

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

## Relationship between Child-Rearing Styles and Secondary School Students' Attitude towards Examination Malpractice in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria

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### **Abstract:**

*Examination malpractice is a perennial problem in the nation's educational system, as such; it is of great interest to educators, researchers and the general public. The type of child-rearing styles employed by parents in raising their children have been severally said to be a factor in almost every aspect of their children's life. This study therefore investigated the relationship between child-rearing styles and Secondary School Students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria.*

*The study was a descriptive research design of the survey type. Three research questions were raised and one corresponding hypothesis tested in the study. The population comprised all senior secondary school students in Ogbomoso South. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample of four hundred (400) respondents. Two research instruments were adopted for data collections which are Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) by Olowa (2015) on child-rearing styles, and attitude towards examination malpractice questionnaire by Nuhu (2009). The research questions were answered using frequency counts and percentage while Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.*

*The study revealed significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State, among others. In view of the findings of this study, it was recommended that parents should be mindful of their child-rearing styles as this, among other factors, influence students' attitude towards examination malpractice.*

**Keywords:** Parenting styles, examination malpractice and students' attitude

### **1. Introduction**

Examination, simply put, is a means of assessment of students' knowledge, skills or ability in a formal setting which could be by means of oral or written questions or practical exercises. Schools and the various recognized examining bodies consider examinations in determining whether or not a student can proceed to the following class or qualify to pursue admission or get admission into higher institution of learning. Examination is therefore indeed pivotal as an indicator of the success or failure of education and still remains the best tool for an objective assessment and evaluation of what learners have achieved after a period of attending classes and relevant lessons. Notwithstanding the importance of examinations in the educational system, it has not been without the instances of malpractice. These malpractice instances during examinations have been identified by a number of scholars (Cromwell, 2002 & Adeyegbe, 2002). Examination malpractice is an improper, fraudulent and unwholesome practices in any examination in order to obtain good results. Oluyeba and Daramola (2000) maintained that examination malpractice is an irregular behaviour exhibited by candidates or anybody charged with the conduct of examination in or outside the examination hall before, during or after such examination. This menace, examination malpractice, has become a big threat to the development of education in Nigeria today. Examination malpractice has been embraced by all and sundry, people no longer see it as a crime any longer, both the old and young engage in the crime; people no longer see examination as what could be taken and passed without external aids. This scourge has been observed in our primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions.

In 2006, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) blacklisted and derecognized 324 secondary schools across the nation as centres for conducting public examination from 2007 to 2010. Furthermore, WAEC in 2011 withheld 39,066 results of candidates who wrote November/December West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) while in 2012, 47,289 results were withheld as a result of malpractices (Anzene, 2014). Similarly, a statistic from the NECO office indicates that during the November 2011(NECO) examination, Oyo State had 6,579 cases of examination malpractice, ranking the highest in that year, followed by Adamawa State with 36 cases (Ibrahim, 2014). Common observations have also shown that there is mass cheating in public examinations in some parts of Ogbomosho land.

In an attempt to understand the reasons behind this unwholesome development eating deep into the fabrics of our educational system, efforts have been made to come up with different causes and reasons for examination malpractice. On a general note, it could be argued that the falling standard in the societal values is at the foundation of this menace. The major stakeholders of education could not be exonerated in the issues of examination malpractices. Although parents have been found to be prominent in the problem of examination malpractice by way of their direct involvement as they could pay machineries or pay heavily for special centres, it would also not be out of place to note that factor like child-rearing styles also contributes to the menace. At least, from the point of view that the students, who are at the centre of this problem, are raised by one parent or the other and through sets of varying child-rearing styles.

The concept of child-rearing is a complex phenomenon as it is perceived differently by numerous psychologists, educationists, writers and researchers. Child-rearing could be described as the characteristic ways of handling or dealing with one's children (Judy 2000) and how parents bring up their children and how parental characteristics are infused into child personality (Kail & Cavanaugh 2000). It involves active molding of character, sharing of love, child care and control, while the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, for proper growth and development are not left out. Olowodunoye and Titus (2011) citing Baumrind (1978) identified and described parenting styles as child-rearing styles or practices. A Child-rearing style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies parents use in raising their children. Child-rearing can be both difficult and rewarding at the same time. The goal of every parent is to have a child grow up to be a respectable and resourceful adult in life. Furthermore, child-rearing styles have been found to predict the child's well-being in terms of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development and problem behavior (McNair, 2004). Okunola (2006) was able to establish that there is a link between child-rearing style and youth involvement in crime. The influence of the lives of adolescents is very important. A good child-rearing style is expected to produce the right result at adolescence stage of life, while poor child-rearing style can mar the life of the child not only at adolescence but for the rest of the child's life. It is very important in predicting children's behavioural and emotional adjustment in later years (Alagbe, 2008).

Basically, four child-rearing styles as put forward by Baumrind (1971, 1991) have been identified to include: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful. Authoritative child-rearing style is characterized by high expectations of compliance to parental rules and directions, an open dialogue about those rules and behaviours and a child centered approach. Authoritarian child-rearing style is characterized by high expectation of conformity and compliance to parental rules and directions. Authoritarian parents expect much from their children but do not explain the rules at all, unlike the authoritative parent. Permissive child-rearing style is characterized as having few behavioural expectations for the child and is characterized by warm affect. Neglectful child-rearing style is also known as non-conformist parenting and is similar to permissive child-rearing but the parents do not care much about the child.

As earlier noted, the tendency to develop different attitudes towards life in general and examination malpractice in particular by the children raised under the different child-rearing styles is not unexpected. Of great importance therefore is the attitude of students to this cancerous disease in the nation's educational sector. Attitude refers to a consistent tendency to react in a particular way, often positive or negative, towards any matter. Adebisi (2002) described attitude as consistent reactionary predisposition directed towards a person, an idea, object, event or concept and these reactionary predispositions may be either positive or negative. Attitude towards examination malpractice is therefore the sums of belief about the examination malpractice and the evaluative aspect of the belief (Nuhu, 2009). Evaluating the students' attitude through the use of appropriate attitudinal scale would help the researcher determine what the nature of their response to examination malpractice is like. It is expedient therefore to state that the main variables of this study are attitude towards examination malpractice and parenting styles.

Within the country, the seriousness of examination malpractice has provoked extensive studies in the past and in recent times (Komolafe, 1989; Kobiowu & Alao, 2005; Abdurazaq & Aminullahi, 2006; Khan & Khan, 2011). Nuhu (2009) conducted a study on relationship between personality types and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ilorin, Nigeria where findings revealed a significant relationship between personality types and secondary school students' attitudes towards examination malpractice. Several studies have also accused the parents of their direct involvement in examination malpractice (Esu, 2004; Denga & Denga, 1998; Agbo, 2003), but not many have actually focused on the child-rearing styles of the parents that brought up these children and what influence this has on their children's attitude to this menace. Some researches that have been carried out on child-rearing styles in relations to concepts of indiscipline, delinquencies, and malpractices (Utti, 2006, Olowodunoye & Titus, 2011, Okorodudu, 2010, etc.) generated conflicting findings and have different locale from that of this research. It is therefore expedient that a study to investigate the relationship between child-rearing styles and the attitudes of secondary school students to examination malpractice be carried out in Ogbomosho to fill the existing gap in knowledge occasioned by the dearth in adequate relevant literatures.

### 1.1. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study will examine:

- The dominant child-rearing style secondary school students in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area are exposed to.
- The attitude of secondary school students in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area towards examination malpractice.
- The relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomosho South Local Government of Oyo State.

### 1.2. Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

- What is the dominant child-rearing style secondary school students in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area are exposed to?
- What is the attitude of secondary school students in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area towards examination malpractice?
- Is there any relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area of Oyo State?

### 1.3. Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis will be tested in this study:

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area of Oyo State.

## 2. Methodology and Materials

This study adopted a descriptive research design of the survey type. The population for this study consisted of all senior secondary school students in Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria. The target population for the study was all students in senior secondary school class two (SSS II) only, in both public and private schools, in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area. There are 35 secondary schools in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area. The total population of students in SSS II is 2777 (2026 public and 751 private). From these schools, 10 schools each of public and private schools respectively was selected through stratified random sampling techniques. This makes a total of 20 schools that participated in the study. Thirty (30) students were randomly selected from the ten (10) selected public senior secondary schools, while ten (10) students were also selected at random from the ten (10) selected private senior secondary schools all in class two (SSSII) through simple random sampling technique respectively, to make a total of 400 students that participated in the study.

In order to achieve the main thrust of this study, two research instruments were used for data collection, they are: Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) adopted from Olowa (2015) with 0.78 reliability index using test re-test method, analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, for collection of data on child-rearing styles and Students' Attitude Towards Examination Malpractice Questionnaire (SATEMQ) adopted from Nuhu (2009), with 0.72 reliability index analyzed using split-half method, using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, for data on students' attitude towards examination malpractice. Both the Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) and the Students' Attitude Towards Examination Malpractice Questionnaire (SATEMQ) have a 4 Point- Likert Scale with the Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) options.

On both instruments, the scoring was in the following manner: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The highest score for each sub-scale was 16, which is 4 items x 4. The sub-scale with highest score determined the respondent's child-rearing style. However, items 3, 10, 11 and 15 were reversed in scoring on the Students' Attitude Towards Examination Malpractice Questionnaire (SATEMQ). Frequency count and percentages were used to analyze the respondents' personal information and research questions 1 and 2. With a median score of twenty-nine (29), students whose scores were less than or equal to the median score ( $\leq 29$ ) were adjudged as having negative attitude while those students whose scores were above twenty-nine ( $>29$ ) were adjudged as having positive attitude towards examination malpractice. The only null hypothesis was tested with Chi-square at 0.05 significant levels. Chi-square statistical tool was adopted for the study to enable the researcher determine whether there is a significant association between the two variables as applicable.

## 3. Findings/ Results

### 3.1. Research Question1

What is the dominant child-rearing style secondary school students in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area are exposed to?

Parenting Styles	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Authoritative	152	38.0
Authoritarian	118	29.5
Uninvolved	45	11.3
Permissive	85	21.3
Total	400	100.0

*Table 1: Dominant Child-rearing Style among Secondary School Students in Ogbomoso South Local Government*

It can be observed from table 1 above that out of 400 secondary school students sampled in this study, 152 (38.0%) of them came from home in which authoritative child-rearing is predominant. Also, 118 (29.5%) of the students were exposed to authoritarian form of child-rearing, 45 (11.3%) were exposed to neglectful form of child-rearing while 85 (21.3%) of them were exposed to neglectful form of child-rearing. Indication is shown from this result that authoritative form of child-rearing style is the most prevalent among others.

### 3.2. Research Question 2

What is the attitude of Secondary School Students in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area towards examination malpractice?

Attitudes	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Negative	203	50.7
Positive	197	49.3
Total	400	100.0

*Table 2: Attitude of Secondary School Students towards Examination Malpractice*

As shown in table 2 above, 203 (50.7%) of the students had negative attitude towards examination malpractice while 197 (49.3%) of them had positive attitude towards examination malpractice. There is an indication from this result that fairly more than half of the sampled students had negative attitude towards examination malpractices.

## 4. Research Hypothesis

### 4.1. Research Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Parenting Styles	Attitude towards Exam Malpractice			$\chi^2$	df	P-value
	Negative	Positive	Total			
Permissive	19(4.8%)	66(16.5%)	85(21.3%)	63.804	3	.000
Authoritative	72(18.0%)	80(20.0%)	152(38.0%)			
Uninvolved	20(5.0%)	25(6.3%)	45(11.3%)			
Authoritarian	92(23.0%)	26(6.5%)	118(29.5%)			
Total	203(50.8%)	197(49.3%)	400(100.0%)			

*Table 3: Chi-square Analysis of the Relationship between Child-rearing Styles and Secondary School Students' Attitude towards Examination Malpractice in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State*

As shown in table 3 above, out of the 400 students sampled in secondary schools, 203 (50.8%) of them had negative attitude towards examination malpractice while 197 (49.3%) of them had positive attitude towards examination malpractice. It is also shown that out of those with negative attitude, 19 (4.8%) of them came from permissive child-rearing, 72 (18.0%) came from authoritative child-rearing, 20 (5.0%) from uninvolved child-rearing while 92 (23.0%) of them came from authoritarian child-rearing style. Also, out of 197 (49.3%) of the students that had positive attitude towards examination malpractice, 66 (16.5%) of them came from permissive child-rearing, 80 (20.0%) came from authoritative child-rearing, 25 (6.3%) came from uninvolved child-rearing while 26 (6.5%) of them came from authoritarian child-rearing style. The Chi-square test results indicated a significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice,  $\chi^2 (n = 400) = 63.804$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p = .000$ . Since the p-value is less than .05 thresholds, we therefore reject the stated null hypothesis. This result concludes that there is significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State.

## 5. Discussion of the Findings

A finding of this study revealed that Authoritative form of child-rearing style was the dominant style among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. This finding is in consonant with

Olowa (2015) who found that authoritative child-rearing style is the dominant child-rearing style among secondary school students in Kwara Central, Nigeria. She further stated that, 'It is mostly practiced by the adolescents' parents followed by authoritarian parenting style and then permissive parenting style while neglectful parenting style is the least used of the parenting styles.'

Also, the finding revealed that fairly more than half of the sampled students have negative attitude towards examination malpractice in secondary schools in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. The finding is contrary to that of Nuhu (2009) who found that majority of the respondents have positive attitude towards examination malpractice.

Finding also revealed that there is significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. This finding confirms the research outcome of Ayang, Edu & Edu (2012) carried out on 'Childrearing Pattern's Influence on Examination Malpractice and Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Ikom Education Zone, Cross River State'. They found that the pattern of child-rearing adopted by parents in the upbringing of their children at home influence the extent of delinquency among students in senior secondary schools and that this behaviour leads children to develop the delinquent act of examination malpractices experienced in Nigerian schools. It is however at variance with the findings of Dikko (2015) who investigated the effect of parenting styles on students' attitude towards examination malpractice with 400 secondary school students in Katsina Local Government and found that there is no significant effect of parenting styles on students' attitudes towards examination malpractice.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn: Authoritative form of child-rearing style is the dominant style among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. Also, fairly more than half of the sampled students have negative attitude towards examination malpractices in secondary schools in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. Similarly, there is significant relationship between child-rearing styles and secondary school students' attitude towards examination malpractice in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that parents should be mindful of their parenting styles. Parents should be encouraged to practice authoritative child-rearing style which is believed to be a good parenting style for children. Parents should be sensitive to their children's need; they should praise their children's strength instead of focusing on their weaknesses because it is important to build confidence in them and help them imbibe healthy and wholesome behaviour. Examination malpractice among students, if not checked, could destruct the educational system and lead to other social vices, hence, teachers and counsellors need to organise seminars for parents on the best child-rearing styles from time to time to help develop appropriate attitude towards examination malpractice in their children.

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