, University of Cape Coast (see Appendix C) to the Asante Akim South Municipal Office of Education to seek their permission and approval to research the selected Senior High Schools. A copy was then sent to the various heads in each school to seek their approval in conducting this survey. After a week, the researcher then went to the various schools to conduct the survey. The process involved the administration of three hundred and sixty-one (361) copies of the questionnaire on the respondents within three (3) weeks. The researcher started the data collection on March 20, 2020, and it ended on the 10th April 2020. The return rate was 100%. Also, all the 5 headteachers were interviewed.

### Data Processing and Analysis

The information that was obtained through the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistic. By descriptive statistics, simple percentages were used to present, analyse and report the respondents' information on the bio-data section. The responses were then edited to ensure the completeness of the questionnaire. Serial numbers were given to the questionnaires and codes were given to the Likert scale (SA= 5, A= 4, U = 3, D= 2, SD=1). The data or scores of the various items were fed into a computer program known as the IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS, version 22) which is software for research analysis. Mean and standard deviation were then used to interpret and discuss the results generated for each research question. The data from the interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically by summarising, describing, and interpreting them.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

The core mandate of this research was to explore the perceived causes and effects of examination malpractice in Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality. The study relied on questionnaires and interview guide to gather the necessary data for thorough investigation into the phenomenon under study. The obtained data from headteachers and students was analysed by computing the frequencies, percentages, and tables in means and standard deviations to generate answers for the four (4) questions underpinning the study. To prevent any confusion in the presentation of the information, findings were categorized under themes with the individual research questions. This chapter contains the presentation and discussion of the findings of this study.

#### Background information about Respondents

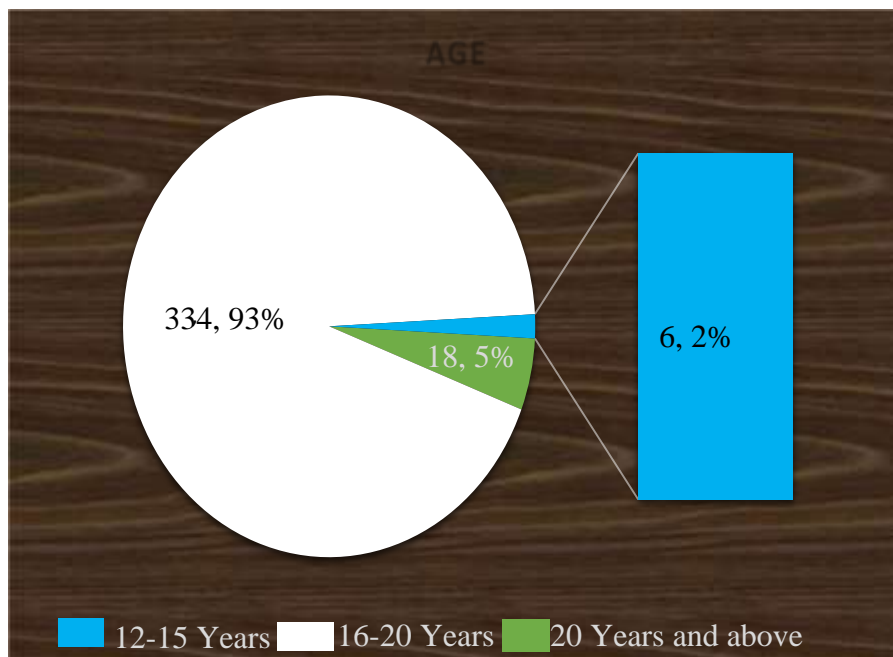
This section detailed data collected on the demographics of the contributors in Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipal on their views on what is perceived as the causes and effects of examination malpractice. The demographic data of the respondents is discussed in Figures 1, 2, and 3.

#### Age of respondents

Age is one of the significant features in understanding students and headteachers opinions about some specific problems. By and large, age designates the degree of maturity of people. In that logic, age became more



vital to examine the responses given by students as far as this research is concern. The results of the age of respondents have been depicted in Figure 2.



*Figure 2: Age of Respondents*  
Source: Field Survey, 2020.

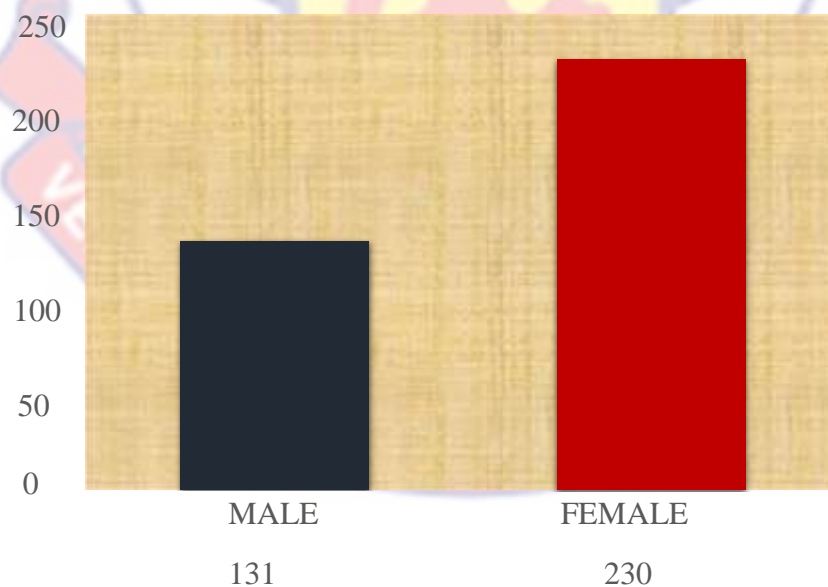
Figure 2 sought data on the ages of the respondents as of their last birthday. As illustrated, the majority of the respondents 334 (93%) were between 16 and 20 years of age while 6 representing 2% were between the ages of 12 and 15 years. Students who were 20 years or above were also 18 (5%). The concentration of most students' ages between sixteen (16) and twenty (20) years could be attributed to the change in Ghana's educational system from the middle school system to the secondary school system in the year 1987 (1987 educational reform). This change saw the average number of pre-tertiary schooling years reduced from 17 years to 12 years. As a result, most students graduate from junior high school between the ages of twelve (12) to sixteen (16) years.

From Figure 2, it can also be seen that most of the students are mature in terms of age. This implies that the responses were given by mature students

who have had a little bit of experience when it comes to examination malpractice. Therefore, they can provide answers on the causes and effects of examination malpractice. All the five Headteachers who were interviewed were above 45 years, (that is, their ages were 47, 49, 52, 55, and 57 respectively in order of the schools listed in chapter three). The implication is that the responses given were from individuals who have had enough experience in the teaching field and as such are well informed on the causes and effects of examination malpractice.

### Gender of respondents

Gender remain an essential variable in a particular Ghanaian social context which is variably affected by any social or economic occurrence. Hence, the variable sex was examined for this study. Data related to the sex of the respondents were analyzed and presented in Figure 3.



*Figure 3: Gender of Respondents*

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

As illustrated in Figure 3, the majority of the students, 230(63.7%) were females and 131(36.3%) of the remaining were males. From the Figures,

it could be seen that the number of female students outnumbered their male counterparts and this could be attributed to the number of female students in the various schools who were visited more than the number for the male students. The implication of this is that there will be more female responses than male responses. With regards to the gender of the headteachers who were interviewed, all the five headteachers were males. Two schools out of the five schools were having females as their assistants but since the main headteachers were the focus of the study they were excluded from the interview.

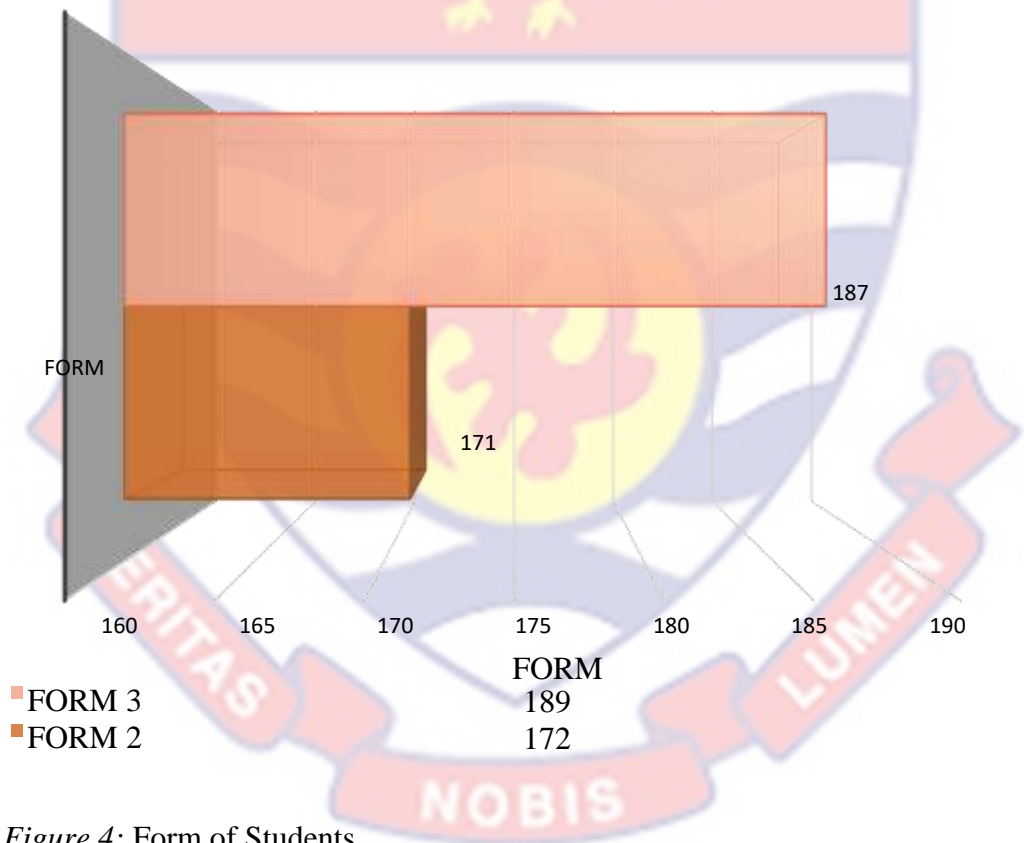


Figure 4: Form of Students  
Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Presented in Figure 3 is the form of the students who partook in this study. Glaringly there were more form 3 students (189, 52.4%) as compared to the form 2 students (172, 47.6%). The number of the form three students was

more than that of form two because during the data collection there were more form three students available than form two students.

### Presentation and discussion of the main results

This section dealt with the results and discussions of the field data. The analysis was done in line with the research questions that guided the study.

Table 3- *Decision Rule for Means Value*

Mean	Scale
4.1-5.0	SA
3.1-4.0	A
2.1-3.0	U
1.1-2.0	D
0.1-1.0	SD

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

The outcomes for this section were presented by means of mean and standard deviations. Tables 3 and 4 present the decision rule used in interpreting the results with reference to the mean and standard deviations.

Table 4- *Decision Rule for Standard Deviation Values*

Standard Deviation Values	Interpretation
1 or greater than 1	Responses differ much from each other
Less than 1	Responses did not differ much from each other

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

**Research Question One: What are the views of SHS students in the Asante Akim South Municipal as to the causes of examination malpractices?**

Research question one tried to find out what respondents perceived to be the causes of examination malpractice within the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana. The outcome is presented in Table 5.

As presented in Table 5, a significant number of the respondents disagreed with the statement that my parents advise that I should cheat during examination whenever I forget what I have learned (M=1.95, SD=1.358). The standard deviation of 1.36 meant that responses given by students exhibited heterogeneity. That is, they differed from each other; however, most of the students agreed that their parents did not encourage them to cheat when they forget what they have learned before the examination.

Table 5- Cause of examination malpractice

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
My parents advise that I should cheat during examination whenever I forget what I have learned	1.95	1.36
I cheat in examinations because I want high marks	2.87	1.56
I cheat in the examination because I want to pass my examination at all cost	4.47	.63
lack of necessary materials to study makes me feel not committed to studying and as such I do not prepare well for the examination	1.61	.77
I mostly cheat during examinations in subjects I poorly prepare for	4.00	1.33
Mean of Means/Average Standard Deviation	2.81	1.13

Source: *Field Survey, 2020.*

Again, most of the students were undecided to the statement that cheating in examinations due to desire for higher marks ( $M=2.87$ ,  $SD=1.56$ ). The standard deviation of 1.56 meant that the response of the students was not uniform. In other words, almost all the students disagreed with that statement although a few of them agreed to that statement. Similarly, the majority of the students strongly disagreed that lack of necessary materials to study makes them feel not committed to studying, and as such, they do not prepare well for examination ( $M=1.61$ ,  $SD= .77$ ). The standard deviation of .77 meant that the responses of the students were uniform or homogeneous.

Furthermore, Table 5 revealed that a higher number of the students agreed with the statement that they mostly cheat during examinations in subjects they poorly prepare for ( $M=4.00$ ,  $SD= 1.33$ ). The figure for the standard deviation which was 1.33 meant that the answers given by the students were homogenous. Similarly, the majority of them strongly agreed that they engage in examination malpractice because they want to pass their examination at all costs ( $M= 4.47$ ,  $SD= .63$ ). The standard deviation of .63 meant that the responses of the students were uniform or homogeneous. This result is similar to that of Olabisi and Abiola (2014) that since a final certificate serves as an index of educational achievement and examination most students see examination as a survival of the fittest and as such see cheating as an effective way of surviving so they will do anything to pass at all cost. The mean of means of 2.81 achieved indicated that the majority of the students disagreed with most factors that were indicated as been responsible for examination malpractice.

With regards to the interview conducted by the researcher, all the five headteachers indicated that most of the students cheat in the examination because of the fear of failure. One headteacher stressed that *'most of the students do not prepare well for examinations, so when it is time for them to write exams, they have a habit of looking for any means to cheat to pass'*

It was also noted during the interview with the headteachers that most of the students' engagement in examination malpractice was being fuelled by their parents. One headteacher revealed that some parents of the students gave money to some of the teachers so that they can help their wards answer any leaked question or should in case they are supervising their ward, they will not be strict on them.

One headteacher stated that *'there have been times, I mean countless occasions that I had to warn some teachers to desist from the act of aiding students to engage in examination malpractice by taking money from parents and some students also'*.

On the same issue, another headteacher stressed that *some parents encouraged examination malpractice by giving phones to their children, paying for leaked questions, and purchasing questions for their children*. This issue was also reported in a study by Mashanyare and Chinamasa (2014) where they reported an instance in Zambia where a minister of education bought examination questions for her daughter. In such instances, some parents even bribe examiners and many illicit acts.

Furthermore, it was also revealed from the study that some of the students engaged in examination malpractices due to their low self-esteem. They do not see themselves as capable of passing certain subjects. On that

issue this was the response from one headteacher, *'when it comes to certain subjects like core mathematics, elective mathematics, and integrated science, many students feel they will never pass unless they are aided with 'apor'. They, therefore, go the extra mile looking for any means to cheat'*. This was in line with the findings of Maheka (2015) that been anxious, lacking confidence, and bearing the fear of failure often lead to the high rate of cheating among students.

It was again revealed from the interview that most students who are caught engaging in examination malpractice are students whose parents could not afford to buy them extra textbooks. It was further explained by one headteacher that such students lacked the motivation to take their studies seriously and as such resorted to cheating during examinations. This supports the findings of Ojerinde (2002) that problems between parents, poor upbringing of children in the home, improper supervision, lack of learning aids for students, and low level of commitment to studies lead to examination malpractice. He went on to further state that when students lack the proper materials to study it reduces their level of commitment to studies. This, therefore, leaves such a child no choice but to cheat to pass an examination. From the interview, it was also revealed that some students engaged in examination malpractice because they want to get high marks. This supports the findings of Makaula (2018) who indicated that getting higher grades was the primary motive for cheating among candidates.

To sum up, it is very clear from the discussion that the respondents were fully aware of the causes of examination malpractice and some of the causes revealed and discussed were the fact that most of the students cheat to



gain high marks, other reasons reported were; advice and encouragement from parents, low self-esteem exhibited by students, students failing to prepare well for a particular subject and finally students lacking the needed and necessary materials to aid in their studies.

**Research Question Two: How do students engage in examination malpractice in the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana?**

Research question two tried to find out how students engage in examination malpractice in the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality. The outcome is presented in Table 6.

Table 6- *How students engage in examination malpractice*

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students sometimes smuggle written notes on tiny pieces of papers into the examination hall	4.76	.42
Students occasionally write a short note on the tables and walls in examination centers	4.75	.45
Students sometimes write short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars, and shorts and walk into the examination room	4.39	.52
Students agree to write an examination or a test for other students or their friends	4.52	.90
Some students replace old answer booklets with new ones after examination	4.11	.64
Some students copy answers on their electronic calculators and send them to examination centers	4.45	.98
Some students smuggle mobile phones into the examination room during the examination	4.33	.47
Mean of means/Average Standard Deviation	4.47	.63

Source: *Field Survey, 2020.*

Inferring from Table 6, the mean of 4.47 meant that most of the students strongly agreed to the ways or forms students engage in examination malpractice that was stated/indicated in Table 5. Delving deeper it can be seen that the majority of the students ( $M= 4.76$ ,  $SD= .42$ ) strongly agreed that some students sometimes smuggle written notes on small portions of papers and sent them to the examination hall. The standard deviation of .42 meant that the answers given by the students remained homogeneous. That is, they did not deviate much from one another. Similarly, most of the students ( $M= 4.39$ ,  $SD= .52$ ) strongly agreed that some students sometimes wrote short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars, and shorts and enter the examination room. The standard deviation of 0.42 meant that students' responses remained homogeneous. This was in line with the findings of Munachonga (2014) who confirmed that in Ghana, as a form of examination malpractice, students smuggled foreign materials into the examination rooms. He went on to say that some of the students took already prepared notes into the examination rooms through their pants, brassieres, the hem of clothing. Furthermore, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.52$ ,  $SD= .90$ ) strongly agreed that some students agreed to write an examination or a test for other students or their friends. The standard deviation of .90 indicated that the answers the students provided were closely related to each other.

On the issue of using electronics in engaging in examination malpractice, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.45$ ,  $SD= .98$ ) indicated that some students copied answers on their electronic calculators and took them to the examination centers. The standard deviation of .98 indicated that the answers the students provided were closely related to each other. Then finally,

most of the students ( $M= 4.33$ ,  $SD= .47$ ) strongly agreed that some students smuggled mobile phones into the examination room. The standard deviation of .47 meant that the responses of the students were very similar and that it did not differ much from each other. This backs the findings of Nnam and Inah (2015) who in their study indicated that most students were noted sending in illegal tiny pieces of paper into the examination center while some were also reported using mobile phones and other electronic gadgets in the examination centers.

Moving onto the interview conducted with the headteachers, it was revealed that the common ways students engaged in examination malpractices included writing short notes on pieces of paper and sending them to the examination centers. Also prominent among the modes of examination malpractice that the headteachers revealed was the writing of notes on the collars, sleeves, and shorts of students' attire. On the issue of students writing notes on their clothes, one headteacher remarked *'Some of the students are so smart that they will write some notes on their shorts and fold them. During examination time they will then unfold their clothes and start to copy and there were instances I have to let a particular student go and dress again while examination was ongoing'*

Four of the headteachers reported that there had been instances where some students were caught using mobile phones in the examination room. It was again revealed in the interview that some students copy the answers of the section A part of a paper on their electronic calculators. On that issue, one headteacher commented *'I have caught several students copying answers from their electronic calculators. At first, I thought they were calculating but on*

*closer observation, I realized they were copying answers from their calculators.* This supported the findings of Burke, Polimeni, and Slavin (2007) that electronic devices including cell phones, iPods, electronic calculators, and personal data assistants were used by students to cheat during examinations.

It was also noticed during the interview that most of the students also communicated and copied the work of other students during examinations. Some were also seen exchanging examination papers at the examination centers. From the interview, it was also discovered that during the end of term examinations some students contracted their seniors or other colleagues to write for them. This normally happened in large class sizes. Two headteachers also stated that they had caught individuals who came to write for students. These individuals, according to the headteachers, were either strangers who had been given money to write on behalf of the students or they were identified as the siblings of the students they are writing for.

One headteacher confirmed that he had witnessed instances where some female students and their teachers engaged in sex-grade trade. He, however, confirmed that a teacher was transferred from the said school he was teaching in. He went on to further explain that some female students offered sex willingly so that their teachers would pass them while other female students were forced into such acts. He, however, reiterated that such instances were very few at the SHS level. The researcher a bit curious about sex for grades asked whether male students were also involved in such acts. All the five headteachers confirmed that they had never seen any male student forced or willingly involved in such acts. This supports the findings of Awaah

and Abdulai (2020) who indicated that some teachers trade grades with female students for sex in a quid pro quo relationship.

To end with the discussion on the interview with the headteachers, one headteacher commented, *'I have caught several students, especially female students, who copy notes on the sensitive parts of their bodies like in between their thighs, on their breasts, etc.'*

That particular headteacher went on to state that most of the students normally wrote short notes on their belts, under their shoes, and other places that one would never suspect. This was in line with the findings of Clabaugh and Rozycki (2009). They contended that the smuggling of written notes on pieces of paper into the examination room is now considered an ancient form of cheating and that now students write or copy the notes on specific parts of their body where the invigilators or examiners would never know or suspect. They went on further to state that, the common form of malpractice by students is writing on the soles of shoes, inside hats, or inside a necktie, or belt. Also, they indicated that most girls preferred copying the notes on sensitive parts of their bodies where the supervisors would ignore. This will then give them a chance to cross their legs and copy them during the exam.

In summary, the researcher can state that majority of the respondents knew the reasons the forms that students used to cheat in examinations. Some of these were students smuggling written notes on tiny pieces of papers into the examination room, students writing a short note on the tables and walls in examination centers, students writing short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars and shorts, other students agreeing to write an examination or a test for other students or their friends, some students

substituting old answer sheets with new ones after examination, students copying answers on their electronic calculators and sending them to examination centers, poor invigilation and finally students smuggling mobile phones into the examination room during the examination.

**Research Question Three: What are the effects of examination malpractice within the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana?**

Research question three tried to find out the effects of examination malpractice within the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality. The outcome is presented in Table 7.

Table 7- *The effects of examination malpractice*

Variables	Mean	Std Deviation
The results of students who are caught cheating during examination are always cancelled	4.44	.51
Schools in which there are frequent case of examination malpractices are mostly blacklisted by external examination bodies	4.46	.61
Cheating in examination tends to corrupt the moral attitude of students which will later lead to corruption and nepotism at workplaces	4.10	1.23
Cheating in examinations will lead to the production of incompetent graduates	4.05	1.30
Examination malpractice tends to cause violence and disorder in a school where some students benefit from the examination malpractice at the expense of other students.	4.58	.49
Examination malpractice often leads to the high cost of conducting examinations due to the possibility of cancellation of examination results	4.32	.50
Examination malpractice has the potential to discourage students from taken their studies serious leading to poor performance at the workplace	4.63	.48
Total/Mean of means	4.37	.73

Source: *Field Survey, 2020.*

From Table 7 majority of the students ( $M= 4.63$ ,  $SD= .48$ ) indicated that examination malpractice has the potential to discourage students from taking their studies seriously which may then lead to poor performance at the workplace. The standard deviation of .48 indicated that the answers the students provided were closely related to each other. This supports the findings of Chaminuka and Ndudzo (2014) that examination malpractice discourages good and genuine students from studying hard in their studies. They went on to further elaborate that such good students may then feel tempted to also practice what everyone is doing. This feeling may be fuelled when these innocent students see their colleagues who cheat escape punishment.

Similarly, most of the students ( $M= 4.32$ ,  $SD= .50$ ) strongly agreed that examination malpractices often lead to high cost of conducting examinations due to the possibility of cancellation of examination results. The standard deviation of .50 indicated that the answers the students provided were closely related to each other. This was similar to the findings of Eckstein (2003) that examination malpractice can lead to a rise in the cost of conducting examinations in a country. He went on to further explain that the cost involved in putting security measures in the conduct of national examination can rise above average.

Furthermore, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.44$ ,  $SD= .51$ ) strongly agreed to the statement that the results of students who are caught cheating during examinations are always cancelled. The standard deviation of .51 meant that the responses of the students were uniform. Again, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.10$ ,  $SD= 1.23$ ) strongly agreed that cheating in

examinations tends to corrupt the moral attitude of students which will later lead to corruption and nepotism at workplaces. However, the standard deviation of 1.23 indicated that the answers the students provided were not closely related to each other. That is some of the students disagreed with that statement, however, most of the students agreed that examination malpractice tended to corrupt the moral attitude of students. In the same vein, most of the students ( $M= 4.05$ ,  $SD= 1.30$ ) strongly agreed that cheating in examinations will lead to the production of incompetent graduates. That is graduates who are not well vest in their area of specialization. The standard deviation of 1.30 indicated that the answers the students provided were not closely related to each other.

With regards to the interview the researcher conducted with the headteachers, all the headteachers agreed that schools in which there are frequent cases of examination malpractices are mostly blacklisted by external examination bodies. On the issues of schools getting blacklisted, one headteacher confirmed that he was a teacher in one school that was blacklisted by the WAEC in Ghana. This is backed by the findings of Oduwole et al. (2013) who asserted that examination malpractice leads to the blacklisting of schools and centers known for frequent examination malpractices. From the interview with the headteachers, it was also revealed that due to examination malpractice most students in the senior high schools graduated with proper training in the subject area they were trained. All the headteachers when they were asked how examination malpractice affected the moral attitude of students revealed that it indeed tended to affect the moral beliefs of students



which can later lead or affect them at the workplace. One headteacher commented,

*'I had the opportunity to be part of a panel that interviewed fresh graduates from universities for a job position at the Ghana Education Service, that is an administrative job or being a teacher, I was surprised to discover that most of the candidates after the interview session tried to bribe some of the panel members and other people who they believe could influence the outcome of the interview. It was clear that they had no confidence in themselves'.* This was also in line with the findings of Kayode (2012) who asserted that several graduates fail to defend their certificates. He went on to further explain that the way such graduates earned their degrees tends to have a negative psychological effect on them.

From the interview, it was again revealed that due to examination malpractice, the education system in Ghana tends to produce half-baked graduates. That is graduates who know little about their subject area. One headteacher who happened to have several shops in his vicinity commented,

*'I needed someone to attend one of my shops so I decided to conduct an interview. Those I was looking for were SHS graduates and most of them, especially those who read business in senior high schools had no idea or might have forgotten about how to manage a simple shop, they failed my questions on how to use a computer to keep records, how to prepare a balance sheet and so many other petty issues relating to office work.'* This he related to the fact that most of them did not take their studies seriously since they knew, in the long run, they will get 'apor'. This supported the conclusion made by Petters and Okon (2014) that examination misconducts discouraged students

from taking their studies seriously. This they believed consequently leads to poor performance in the job field when they graduate.

In a nutshell, the mean of means of 4.36 meant that most students agreed to the various effects of examination malpractice that were listed in the table. The researcher from the foregoing can boldly say that the respondents are aware of the effects that examination malpractices in schools. This can be inferred from Table 6 that most of the students were in support of the assertion that; the results of students who are caught cheating during examination are always cancelled, schools in which there is a frequent cause of examination malpractices are mostly blacklisted by external examination bodies, cheating in examination tends to corrupt the moral attitude of students which will later lead to corruption and nepotism at workplaces, cheating in examinations will lead to the production of incompetent graduates, examination malpractice tends to cause violent and disorder in a school where some students benefit from the examination malpractice at the expense of other students. Again, it sufficed that Examination malpractice often leads to the high cost of conducting examinations due to the possibility of cancellation of examination results. And finally, examination malpractice has the potential to discourage students from taking their studies seriously leading to poor performance at the workplace.

**Research Question Four: What measures could be put in place to minimize/eradicate the incidence of examination malpractice in the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana?**

Research question four tried to find out the strategies to eradicate the incidence of examination malpractice in the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Responses to this question were presented in Table 8.

As presented in Table 8, most of the students ( $M= 4.64$ ,  $SD= .520$ ) strongly agreed that the rules and regulations for examination malpractice should be strictly enforced whenever a student is caught cheating in examinations. The standard deviation of .520 indicated that the answers the students provided were closely related to each other. This also supported the conclusion of Adeyemi (2010) that full implementation of the examination malpractices laws can eradicate the act. He further promoted the idea of effective observation of students all through examinations as well as the dissolution of the position of examination officials and teachers who are involved in examination malpractices.

Table 8- *Ways of curbing/eradicating examination malpractice*

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
The rules and regulations for examination malpractice should be strictly enforced whenever a student is caught cheating in examinations	4.64	.52
Teachers and administrative staff should be trained to equip themselves with the skills in conducting a computer-based test	4.30	.86
Parents, the community, and various clubs on campus should train their children and members to value honesty and hard work	4.28	.96
Total/Mean of means	4.36	

Source: *Field Survey, 2020.*

Similarly, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.30$ ,  $SD= .86$ ) strongly agreed that teachers and administrative staff should be trained to equip themselves with the skills in conducting a computer-based test. The standard deviation of .856 meant that the responses of the students were homogeneous. This falls in line with the findings of Akintunde and Selzing-Musa (2012) who believed that examination malpractice could be curbed through pragmatic means and these include Personal determination, values for education training, orientation for parents, use of computer-based tests, and biometric verification.

Finally, most of the students ( $M= 4.28$ ,  $SD= .96$ ) strongly agreed that parents, the community, and various clubs on campus should train their children and members to value honesty and hard work. The standard deviation of .96 indicated that the answers the students provided were closely related to each other. This is also backed by the findings of Olabisi and Abiola (2014) who believed that a way of curbing examination malpractice is for parents and the community to train their children to love and cherish their traditional values, that is, honesty and hard work. They also advocated the need for guidance and counselling in schools.

With regards to the interview with the headteachers on the possible ways to curb or eradicate examination malpractice, all the headteachers suggested an improved and regular monitoring by the Ghana Education Service during external or national examination during the WASSCE and the Nov/Dec. Another headteacher also suggested the same action when it comes to the internal examination that is conducted in senior high schools. Further, suggestion was made that the circuit supervisors and the internal supervisors

in the various senior high schools should be trained regularly on modern ways of supervision and also on the need to give out their best during the supervision process. One headteacher also emphasized the motivation of the supervisors. This finding supported that of Maheka (2015). She believed that to address examination malpractice schools should conduct intensified sensitization to both teachers and learners. She also noted that the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) should intensify monitoring to ensure quality delivery of lessons to develop confidence in learners.

One headteacher also suggested that examination papers could be printed elsewhere other than the place where the test is to be conducted. His reason he stated as; *'when the examination papers are printed elsewhere, the packaging and sealing will be out of sight of individuals who are familiar with students or some of the teachers, this will then minimize the problem of examination leakage caused by familiarity'*. This is also backed by the findings of Bamusananire (2010) who indicated that one of the ways of curbing examination malpractice is to print examination questions abroad. He went on to explain that when this is done it will secure storage and packaging.

It was also noted from the interview that when classrooms or examination centers are properly arranged, the incidence of examination malpractice may be reduced. This was also in line with the findings of Dusu, Gotan, Deshi, and Gambo (2016) who recommended that appropriate sitting arrangements should be put in place to lessen the incidence of students copying from each other or exchanging booklets.

In summary, it was noted from the discussion above that to curb or reduce the incidence of examination malpractice, the rules and regulations concerning examination malpractice should be well established and executed. Others discussed were, parents and the community educating their children on the need to practice honesty and hard work, the practice of computer-based tests, the printing of examination papers abroad, regular and effective monitoring and finally ensuring that the classroom and examination centers are properly arranged.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This section summarizes the results of the study. In detail, it presented the main findings, conclusions, and the recommendations made by the researcher.

#### Summary of the study

The main purpose of the study was to explore the perceived causes and effects of examination malpractice in Senior High School in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. explore respondents' perception of the cause of examination malpractice within the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality.
2. explore how students engage in examination malpractice in the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality.
3. identify the effects of examination malpractice within the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality.
4. suggest ways to eradicate the incidence of examination malpractice in the Senior High Schools in the Asante Akim South Municipality.

The research used the descriptive research design, with a population which encompassed 358 Senior High School students and five headteachers in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The sampling procedures used in selecting the respondents and participants were simple random and purposive respectively. Questionnaires and interview

guides were relied upon to collect primary data from the students and headteachers. The data obtained were edited, coded, and analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation, and thematic analysis.

### **Major Findings**

On the causes of examination malpractice, majority of the respondents revealed that their parents did not encourage them to cheat. Most of the students further revealed that their desire to attain higher marks motivated them to cheat in examinations ( $M=2.87$ ,  $SD=1.562$ ). Furthermore, it was revealed that students mostly cheat during examinations in subjects they poorly prepare for ( $M=4.00$ ,  $SD= 1.328$ ). With regards to the interview conducted by the researcher, all the five headteachers indicated that most of the students cheat in the examination because of the fear of failure. It was also noted during the interview with the headteachers that most of the students' engagement in examination malpractice was being fuelled by their parents. One headteacher revealed that some parents of the students gave money to some of the teachers so that they can help their wards answer any leaked question or should in case they are supervising their ward, they will not be strict on them. Furthermore, it was also revealed from the study that some of the students engaged in examination malpractice due to their low self-esteem.

With respect to the forms/ways students engaged in examination malpractice, it was noted that the majority of the students ( $M= 4.76$ ,  $SD= .424$ ) strongly agreed that some students smuggled written notes on tiny pieces of papers into the examination room. Similarly, most of the students ( $M= 4.39$ ,  $SD= .523$ ) agreed with the statement that some students wrote short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars, and shorts and entered the



examination room. Furthermore, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.52$ ,  $SD= .897$ ) indicated that students agreed to write an examination or a test for other students or their friends. On the issue of using electronic devices to engage in examination malpractice, the majority of the students ( $M= 4.45$ ,  $SD= .977$ ) indicated that some students copied answers on their electronic calculators and took them to the examination centers. To end with the findings on the forms/ways students engage in examination malpractice, one headteacher revealed that some students especially female students, copied notes on a sensitive part of their bodies and other places that one would never suspect.

With regards to the effects of examination malpractice, findings from the study indicated that ( $M= 4.63$ ,  $SD= .483$ ) examination malpractice has the potential to discourage students from taking their studies seriously which may then lead to poor performance at the workplace. Similarly, it was revealed that examination malpractice often leads to the high cost of conducting examinations due to the possibility of cancellation of examination results ( $M= 4.32$ ,  $SD= .503$ ). Furthermore, the study revealed that cheating in examinations tends to corrupt the moral attitude of students which will later lead to corruption and nepotism at workplaces ( $M= 4.10$ ,  $SD= 1.233$ ). With regards to the interview the researcher conducted with the headteachers, all the headteachers agreed that schools in which there are frequent cases of examination malpractices are mostly blacklisted by external examination bodies. It was also revealed that due to examination malpractice most students in Senior High Schools graduated without proper training in the subject area they were trained in.

Finally, on the issue of the ways of curbing or reducing the incidence of examination malpractice, the study revealed that the rules and regulations for examination malpractice should be strictly enforced whenever a student is caught cheating in examinations. Similarly, it was revealed that teachers and administrative staff should be trained to equip themselves with the skills in conducting a computer-based test. It was again revealed that parents and the community should train their children and members to value honesty and hard work. Furthermore, it was discovered that improved and regular monitoring by circuit supervisors and the internal supervisors in the Senior High Schools could reduce the rate of examination malpractice. Finally, it was revealed that another way of reducing examination malpractice is to print examination papers abroad and properly arranging examination centers.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that students desire to gain high marks, advice, and encouragement from parents, low self-esteem exhibited by students, students failing to prepare well for a particular subject, and finally students lacking the needed and necessary materials to aid in their studies were the factors that caused students in the Asante Akim Municipality to cheat during examinations.

On the ways students engage in examination malpractice, the study showed that students smuggled written notes on tiny pieces of papers into the examination room, students wrote a short note on the tables and walls in examination centers, students wrote short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars and shorts, other students agreed to write an examination or a test for other students or their friends, while some students replaced old

answer scripts with new ones after examination, students also copied answers on their electronic calculators and sent them to examination centers, and finally, students smuggled mobile phones into the examination room during the examination. It can therefore be concluded that students in the Asante Akim Municipality engaged in examination malpractice through smuggling of written notes on tiny pieces of papers into the examination room, writing short notes on the tables and walls in examination centers, writing short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars and shorts, impersonation, replacing of old answer scripts with new ones after examination, copying answers on their electronic calculators and finally smuggling of mobile phones into the examination room.

It can also be concluded that examination malpractice leads to cancellation of results of students who are caught cheating during the examination, blacklisting of schools in which there were frequent cases of examination malpractices, corruption of the moral attitude of students leading to corruption and nepotism at workplaces in the future, the production of incompetent graduates, high cost of conducting examinations and finally discouraging genuine students from taking their studies serious.

It was noted from the study that the incidence of examination malpractice can be eradicated by setting rules and regulations concerning examination malpractice and making sure the rules and regulations are well-established and executed. It can be concluded that some of the ways of curbing examination malpractice are to print examination questions abroad, proper sitting arrangement, well established and executed rules concerning the conduct of examination malpractice, parents and the community educating

their children on the need to practice honesty and hard work, the practice of computer-based tests, and regular and effective monitoring are some of the ways of curbing/eradicating the incidence of examination malpractice.

### **Recommendations**

This research, making reference to the findings, made the following recommendations:

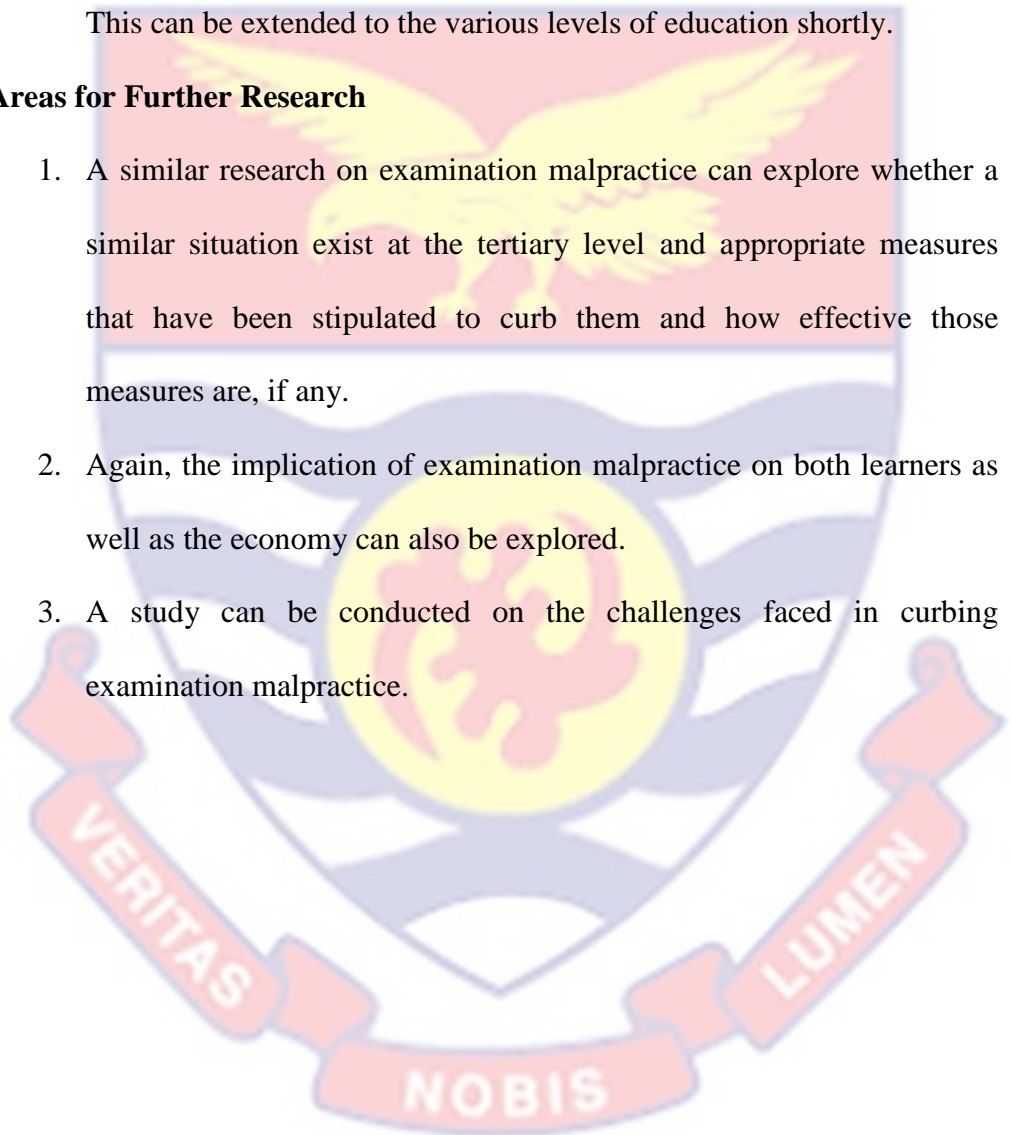
1. The Ministry of Education, together with the Ghana Education Service should intensify monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that teachers are doing their work and that there is quality delivery of lessons to develop confidence in learners to enable them to face the examinations.
2. Teachers and headteachers through the school guidance and counselling programmes should intensify sensitizations to learners on the dangers of engaging in examination malpractices. Learners should be made to understand the dangers associated with cheating in examination before the commencement of examinations to reduce the likelihood of engaging in examination malpractice. Furthermore, civic campaigns/advocacy ought to be mounted using the media platforms as well as in churches/mosques, schools, other social, religious or political meetings on the menace and implications of engaging examination malpractice.
3. Severe and immediate sanctions must be brought upon perpetrators, those who support and sponsor examination malpractice by WAEC. Further, recognition and suitable reward must be given to teachers, students, school administrators, and other public officers who

condemn and/or expose examination malpractice and perpetrators involved.

4. The Ghana Education Service in collaboration with the Ministry of Education should in collaboration with WAEC should put in place a computer-based examinations during general or national examinations. This can be extended to the various levels of education shortly.

#### **Areas for Further Research**

1. A similar research on examination malpractice can explore whether a similar situation exist at the tertiary level and appropriate measures that have been stipulated to curb them and how effective those measures are, if any.
2. Again, the implication of examination malpractice on both learners as well as the economy can also be explored.
3. A study can be conducted on the challenges faced in curbing examination malpractice.



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APPENDICES



**APPENDIX A**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**EDUCATION**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

Dear Respondent,

This is a part of a research work that seeks to examine examination malpractices among Senior High School students in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. You are kindly entreated to respond to questions as truthfully and accurately as you can. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used exclusively for academic purposes. You are required not to write your name on the questionnaire so that you will not be identified with the responses. Thank you for your time and contribution.

**SECTION A**

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

Instruction; please tick (√) or write against the most appropriate option that represents your response.

1. Age as at last birthday
  - 12-15 years [ ]
  - 16-20years [ ]
  - 20years and above [ ]
2. Form
  - a. Form 2 [ ]
  - b. Form 3 [ ]
3. What is your gender?
  - Male [ ]
  - Female [ ]



**SECTION B**

**CAUSES OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The statements beneath denote the level of agreement or disagreement. Please tick (√) the columns which represent your view on the statement SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Disagree.

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
(4) My parents' advice that I should cheat during examinations whenever I forget what I have learned.					
(5) I cheat in examinations because I want high marks					
(8) I cheat in the examination because I want to pass my examination at all cost					
(9) My lack of necessary materials to study makes me feel not committed to studying and as such I do not prepare well for the examination. I, therefore, have no choice but to cheat during an examination.					
(10) I mostly cheat during examinations in subjects I poorly prepare for					

(11) Others, specify.....

**SECTION C**

**THE EFFECTS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The statements below represent the levels of agreement or disagreement. Please tick (√) the columns which represent your view on the statement. SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Disagree

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
(12) The results of students who are caught cheating during examination are always canceled					
(13) Schools in which there are frequent case of examination malpractices are mostly blacklisted by external examination bodies					
(14) Cheating in examination tends to corrupt the moral attitude of students which will later lead to corruption and nepotism at workplaces					
(15) Cheating in examinations will lead to the production of incompetent graduates					
(17) Examination malpractice tends to cause violence and disorder in a school where some students benefit from the examination malpractice at the expense of other students.					
(18) Examination malpractice often leads to the high cost of conducting examination dues to the possibility of cancellation of examination results					
(19) Examination malpractice has the potential to discourage students from taking their studies serious leading to poor performance at the workplace					

(20) Others, specify.....

**SECTION D**

**FORMS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The statements below represent the levels of agreement or disagreement. Please tick (√) the columns which represent your view on the statement. SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Disagree

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
(21) In attempts to cheat, students sometimes smuggle written notes on tiny pieces of papers into the examination room					
(22) In attempts to cheat, students sometimes write short notes on the tables and walls in the examination centers					
(23) In attempts to cheat, students sometimes write short notes on their palms, thighs, back of their neck collars, and shorts and walk into the examination room					
(24) In attempts to cheat, students agree to write an examination or a test for other students or their friends					
(25) As part of plans to cheat, some students replace old answer scripts with a new ones after examination					
(26) In attempts to cheat, some students copy answers on their electronic calculators and send them to examination centers					
(27) During examinations and test most students can take foreign materials into the examination					
(28) During examinations and test most students can take foreign materials into the examination center because invigilators do not properly search us					
(29) In attempts to cheat, some students smuggle mobile phones into the examination room during an examination					

(30) Others please, specify.....

**SECTION E**

**WAYS OF CURBING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

The statements below represent the levels of agreement or disagreement. Please tick (√) the columns which represent your view on the statement. SD=Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Disagree

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
(31) The rules and regulations for examination Malpractice should be strictly enforced whenever a student is caught cheating in examinations					
(32) Teachers and administrative staff should be trained to equip themselves with the skills in conducting computer-based test					
(33) West African Examination Council should also adopt computer-based examination					
(34) Parents, the community, and various clubs on campus should train their children and members to value honesty and hard work					

(35) Others please, specify.....

**APPENDIX B**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**EDUCATION**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS**

Dear Participant,

This is a part of a research work that seeks to examine examination malpractice among Senior High School students in the Asante Akim South Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. You are kindly entreated to respond to questions as truthfully and accurately as you can. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used exclusively for academic purposes. You are required not to write your name on the questionnaire so that you will not be identified with the responses. Thank you for your time and contribution.

**SECTION A  
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. How old are you?

.....

2. For how long have you been in the teaching field?

.....

3. What is your gender?

.....

**SECTION B**

**CAUSES OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

4. In what three ways can certain parents encourage their wards to engage in examinations malpractice?

a. ....  
.....

b. ....  
.....

c. ....  
.....

5. State three factors that motivate students to cheat in the examination.

a. ....  
.....

b. ....  
.....

c. ....  
.....

6. In what three ways does too much stress on certificate cause cheating in the examination?

a. ....  
.....

b. ....  
.....

c. ....  
.....

d. What other things cause students to cheat in the examination?

a. ....  
.....

b. ....  
.....

c. ....  
.....

**SECTION C**

**THE EFFECTS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

7. State any four effects that examination malpractice can have on society and our country?

a. ....

.....

b. ....

.....

c. ....

.....

d. ....

.....

8. Mention any three effects that examination malpractice can have on the school

a. ....

.....

b. ....

.....

c. ....

.....

**SECTION D**

**FORMS OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

9. In what three ways do some parents contribute to their children's involvement in examination malpractice?

a. ....

.....

b. ....

.....

c. ....

.....

.....

10. In what three ways do students commit examination malpractice?

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....

11. In what three ways do parents commit examination malpractice?

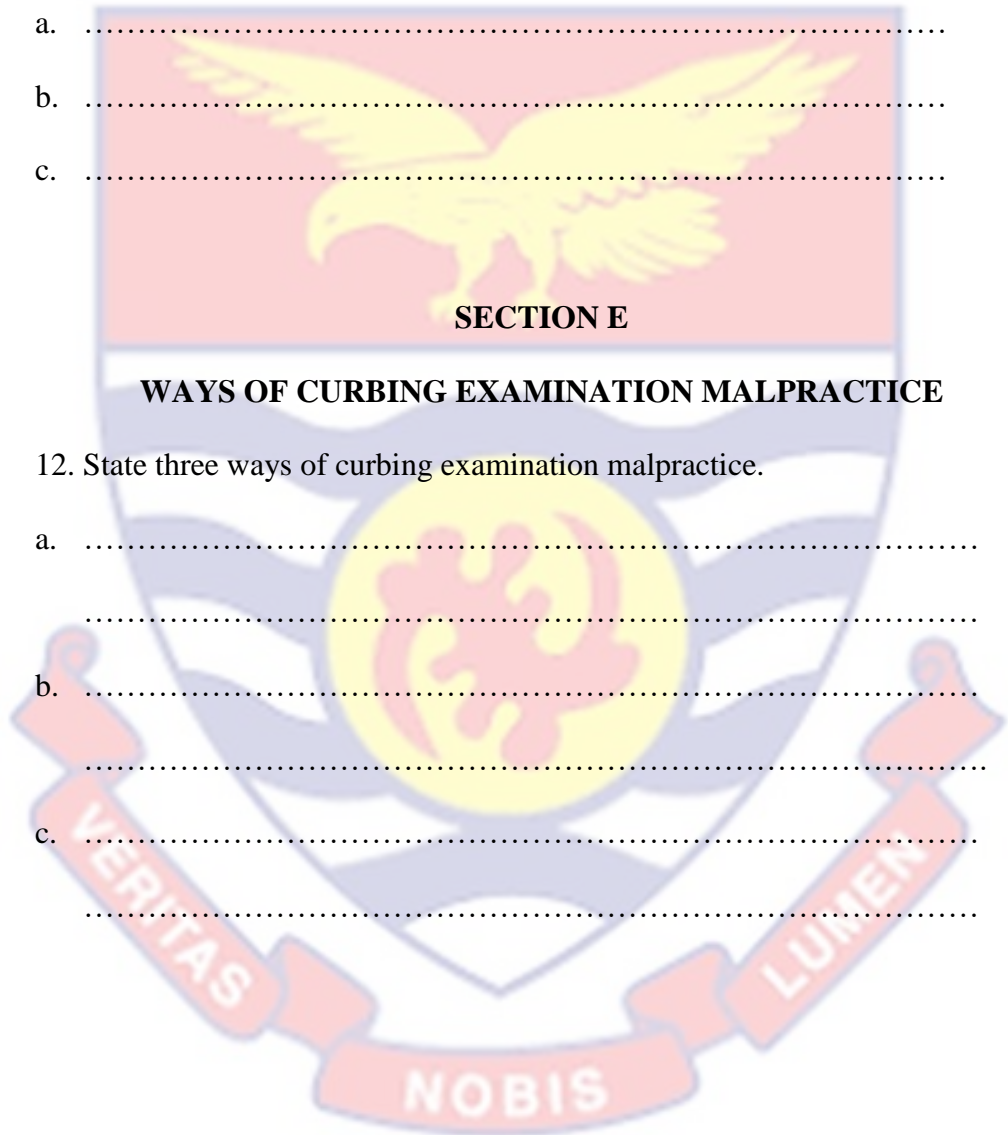
- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....

**SECTION E**

**WAYS OF CURBING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE**

12. State three ways of curbing examination malpractice.

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....





## APPENDIX C

### Consent Letter for Students

Dear Student,

I am conducting a research study and would like to ask for your responses. If you are willing to participate, it should take about 20-30 minutes of your time.

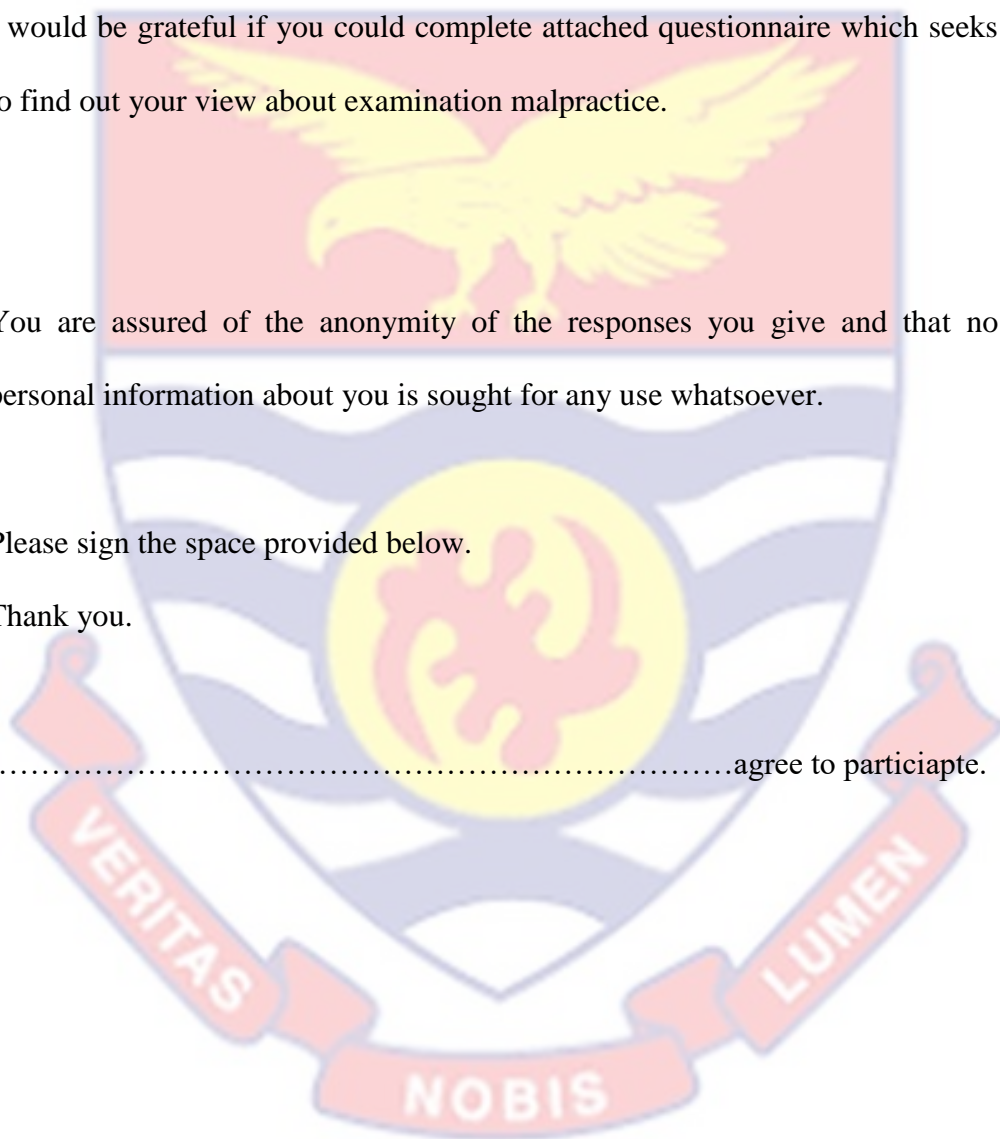
I would be grateful if you could complete attached questionnaire which seeks to find out your view about examination malpractice.

You are assured of the anonymity of the responses you give and that no personal information about you is sought for any use whatsoever.

Please sign the space provided below.

Thank you.

I.....agree to participate.



## APPENDIX D

### Consent Letter for Headteachers

Dear Headteacher,

I am conducting a research study and would like to ask for your responses. If you are willing to participate, it should take about 10-20 minutes of your time.

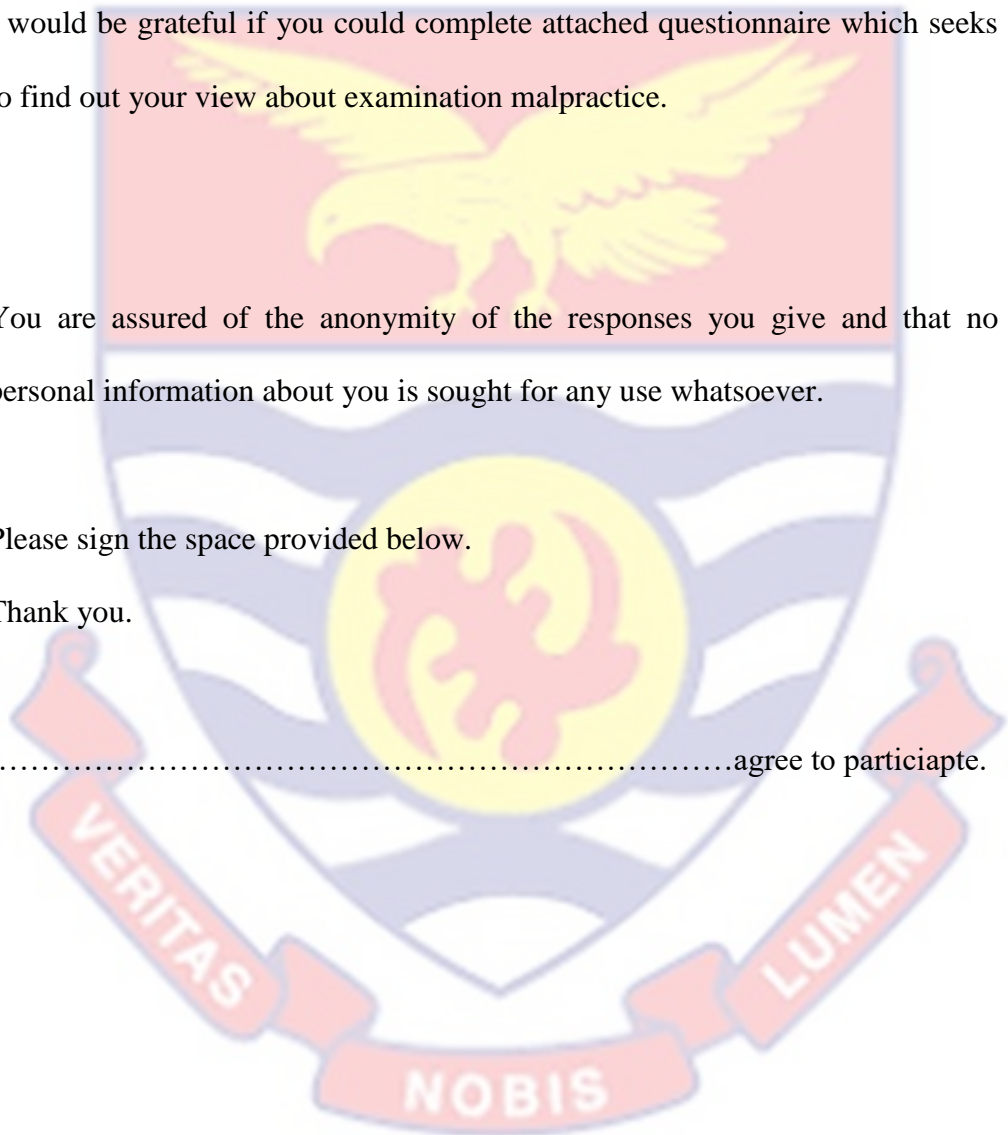
I would be grateful if you could complete attached questionnaire which seeks to find out your view about examination malpractice.

You are assured of the anonymity of the responses you give and that no personal information about you is sought for any use whatsoever.

Please sign the space provided below.

Thank you.

I.....agree to participate.




## APPENDIX E

### Introductory Letter

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION**

Telephone: +233-(0)3321 35411 / +233-(0)3321 3240/3  
EXT: (268), Direct: 35411  
Telegrams & Cables: University, Cape Coast  
Dept. Telephone: 0209408788  
E-mail: [dbase@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:dbase@ucc.edu.gh)



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COST  
PRIVATE MAIL BAG

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2021

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

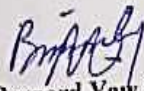
Mr. George Swaniker is an M.Phil Social Studies (Sandwich) student of this Department and as a requirement for the programme he is working on the research topic: **"Incidence of Re-occurring Examination Malpractice in Senior High Schools in the Asante Akyem South Municipality"**.

The study aims at examining the re-occurring of examination malpractice among the senior high school students, the causes, effects, and the prevention of examination malpractice. We would be grateful if you could give him the necessary assistance to enable him complete the research.

In case he flouts any ethical requirement as the study may necessitate, kindly get in touch with his supervisor, Dr. Isaac Atta Kwenin, on 0204445965 or through e-mail [isaac.kwenin@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:isaac.kwenin@ucc.edu.gh). You may also get in touch with the Department on 0209408788 or through [dbse@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:dbse@ucc.edu.gh).

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



**Dr. Bernard Yaw Sekyi Acquah**  
Head

## APPENDIX F

### Ethical Clearance Form

# UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309  
E-MAIL: [irb@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:irb@ucc.edu.gh)  
OUR REF: UCC/IRB/A/2016/877  
YOUR REF:  
OMB NO: 0990-0279  
IORG #: IORG0009096



18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2020

Mr. George Swaniker  
Department of Business and Social Sciences Education  
University of Cape Coast

Dear Mr. Swaniker,

#### ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CES/2020/111)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted **Provisional Approval** for the implementation of your research titled **Incidence of Re-occurring Examination Malpractice in Senior High Schools in the Asante Akyem South Municipality**. This approval is valid from 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 to 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2022. You may apply for a renewal subject to submission of all the required documents that will be prescribed by the UCCIRB.

Please note that any modification to the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation. You are required to submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

  
ADMINISTRATOR  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
Samuel Asiedu Owusu, PhD  
UCCIRB Administrator