

# **To Ascertain the Effects of Malpractices in Examinations at School and Board Examinations Stage as Perceived by (i) Senior Secondary School Students; (ii) Senior Secondary School Teachers; and (iii) Community Members**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This is an often fact that malpractices in examinations has several adverse effects on students' future life. The prevalence of examination malpractices discourage the students from studying hard and deprive brighter students of a fair chance for advancement. Examination malpractice can also cause delays in the processing of exam scores and release of results. When suspicions arise regarding such malpractice, it takes time to investigate the cases, thus extending the time period for issuing test scores. It also makes examinations and degrees worthless and reflects the failed internalisation of the rules of truth and honesty. Candidates who participate in examination malpractice generally perform better on tests and dramatically increase their chances of admission into higher institutes of learning. Because of this, many bright, honest students who attain the entry grade might not gain access to the schools of their choice due to having lower examination scores than those who cheated.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Exam malpractice can also adversely impact the educational system and the society as a whole. This problem contributes to job inefficiency, hence affecting the economic growth of the country. The problem can also adversely affect the academic reputation of an educational institution, as ill-prepared students are less likely to continue to perform their performance once enrolled at a higher level and might also feel overwhelmed by a rigorous curriculum.

Udoh (2011) remarks that without doubt, the persistent occurrence of examination malpractice in Nigeria has spawned heinous problems such as:

1. Lack of credibility of academic certificates acquired in Nigeria by the international community.
2. Declining standard of education in the country.
3. The problem of turning out into the society half-baked -- if not unbaked -- graduates who are virtually good for nothing and functional illiterates.
4. Inability to secure competitive and challenging jobs which require practical test of proficiency and skills.
5. The existing correlation between examination malpractice and corruption in public offices. As noted by Thomas Derry of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and quoted in the Examinations Ethics Project (EEP) survey (2004) report, students who steal their ways to higher offices through examination malpractice would not find it difficult to engage in corrupt practices when they are employed.
6. Finally, examination malpractice has economic implications. According to EEP (2003) report, Nigeria loses more than one billion naira annually to examination malpractice. Thus examination malpractice could equally be seen as an economic crime.

Ahmed (2015) states that examination malpractice is real and apparent in a multi ethnic society like Nigeria, several others have put forward some dangers and consequence of examination malpractice, which could be:

1. Examination malpractice is destroying one of the pillars of development and poses serious threat to the future of education in the country (Hassan, 2013).

2. Examination malpractice leads to irreversible loss of credibility.
3. Examination malpractice renders the goods of education invalid (Jimoh, 2009)
4. Examination malpractice has very serious economic, political, psychological and social consequences, for instance, wastage of both human and material resources (Jimoh, 2009).
5. Examination malpractice encourages corruption within the educational system

Onyibe, Uma and Ibina (2015) state that examination malpractice has grave consequences on the individuals and institutions of learning, communities and the country at large. Dismissal, termination, loss of position, and lack of self-confidence are effects and have caused a lot of embarrassment and suffering to individuals, families and the nation. The guilty ones who were not caught and punished cannot defend the certificates procured not to talk of delivering at their duty posts. The prevalent rate of bank failures, collapse of buildings, economic sabotage, vandalism, kidnapping/hostage taking for ransom, drug trafficking, fake drug manufacturing and sales are practical effects of moral decadence, emanating from examination malpractice. Effects of examination fraud are displayed in the filling stations, churches, homes, hospitals, markets and everywhere. The fight against corruption cannot be realized if examination malpractice continues to be rampant in our educational system. As future leaders who have been equipped through a school system characterized by academic fraud and dishonesty, will certainly manifest this fraudulent behavior in any organization they will serve. Those that cheated to pass examination will cheat to get employed, have spouse, and even to win election through electoral violence or other sharp malpractices. Other effects of examination malpractice includes discouragement of students from hard work, low productivity and poor job performances, bribery, corruption, and certificate racketeering. Examination malpractice with its disadvantages is affecting all the facets of the society negatively. The potentials of this nation will be difficult to be realized socially, economically, and technologically until the individuals, governments, and other stakeholders in the education sector collaborate to eradicate this malpractice.

## **2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The following objective was formulated for the present study:

To ascertain the effects of malpractices in examinations at school and board examinations stage as perceived by (i) senior secondary school students; (ii) senior secondary school teachers; and (iii) community members

## **3. METHOD**

The objectives laid down for the study at hand conform to all the characteristics of descriptive method. Hence, descriptive method of research was used in the present study.

### **3.1 Sample**

The State of Himachal Pradesh has twelve districts. Out of these, the following five districts were selected randomly viz., Solan, Kullu, Shimla, Lahaul & Spiti and Kangra. In the second stage, ten Senior Secondary Schools each from five districts were chosen randomly. In the third stage, thirty senior secondary school students from each school were taken randomly the total sample comprised of 1500 students. From each of the 50 selected schools, the willing teachers were included in the sample. The total sample comprised of 200 school teachers and 200 willing community members were included in the sample. Forty community members were taken from each district applying the technique of incidental sampling.

### **3.2 Tool Used**

The instrument used to collect data from students, teachers and community members for this study was a scale titled "Examination Malpractices Scale"

### **3.3 Operational Definitions of Specific Terms**

A few specific terms have been used in the text a number of times. The operational meanings of these terms have been given below.

**a. Prevalence of Malpractices in Examination:**

Prevalence of malpractices in examination refers to number of students indulging in malpractices as perceived by school teachers.

**b. Effects:**

Effects refer to future consequences of malpractices in examinations.

### **3.4 Delimitations of the Study:**

The study was delimited to five districts of Himachal Pradesh to be selected randomly.

#### 4. RESULTS

- a. The responses of senior secondary school students in terms of frequencies for 26 items for effects of malpractices in examinations are presented in 1.

**Table 1: Responses of senior secondary school students in terms of frequencies for 26 items for effects of malpractices in examinations along with  $\chi^2$  values**

AFTER-EFFECTS OF MALPRACTICES/COPYING IN EXAMINATIONS							
5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3= Uncertain; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly Disagree							
S. No.	Item	5	4	3	2	1	$\chi^2$
1-	Students do not develop responsibility for their work.	579	388	374	97	62	629.71**
2-	Students do not develop reasoning and creativity.	446	558	357	87	52	660.01**
3-	Students fail to understand the importance of hard work.	736	278	221	182	83	859.45**
4-	Use of unfair means nurtures the fraudulent behavior and leads to corruption and use of short-cuts in future life too.	665	286	359	84	106	737.31**
5-	Students do not gain real knowledge of content.	535	427	330	136	72	503.78**
6-	Use of unfair means is an obstacle in achieving the goals of education.	577	358	371	136	58	568.65**
7-	Use of unfair means defeats the purpose of examination.	575	339	389	116	81	556.28**
8-	Use of unfair means discourages good students from studying	441	457	334	193	75	359.02**
9-	Use of unfair means leads to lack of life and job skills.	513	422	313	147	105	406.19**
10-	Use of unfair means prepares unproductive human resources.	408	374	398	189	131	225.42**
11-	The students who use unfair mean do not succeed in competitive examinations.	657	328	254	154	107	629.71**
12-	Students lose self-confidence even in other activities.	577	429	242	134	118	524.71**
13-	Use of unfair means affects employability in good places.	427	674	201	155	43	842.93**
14-	The guilty ones who are not caught and punished cannot defend their certificates issued to them.	342	605	289	182	82	521.19**
15-	Examination malpractices lead to irreversible loss of credibility as a country that is ranked high in examination malpractices loses international credibility.	507	396	271	226	100	327.94**
16-	Certificates/documents emanating from a country's educational system ranked high in examination malpractices are treated with suspicion and doubt.	458	419	373	194	56	384.09**
17-	The effect of exam malpractice is discouraging the students from studying hard and denying brighter students a fair chance for advancement.	557	320	319	227	77	406.23**
18-	Exam malpractice can also cause delays in the processing of exam scores and release of results.	346	607	305	154	88	542.17**
19-	Affects adversely the careers of students if they are caught and punished for malpractices in examinations.	515	366	222	267	130	288.85**
20-	The problem can also impact the academic reputation of an educational institution, as ill-prepared students are less likely to continue to perform at a high level once they are enrolled and might also feel overwhelmed by a rigorous curriculum.	344	473	497	137	49	534.15**
21-	Candidates who participate in examination malpractices may perform better on tests and dramatically increase their chances of admission into higher institutes of learning thus barring chances of genuine students.	636	441	230	140	53	747.62**
22-	The problem of examination malpractice contributes to job inefficiency, affecting the economic growth of the country.	600	421	292	130	57	642.18**
23-	The consequences of examination malpractices both to education and the society are catastrophic in the long run. Candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination may now depend on quack arrangement.	675	314	269	176	66	706.38**
24-	The candidates produced in this manner will grow into adults or	561	296	397	144	102	470.29**

	teachers or examinations officials who will not see anything wrong in examination fraud thus defeating the goals of education by turning out certificated illiterates.						
25-	Examinations malpractice produces candidates with low morale and academic values.	476	378	373	173	100	328.39**
26-	The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.	697	291	294	97	121	769.92**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level of confidence

### Interpretation

It is revealed from Table 1 that  $\chi^2$  value is significant at 0.01 level of confidence for all the twenty six items studying effects with respect to malpractices in examinations. This indicates that the responses of senior secondary school students in terms of frequencies for strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree differ significantly for all the twenty six items. The scrutiny of Table 1 indicates that the senior secondary school students have responded more favourably to 'strongly agree & agree' options to all the twenty six items. However, in order to get a clearer picture, the responses for 'strongly agree & agree' and 'disagree & strongly disagree' are added and the following scenario emerges.

**Table 2: Added frequencies for 'strongly agree & agree' and 'disagree & strongly disagree' based upon Table 1**

Item No.	Strongly Agree+Agree	Uncertain	Disagree+Strongly Disagree
1	967	374	159
2	1004	357	139
3	1014	221	265
4	951	259	190
5	962	330	280
6	935	371	194
7	914	389	197
8	898	334	268
9	935	313	252
10	782	398	320
11	985	254	261
12	1006	242	252
13	1101	201	198
14	947	289	264
15	903	271	326
16	877	373	250
17	877	319	304
18	953	305	242
19	881	222	397
20	817	497	186
21	1077	203	193
22	1021	292	187
23	989	269	242
24	857	397	246
25	854	373	273
26	988	294	218

Table 2 shows that number of responses added for 'strongly agree & agree' is larger for all the items in comparison to responses added for 'disagree & strongly disagree'. This indicates that senior secondary school students view all the listed effects as most important with respect to malpractices in examinations. However, the following ten effects have been viewed as most important by senior secondary school students.

S. No.	Most Important After-Effects of Malpractices/Copying in Examinations Perceived by Students
13	Use of unfair means affects employability in good places.
21	Candidates who participate in examination malpractices may perform better on tests and dramatically increase their chances of admission into higher institutes of learning thus barring chances of genuine students.
22	The problem of examination malpractice contributes to job inefficiency, affecting the economic growth of the country.
3	Students fail to understand the importance of hard work.
12	Students lose self-confidence even in other activities.
2	Students do not develop reasoning and creativity.
23	The consequences of examination malpractices both to education and the society are catastrophic in the long run. Candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination may now depend on quack arrangement.
26	The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.
11	The students who use unfair mean do not succeed in competitive examinations.
1	Students do not develop responsibility for their work.

b. The responses of senior secondary school teachers in terms of frequencies for 26 items for effects of malpractices in examinations are presented in Table 3

**Table 3: Responses of senior secondary school teachers in terms of frequencies for 26 items for effectsof malpractices in examinations along with  $\chi^2$  values**

S. No.	AFTER-EFFECTS OF MALPRACTICES/COPYING IN EXAMINATIONS	5	4	3	2	1	$\chi^2$
1-	Students do not develop responsibility for their work.	81	87	23	4	5	167.05**
2-	Students do not develop reasoning and creativity.	73	109	7	9	2	233.6**
3-	Students fail to understand the importance of hard work.	86	92	10	8	4	201.00**
4-	Use of unfair means nurtures the fraudulent behavior and leads to corruption and use of short-cuts in future life too.	80	93	15	10	2	184.45**
5-	Students do not gain real knowledge of content.	88	86	16	5	5	186.15**
6-	Use of unfair means is an obstacle in achieving the goals of education.	96	78	16	6	4	190.02**
7-	Use of unfair means defeats the purpose of examination.	90	77	24	5	4	166.15**
8-	Use of unfair means discourages good students from studying	95	82	12	5	6	198.85**
9-	Use of unfair means leads to lack of life and job skills.	60	101	27	12	0	166.85**
10-	Use of unfair means prepares unproductive human resources.	52	89	34	20	5	105.15**
11-	The students who use unfair mean do not succeed in competitive examinations.	59	95	30	15	1	140.08**
12-	Students lose self-confidence even in other activities.	56	84	37	21	2	100.15**
13-	Use of unfair means affects employability in good places.	49	100	30	14	7	138.65**
14-	The guilty ones who are not caught and punished cannot defend their certificates issued to them.	53	87	44	13	3	112.3**
15-	Examination malpractices lead to irreversible loss of credibility as a country that is ranked high in examination malpractices loses international credibility.	53	87	44	12	4	111.85**
16-	Certificates/documents emanating from a country's educational system ranked high in examination malpractices are treated with suspicion and doubt.	52	84	55	9	0	121.65**
17-	The effect of exam malpractice is discouraging the students from studying hard and denying brighter students a fair chance for advancement.	73	83	31	8	5	131.07**
18-	Exam malpractice can also cause delays in the processing of exam scores and release of results.	40	103	33	18	6	141.45**
19-	Affects adversely the careers of students if they are caught and punished for malpractices in examinations.	49	93	36	18	4	117.15**
20-	The problem can also impact the academic reputation of an educational institution, as ill-prepared students are less likely to	42	94	51	10	3	132.75**

	continue to perform at a high level once they are enrolled and might also feel overwhelmed by a rigorous curriculum.						
21-	Candidates who participate in examination malpractices may perform better on tests and dramatically increase their chances of admission into higher institutes of learning thus barring chances of genuine students.	70	77	24	24	5	100.15**
22-	The problem of examination malpractice contributes to job inefficiency, affecting the economic growth of the country.	60	86	37	15	2	114.85**
23-	The consequences of examination malpractices both to education and the society are catastrophic in the long run. Candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination may now depend on quack arrangement.	82	90	14	10	4	178.04**
24-	The candidates produced in this manner will grow into adults or teachers or examinations officials who will not see anything wrong in examination fraud thus defeating the goals of education by turning out certificated illiterates.	57	104	30	4	5	175.15**
25-	Examinations malpractice produces candidates with low morale and academic values.	60	112	19	7	2	213.95**
26-	The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.	67	111	18	2	2	228.55**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level of confidence

### Interpretation

It is revealed from Table 3 that  $\chi^2$  value is significant at 0.01 level of confidence for all the twenty six items studying effects of malpractices in examinations. This indicates that the responses of senior secondary school teachers in terms of frequencies for strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree differ significantly for all the twenty six items. The scrutiny of Table 3 indicates that the senior secondary school teachers have responded more favourably to strongly agree and agree options to all the twenty six items. However, in order to get a clearer picture, the responses for 'strongly agree and agree' and 'disagree and strongly disagree' are added and the following scenario emerges.

**Table 4: Added frequencies for 'strongly agree and agree' and 'disagree and strongly disagree' based upon 3**

Item No.	Strongly Agree+Agree	Uncertain	Disagree+Strongly Disagree
1	168	23	9
2	182	7	11
3	178	10	12
4	173	15	12
5	174	16	10
6	174	16	10
7	167	24	9
8	177	12	11
9	161	27	12
10	141	34	25
11	154	30	16
12	140	37	23
13	149	30	21
14	140	44	16
15	140	44	16
16	136	55	9
17	156	31	13
18	143	33	24
19	142	36	22
20	136	51	13
21	147	24	29
22	146	37	17
23	172	14	14
24	161	30	9
25	172	19	9
26	178	18	4

Table 4 shows that number of responses added for ‘strongly agree & agree’ is larger for all the twenty six items in comparison to responses added for ‘disagree & strongly disagree’. This indicates that the senior secondary school teachers view all the listed effects as important with respect to malpractices in examinations. However, the following ten effects have been viewed as most important by senior secondary school teachers.

S. No.	Most Important After-Effects of Malpractices/Copying in Examinations Perceived by Teachers
2	Students do not develop reasoning and creativity.
3	Students fail to understand the importance of hard work.
26	The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.
8	Use of unfair means discourages good students from studying
5	Students do not gain real knowledge of content.
6	Use of unfair means is an obstacle in achieving the goals of education.
4	Use of unfair means nurtures the fraudulent behavior and leads to corruption and use of short-cuts in future life too.
23	The consequences of examination malpractices both to education and the society are catastrophic in the long run. Candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination may now depend on quack arrangement.
25	Examinations malpractice produces candidates with low morale and academic values.
1	Students do not develop responsibility for their work.

- c. The responses of community members in terms of frequencies for 26 items for effects of malpractices in examinations are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Responses of community members in terms of frequencies for 26 items for effects of malpractices in examinations along with  $\chi^2$  values**

S. No.	AFTER-EFFECTS OF MALPRACTICES/COPYING IN EXAMINATIONS	5	4	3	2	1	$\chi^2$
1-	Students do not develop responsibility for their work.	64	70	48	7	11	86.75**
2-	Students do not develop reasoning and creativity.	59	81	38	16	6	94.45**
3-	Students fail to understand the importance of hard work.	80	60	32	14	14	85.04**
4-	Use of unfair means nurtures the fraudulent behavior and leads to corruption and use of short-cuts in future life too.	76	57	46	11	10	84.05**
5-	Students do not gain real knowledge of content.	67	71	37	10	15	80.06**
6-	Use of unfair means is an obstacle in achieving the goals of education.	79	58	37	17	9	83.06**
7-	Use of unfair means defeats the purpose of examination.	76	57	39	14	14	73.45**
8-	Use of unfair means discourages good students from studying	57	59	45	29	10	42.04**
9-	Use of unfair means leads to lack of life and job skills.	59	77	28	27	9	75.01**
10-	Use of unfair means prepares unproductive human resources.	37	76	57	19	11	71.09**
11-	The students who use unfair mean do not succeed in competitive examinations.	64	70	30	27	9	67.65**
12-	Students lose self-confidence even in other activities.	58	68	39	20	15	53.35**
13-	Use of unfair means affects employability in good places.	63	76	35	15	11	82.09**
14-	The guilty ones who are not caught and punished cannot defend their certificates issued to them.	53	72	43	21	11	60.01**
15-	Examination malpractices lead to irreversible loss of credibility as a country that is ranked high in examination malpractices loses international credibility.	49	74	39	24	14	54.25**
16-	Certificates/documents emanating from a country’s educational system ranked high in examination malpractices are treated with suspicion and doubt.	44	62	70	21	3	78.25**
17-	The effect of exam malpractice is discouraging the students from studying hard and denying brighter students a fair chance for advancement.	66	69	33	22	10	69.75**
18-	Exam malpractice can also cause delays in the processing of exam scores and release of results.	40	75	44	17	24	50.65**
19-	Affects adversely the careers of students if they are caught and punished for malpractices in examinations.	62	67	34	18	19	54.35**
20-	The problem can also impact the academic reputation of an educational	46	69	65	15	5	83.08**

	institution, as ill-prepared students are less likely to continue to perform at a high level once they are enrolled and might also feel overwhelmed by a rigorous curriculum.						
21-	Candidates who participate in examination malpractices may perform better on tests and dramatically increase their chances of admission into higher institutes of learning thus barring chances of genuine students.	65	63	35	26	11	55.04**
22-	The problem of examination malpractice contributes to job inefficiency, affecting the economic growth of the country.	66	69	32	27	6	72.65**
23-	The consequences of examination malpractices both to education and the society are catastrophic in the long run. Candidates/students who would ordinarily be working hard to pass examination may now depend on quack arrangement.	71	58	38	22	11	61.35**
24-	The candidates produced in this manner will grow into adults or teachers or examinations officials who will not see anything wrong in examination fraud thus defeating the goals of education by turning out certificated illiterates.	50	66	61	14	9	71.35**
25-	Examinations malpractice produces candidates with low morale and academic values.	56	70	51	18	5	74.65**
26-	The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.	75	73	26	14	12	99.25**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level of confidence

### Interpretation

It is revealed from Table 5 that  $\chi^2$  value is significant at 0.01 level of confidence for all the twenty six items studying effects of malpractices in examinations. This indicates that the responses of community members in terms of frequencies for strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree differ significantly for all the twenty six items. The scrutiny of Table 5 indicates that the community members have responded more favourably to strongly agree and agree options to all the twenty six items. However, in order to get a clearer picture, the responses for 'strongly agree and agree' and 'disagree and strongly disagree' are added and the following scenario emerges.

**Table 6: Added frequencies for 'strongly agree and agree' and 'disagree and strongly disagree' based upon 5**

Item No.	Strongly Agree+Agree	Uncertain	Disagree+Strongly Disagree
1	134	48	18
2	140	38	22
3	140	32	28
4	133	46	21
5	138	37	25
6	137	37	26
7	133	39	28
8	116	45	39
9	136	28	36
10	113	57	30
11	134	30	36
12	126	39	35
13	139	35	26
14	125	43	32
15	123	39	38
16	106	70	24
17	135	33	32
18	115	44	41
19	129	34	37
20	115	65	20
21	128	35	37
22	135	32	33
23	129	38	33
24	116	61	23
25	126	51	23
26	148	26	26



Table 6 shows that number of responses added for ‘strongly agree & agree’ is larger for all the twenty six items in comparison to responses added for ‘disagree & strongly disagree’. This indicates that the community members view all the twenty six effects of malpractices in examinations as important. However, the following ten effects have been viewed as most important by community members.

S. No.	Most Important After-Effects of Malpractices/Copying in Examinations Perceived by Community Members
26	The products of examination malpractice always end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career.
2	Students do not develop reasoning and creativity.
3	Students fail to understand the importance of hard work.
13	Use of unfair means affects employability in good places.
5	Students do not gain real knowledge of content.
6	Use of unfair means is an obstacle in achieving the goals of education.
9	Use of unfair means leads to lack of life and job skills.
17	The effect of exam malpractice is discouraging the students from studying hard and denying brighter students a fair chance for advancement.
22	The problem of examination malpractice contributes to job inefficiency, affecting the economic growth of the country.
1	Students do not develop responsibility for their work.

Some important result emerges from the present study. The senior secondary school students view the following ten effects as most important with respect to malpractices in examinations. i.e. item no. 13,21,22,3,12,2,23,26,11,1 similarly Senior secondary school teachers view the following ten effects as most important with respect to malpractices in examinations i.e. item no.2,3,26,8,5,6,4,23,25,1 and Community members view the following ten effects as most important with respect to malpractices in examinations i.e. item no. 26,2,3,13,5,6,9,17,22,1. The following four effects with respect to malpractices in examinations have been viewed by all the three samples of subjects i.e. students, teachers and community members as the most important. i.e. item no.3,2,26,1.

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