ABSTRACT

The Menace of Examination Malpractice and Information Communication Technology Strategies for Curbing – A Case Study in Kenya

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Background:
Examination Malpractice has been a great menace affecting the education system in Kenya. It is a vice that has been aggravated by the evolution of technology and modern means of communication like the use of mobile phones, internet and social media platforms of communication. The menace of examination malpractice has crippled the credibility of our national examinations such that the certification process has become unreliable and worthless. Candidates sitting for the national examination have gone high tech on how to access information related to examinations. Over the years, candidates have had their results cancelled because of examination irregularities while the numbers are increasing at an alarming rate. The evolution of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the society has made candidates access, retrieve and store information related to the examination in electronic format hence making it ineffective for the traditional methods of supervision and invigilation of Examination administration. The expectation of the Ministry of Education and Kenya National Examinations Council is to release the results for all candidates who registered and sat for a given examination in a particular year on merit by satisfying the criteria set out by the council. This study examines the menace of examination malpractice and the available ICT strategies that can be used to curb the menace.

Methods:
The study adopted a descriptive survey design in which structured Students' and Teachers' questionnaires were used to collecting data from a sample of five hundred and seventy (570) Form Four students and one hundred and two (102) teachers in charge of examination administration selected randomly from thirty-four (34) schools within Nairobi County, Kenya. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS computer software version 20 and presented in the form of frequency tables, percentages, and means in the section of discussion and findings of this study.

Results:
The findings of the study indicated that the use of mobile phones among learners is the main method accelerating the vice of examination malpractice at 32.00%, followed by the use of written materials at 24.00%. The integration of ICT in examination administration was preferred at 84.00% as a means to eradicate examination malpractice in the current education system in Kenya. Teachers and students supported the computerization of the examination process at 50.00% through the installation of CCTV cameras at 71.43% in all Examination Centres and the use of Biometric data capture machines. The government needs to invest in the process of computerization of examination management that would involve candidates being given a unique password for online identification during the examination.

Conclusions:
The main purpose of this study was to understand the menace of examination malpractice how Information Communication Technology (ICT) can be used to curb the menace in the current system of education in Kenya. From the data analysis and discussion, it has been observed that 83.70% of students support the use of ICT in the process of examination administration. It was also noted that the teachers in charge of examination agreed with 91.10% that the use of ICT was the only way to end Examination Malpractice in the current education system in Kenya. It has been established that the entire examination process starting from the production of question papers to the release of examination results should be computerized. This should include the installation of CCTV cameras and the use of Biometric data capture machines for monitoring the entire process of examination administration.

If the current system of examination management is to continue effectively; it was observed that all examination centres and Sub-County offices where KNEC containers are kept should be installed with CCTV cameras and biometric data capture machines for security surveillance. The use of mobile phones perpetuates examination malpractice with teachers in charge of examination citing at 79.25% and a total of 183 out of 570 students representing 32.11% supporting the claim. The invention of ICT tools like mobile phones poses a big threat to the security of examination administration in the country. Therefore stakeholders of education should come up with innovative and creative ways on how best to utilize the gadget for teaching and learning rather than for cheating in national examinations.

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