



EFFECT OF CLIENT-CENTRED THERAPY ON EXAM MALPRACTICE OF EXAM MALPRACTICE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN JALINGO EDUCATION ZONE TARABA STATE.

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Abstract

The study investigated the effect of Client-centered counselling therapies on exam malpractices of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria. Two specific objectives to guide the study with corresponding research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significance level. The study adopted quasi-experimental research design. The population was 2,283 SS2 students. The sample of the study comprises 60 SSII (male and female) students drawn from the public secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria who exhibited examination malpractice. Exam malpractice Inventory Questionnaire(BMIQ) made up of 20 items were used for data collection for the study. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and a reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained. Both the face and content validity of the research instrument were ensured with the help of experts from three departments such as Science education, Educational foundations and Counselling Educational psychology and Human Development, Faculty of Education Taraba State University, Jalingo. The two research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while t-test (paired samples and independent samples) was used to test the two research hypotheses. According to the data collected and analyzed the following findings revealed that: there was significant effect of Client-centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria. There was no significant difference in the mean effect of Client-centered therapy on examination malpractice between male and female secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria. It was concluded that Client-Centered therapy had significantly reduced examination malpractice behaviour of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria. The Client-Centered therapy is gender friendly. The study recommended among others that school counsellors, teachers, psychologists should be encouraged to learn the make proper use of Client-Centered therapy for an effective way of reducing any form of exam malpractice problem among students.

Key words: Client-Centered Therapy, Maladaptive Behaviours, Examination Malpractice, male and female students behaviour.

Introduction

Many studies across Nigeria, and the world in general, have reported trend of exam malpractice among students in secondary schools have continue to post great challenge to our educational system. The school environment is expected to be place for learning good behaviours has become distracted with

exam malpractices among students. The percentage of the students manifesting exam malpractice problems scores high of which are found in both social, moral and academic life of our students evidenced in their display of aggression, truancy, stealing, bullying, violence, fighting, the long list to mention but few. At this point, these behaviour problems if not attended to will eventually make life unbearable for the students themselves, their parents and their educators (Taiwo, 2014)

Exam malpractices among our secondary school students have attracted many researchers in education toward identifying these behaviours to provide solutions and adjustment procedures for better learning. These behaviours keep drawing the attention of researchers in the field of education to bring about adjustment of the behaviours among students in schools or else the problem will keep increasing by the day (Dattu, 2013, James, 2014,).

The researcher, who is a teacher and counsellor from the study area was motivated to carry out this research work as a result of the displayed of various exam malpractices among the students each time they resumed school. The researcher closely observed that many of the students were manifesting one exam malpractice or the other within classroom and the school environment. The situation is not as expected due to the menace of various exam malpractices among our students in secondary schools such as examination malpractice.

Examination malpractice is an unacceptable norm in our learning institutions. This is a exam malpractice problem that is very common in our secondary schools which this study is concerned with. The researcher observed that some of our students are involved in examination malpractice and give many reasons to support their behaviours, which include poor understanding during lesson, bad influences, and fast way of passing exam. Great part of our students in secondary schools have formed it a habit due to so many factors, some could be poor academic background and broken home which do affect their attention during study. As such a point, attention is needed toward these students before they leave school. Both boys and girls could be involved in exam malpractice in schools. Ponton (2019) said that some activities are culturally fit for sex roles. That some activities seem to be normal to the male and not normal to the female, even the case of exam malpractice.

Since these exam malpractices have been proven common by studies and are on the increasing rate world over, and which could be found among students, as such it become the concern of this study. Because of the Client-centeredness of man and his behaviour by the Client-centered theory, the intervention in this study might stand the chance to be considered better toward handling students' exam malpractice in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State. This is the above approaches this study wants to explore so as to contribute to knowledge through the use of Client-centered therapy on exam malpractices.

The exam malpractice of the boys and girls is reflecting in the society as against the moral values of the society and school in particular. Differences in cultural background of boys and girls also attributed to morality in their behaviour toward roles expected of them in the society, family, school and community. Regular secondary school nowadays comprises of both boys and girls as such their involvement in exam malpractices need to be considered and rated. Other experts like Awabil (2015) reported that in many part of the world boys in schools are found less likely to finish school than their female counterpart and the gap discovered to be around 13-14% between the boys and girls within African American school students. Also Gesinde (2014) opined that our secondary school male students are found exhibiting stealing behaviour more than their female counterpart. Another study carried out

in Nigeria showed that boys and girls do exhibit similar behaviour rate and can lead to school dropout situation among students. From the above studies, both male and female students in schools engages in exam malpractice behaviour and thus needed an intervention for a change in such behaviour problems. This study intends to determine the role gender will play on the display of exam malpractice among secondary schools students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

. In the recent past, researchers have attempted to address exam malpractices of students using various therapies yet it persisted. In Taraba State, the behaviours of students in schools supposed to be attracting, and acceptable in the learning environment. The behaviour should be adaptive such that they are beneficial to the individuals and the society at large. An adaptive behaviour of students in secondary school will account for their better performance, good grades, and improved study habits. Yet exam malpractice among secondary school students as observed by the researcher from the study area are self-perpetuating and self-defeating as against the ideal school settings and are on the increase. Some researchers have addressed the issue exam malpractices among students using various therapies yet it increasing by the day. Some scholars have even attempted the use of Adlerian therapy on exam malpractices yet it keep on manifesting students. That is why this study wanted to apply and validate the use Client-Centered therapy on exam malpractice among secondary school students to see whether it could give out positive results and good future. These behaviour problems as observed by the researcher are exhibited among secondary school students in the study area which demand an attention for appropriate counselling intervention for a desire behaviour change.

It is reasonable to probe an existing and increasing behavioural problems among secondary school students in a given society. The researcher observes there seems to be little or no empirical studies which investigated the effect of Client-Centered counselling therapy on exam malpractices of students in senior secondary schools in the Zone. Previous investigations have revealed that the exhibition of exam malpractice could vary among boys and girls. Other researchers have identified that there is no gender difference in the display of exam malpractice. There seem to be no available empirical data that revealed whether or not there is differences between boys and girls students in their exhibition of any exam malpractices among secondary school students in the area. Meanwhile there seems to be no available research findings on the effect of Client-Centered therapy toward adjusting exam malpractices of students. This present study supposes Client-Centered therapy will attempt to some extent address the problem of exam malpractices among senior secondary school students in the area.

Objectives of the study

The specific objective of the study is to determine:

1. Effect of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria.
2. Gender difference in the effect of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. H_{01} There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State, Nigeria.
2. H_{02} There is no significant mean difference between male and female in the effectiveness of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted quasi-experimental design. The design is refers to quasi-experimental because it does not intend to employ randomization in the allocation of participants into experimental and control groups. The design is usually applied in a study where the researcher cannot truly control all relevant variables that make up the study. Some experts usually use quasi-experimental research design because it does not provides full laboratory setting for true experimental study and that it is often dependent upon the natural in which the researcher may find himself or herself. This study adopted the design because there was no intention to carry out true experiment, but find out the effectiveness of Client-Centered therapy on exam malpractices of exam malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Taraba State, Nigeria.

The population of this study comprises 2,283, SSS two secondary school students within the study area. The zone has the total number of forty (40) secondary schools. The study considered SS 2, because they are the intermediary SS class level. The sample for this study comprises 60 SSS two students from the two local government areas within Jalingo education zone Taraba State, using Random sampling technique was used in order to give the schools the chance of equal selection for proper representation. Two schools was sampled from Jalingo local government area because it has many secondary schools being the State headquarters and two secondary schools from Ardo-kola local government area respectively. From two sampled schools within Jalingo local government, the sample of 40 SSII students were selected for the experimental groups while twenty (20) SSII students from two sampled schools in Ardo Kola local government area. Purposive sampling technique was used in order to select those 60 SSII students who exhibits exam malpractices of stealing, assigned for the experimental groups based on the identified behaviour problems among the subjects

The study instrument for data collection named Exam malpractice Inventory (MBI) structured by the researcher through considering the dependent variables of the study and the research questions. The study prepared one main instructional package (treatment plan) on exam malpractices (exam malpractice) for Client-Centered therapy. The treatment package or plan was subjected to expert validation in Guidance and Counselling Department and psychologist all in the faculty of education Taraba State University Jalingo. The total number of 20 questionnaire items was used to obtain responses from the respondents (students) based on formulated research questions. The instrument was divided into two (2) sections. Section 'A' is for bio data and instructions while section 'B' is for the questionnaire with 20 items on effect of Client-Centered Therapy on exam malpractice among the SSII students in the study area. The 20 questionnaire items was given a column for question items that provides good options for the respondents using the four points rating scale of Likert type scale such as strongly agreed (SA) 4 points, Agreed (A) 3 points, Disagreed (D) 2 points, Strongly disagreed (SD) 1 point.

In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot study using split-half. The total number of twenty (20) SS II students were used for the pilot study to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument for the main work. The result was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha and reliability coefficient of .82 was obtained which showed that the research instrument was reliable.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation was used in answering research questions while Independent t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance and at 95 degree of freedom. The t-test and paired independent samples was used in the study because it wish to determine the effectiveness of the therapy and its differences on gender.

Results

Research question one

What is the effect of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria?

Table 1

Mean and standard deviations scores on the effect of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria

Exams	N	mean	std. dev
Pretest	60	1.9417	.64789
Post-test	60	1.6150	.38788
Mean difference		0.3267	

In table 1 the mean score for examination malpractice before the intervention was 1.9417, with a standard deviation of 0.64789. This relatively high mean indicates a considerable level of reported malpractice behaviours among students, accompanied by variability in responses, as suggested by the standard deviation.

After the implementation of Client-Centered therapy, the mean score for examination malpractice decreased to 1.6150, with a standard deviation of 0.38788. This reduction in the mean score by 0.3267 reflects a notable decline in examination malpractice behaviours among the students following the therapy. The decrease in standard deviation also indicates a greater consistency in students' responses post-therapy, suggesting a more uniform attitude toward examination conduct after receiving the intervention.

Overall, these findings suggest that Client-Centered therapy was effective in reducing examination malpractice among secondary school students in the Northern Taraba State. The significant decrease in

the mean score, along with the reduction in standard deviation, indicates that the therapy not only led to improved outcomes in terms of ethical examination practices but also resulted in a more cohesive shift in students' behaviours regarding examination integrity.

Research question two

What is the mean difference between male and female students in the effect of Client-Centered therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State, Nigeria?

Table 2

Mean scores and standard deviations scores on exam malpractice of male and female students under Client-Centered therapy in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State.

gender N		Pretest		Posttest		Mean
		mean	std. dev	mean	std. dev	gain
male	30	2.0000	.69530	1.6233	.44154	.0420
female	30	1.8833	.60291	1.6067	.33315	.3333
Mean difference		0.1167		0.0166		.1001

Initially, male students exhibited a pre-therapy mean score of 2.0000 for examination malpractice, with a standard deviation of 0.69530. This relatively high mean indicates a significant level of reported malpractice behaviours, coupled with considerable variability in responses. After the implementation of the therapy, the mean score for male students decreased to 1.6233, alongside a reduced standard deviation of 0.44154. This substantial decline of 0.3767 in the mean score suggests a notable reduction in examination malpractice behaviours among male students, reflecting not only improved outcomes but also a more consistent response pattern within this group post-therapy.

Conversely, female students began with a pre-therapy mean score of 1.8833, with a standard deviation of 0.60291. While this score is lower than that of male students, it still indicates a noteworthy level of malpractice, with some variability in responses. Following the therapy, the mean score for female students saw a slight reduction to 1.6067, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.33315. The decline of 0.2766 in the mean score indicates a decrease in examination malpractice behaviours; however, the impact was less pronounced compared to that observed in male students. The lower standard deviation suggests greater consistency in responses among females after the intervention.

Consequently, the mean difference of 0.1001 between males and females indicates that the reduction in examination malpractice was more significant for male students compared to their female counterparts following the therapy.

These findings imply that Client-Centred therapy had a more substantial effect on decreasing examination malpractice among male students than on female students. This highlights the necessity for developing targeted interventions that cater to the specific behavioural needs of different genders within educational contexts.

Hypothesis one

Client-Centered therapy has no significant effect on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria

Table 3

The results of the paired samples t-test for examination malpractice of Client-Centered therapy

Paired	Std.	Std. Error	95% Confidence interval		t	df	sig.
Differences	Deviation	Mean	of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
.32667	.78197	.10095	.12466	.52867	3.236	59	.002

A paired samples test was conducted to compare the incidence of examination malpractice before and after the therapy intervention. The analysis reveals a mean difference of 0.32667 between the pre-therapy (PreT) and post-therapy (PostT) scores related to examination malpractice. This indicates that, on average, students demonstrated a reduction in malpractice behaviours following their participation in client-centered therapy. The standard deviation of 0.78197 reflects the variability in how students' malpractice behaviours changed, while the standard error of 0.10095 provides an estimate of the precision of the mean difference.

The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranges from 0.12466 to 0.52867. Notably, this interval does not include zero, suggesting that the change in examination malpractice scores is statistically significant and unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Further supporting these findings, the calculated t-value is 3.236 with 59 degrees of freedom. The corresponding two-tailed significance (p-value) is 0.002, which is well below the conventional significance level of 0.05. This low p-value indicates a statistically significant effect of client-centered therapy on reducing examination malpractice.

In conclusion, the analysis provides compelling evidence to reject the null hypothesis that client-centred therapy has no significant effect on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State. The results indicate that client-centred therapy is effective in decreasing examination malpractice behaviours, suggesting a positive impact of the intervention in this educational context.

Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference between male and female students in the effect of Client-Centred therapy on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State, Nigeria.

Table 4

Independent Samples t-test analysis of the significance of gender difference in Exam malp.

~~Independent Samples t-test analysis of the significance of gender difference in truancy~~

	Levene's Test for		t-test for Equality of Means			
	Equality of Variances					
	F	Sig	t	df	sig	Mean
					2-tailed	Diff
Equal variance assumed			.165	58	.869	.01667
	.460	.500				
Equal Variances not assumed			.165	53.937	.869	.01667

An independent samples test was performed to compare the effects of the therapy on examination malpractice scores across genders. The analysis commenced with Levene's test for equality of variances, which evaluates whether the variances in post-therapy examination malpractice scores differ between male and female students. The results revealed an F-value of 0.460 with a significance level of 0.500. This p-value exceeds the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, indicating that the variances in examination malpractice scores for male and female students are not significantly different. As a result, the assumption of equal variances is upheld, permitting the interpretation of results from the section of the t-test assuming equal variances.

The t-test for equality of means produced a t-value of 0.165 with 58 degrees of freedom. The corresponding two-tailed significance (p-value) for this test was found to be 0.869, which is considerably higher than the 0.05 threshold. This substantial p-value suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in the impact of client-centred therapy on examination malpractice between male and female students.

Furthermore, the mean difference between the groups was calculated to be 0.01667, indicating a minimal difference in the effects of the therapy on examination malpractice scores for male and female students. The 95% confidence interval for this mean difference ranged from -0.18548 to 0.21881, which includes zero. This finding reinforces the conclusion that any observed difference is not statistically significant.

In conclusion, the analysis provides strong evidence to support the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between male and female students in the effect of client-centred therapy on examination malpractice. The high p-value of 0.869 and the confidence interval encompassing zero indicate that the therapy's impact is comparable across genders. Consequently, the findings suggest that

client-centered therapy does not differentially influence examination malpractice behaviours based on gender among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State.

Discussion

Findings on the effect of Client-centered therapy on examination malpractice behaviour among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria, showed that the average reduction in examination malpractice behaviour among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba state, Nigeria, due to the result of Client-Centered therapy is 0.002. Therefore, the result showed that there was a significant effect of Client-centered therapy on examination malpractice behaviour among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria. This implies that Client-Centered therapy has made a significant effect on examination malpractice among secondary school students in Northern Taraba State, Nigeria. Finding of the study agrees with Danladi et al (2022) finding which revealed that Client-Centered therapy is effective in reducing drug addiction attitude among youth. Again the finding agrees with James (2014) findings which showed that counselling strategies was effective in handling exam malpractices of secondary school students. It also agrees with Ajiya (2018) findings which revealed that counselling based social skill management is effective in the treatment of secondary school students who are socially challenged base on the adapted socialability questionnaire measures. Finding also agrees with Kennedy and Okwelle (2021) which revealed that there was a significant effect in the application of Client-centered therapy in reducing bullying behavior among secondary school students.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that Client-centered therapy had a significant effect in reducing examination malpractice behaviour of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria. Those students exposed to Client-centered therapy had an average reduction in examination malpractice behaviour. Finally, Client-centered therapy is gender friendly in regard to male and female with exam malpractices among secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone Taraba State, Nigeria.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations and counselling implications were made.

1. Counsellors, psychologists, and other therapists be greatly encouraged to adapt the client-centred therapy (CCT) as a counselling intervention to help youth and adult with exam malpractices behaviour especially those working with secondary school students.
2. The state government should regularly organize conferences and workshops for her school counsellors, teachers and school managers or administrators on effective use of CCT to help students with exam malpractice thereby reducing the incidence among our secondary school students.

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