

## **Examination Malpractice: A Study of Selected Technical Educational Vocational Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Institutions on the Copperbelt Province of Zambia**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aimed at assessing the management of examination malpractice in selected Technical Education Vocational Entrepreneurship (TEVET) institutions on the Copperbelt Province. Therefore, the study was designed to investigate the forms of examination malpractice, assess the causes of examination malpractice, examine the effectiveness of the TEVETA examination guidelines in curbing examination malpractice, determine the challenges faced in curbing malpractice and establish measures to help in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province. Qualitative methods were largely employed in the study. Case study design was employed in this study, whose study sample was 145, comprising of students, lecturers, Examinations Officers and an Assessment Specialist at TEVETA. Data collection was done through focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and semi-structured questionnaires. Data was analysed through thematic analysis. The study established that examination malpractice was real in TEVET institutions. This was evident from the three forms of examination malpractice that emerged from the study namely individually enhanced, technologically enhanced and collaborative cheating methods occur in the learning institutions. It was also found that personal factors, academic factors, social factors, psychological factors and environmental factors were the causes of examination malpractice in the institutions. The findings of the study further showed that TEVETA examination regulations were effective*

*in curbing examination malpractice. Lastly, the study revealed that the institutions were faced with challenges in curbing the vice which included inadequate sensitization programmes and inadequate implementation of examination guidelines. The study made recommendations that TEVETA should intensify the monitoring of teaching and how examinations were conducted as well as to take an active role in sensitising students about the dangers of examination malpractice.*

**Keywords:** Examination malpractice, examination leakage, TEVETA examination, education, assessment, summative evaluation.

## **1. Introduction**

### *1.1 Background to the Study*

Assessment is a common means of evaluating candidates in learning institutions. According to Daka (2019), the term assessment is defined as a systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programmes. Assessment can either be formative evaluation as an on-going process throughout the course (this is referred to as modifying and adjusting) or summative evaluation which occurs at the end of the course and is most often the model used in academic institutions (Daka, 2019). Summative assessment is what is known as assessment of learning. Assessment of learning is the assessment that becomes public and results in statements or symbols about how well students are learning (Mulenga, et al, 2019). It is also referred to as Final Examination. Examinations are an important aspect of many education systems in the world. One can argue that the most important time during the school year is the examination period because examinations are a good measure of how much knowledge students have acquired. Students are under pressure to pass examinations. This pressure comes from their parents or guardians, school authorities and society at large. Without examinations, students would not take their studies seriously and this would have lasting consequences on many sectors

of society. This is why examinations (summative assessment) are said to be the ‘tail that wags the dog’ (Daka, 2019).

Examinations as we know them today first emerged in the first century AD in China. The purpose of these examinations in China was to select suitable people into the Imperial Civil Service. In order to help students pass these examinations, “academies” were created, and historians refer to these created institutions as the forerunners of today’s universities (Usher, 2016). From the ancient times till now, examinations have undergone a number of important changes. In England for instance, in the 1860s, the presiding examiners travelled from Cambridge to examination centres, usually by train, wearing academic dress and carrying a locked box containing the question papers. Today, national examination papers are sent to schools before the examination dates and are now supervised by invigilators appointed by schools. The completed examination papers are then sent to the relevant examiners for marking (Cambridge Assessment, 2008).

Examinations are important in determining a student’s eventual certification, placement, and promotion. For purposes of certification, the overall examination grade is frequently used as criteria for determining one’s progression in the educational ladder or in getting a well-paying job. It is in this respect that no student is to get preferential treatment or undue advantage over others. Due to the crucial role that examinations play in socio-economic life, examinations need to be well managed so that they yield results that accurately show a person’s intellectual ability. The management of examinations should be seriously considered if examination results are to be valid and reliable and at the same time to ensure that their value is maintained. Ineffective management of examinations at any stage is a social evil that can damage society to the extent of leading to a failed state (Irira, 2014). If these aspects are effectively practiced, education institutions would mostly likely achieve quality results or set goals.

Examination malpractice has become common in most

learning institutions. Examination malpractice can be understood as a deliberate wrong doing contrary to official examination rules designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage or a misconduct or improper practice, before, during or after any examination by examinees or others with a view to obtaining good results by fraudulent means (Arakaranga and Ongong, 2013). Every examination period comes with new and ingenious ways of cheating. Recently, public examinations in Zambia for all examination classes had to be suspended indefinitely because a grade nine Mathematics examination paper leaked on social media (Mwila, 2018). The examination process has become endangered to the extent that certification has almost lost its credibility in Zambia. Certificates no longer seem to reflect skill and competence. Often times, blame has been laid on teachers, school heads, parents, students, examination officials and even security agents for examination malpractice in the school system (Gbagolo, 2011). It is undeniable that public examinations at any level of education are influential on the lives of students and their future.

Owing to the above mentioned fact, varieties of ways are being used by students to obtain unfair advantage over others, which amounts to examination malpractice. Olushola (2006) defined examination malpractice as an unlawful behavior or activity engaged by students to have personal advantage in an examination over their colleagues or mates who are taking the same examination. The process of examination malpractice and fraud usually commences at the setting of the examinations, right through to the writing of the examinations, their marking and grading, to the release of the results and the issuance of certificates and this can be committed by examination candidates and/or officials administering the examinations (Ndudzo and Chaminuka, 2014) and examination setters themselves.

Every year, various stakeholders in the education system express concern about the need to eradicate examination malpractice, yet the problem seem to persist and is compromising the educational

standards in Zambia. Examination malpractices make students who pass through the school system to be mere statistics as they do not acquire the necessary skills or competences that should add value to national development. When they are adults and become officials in various sectors, chances are high that they will not have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their professional work.

All in all, examination irregularity does not only affect its agents (i.e. candidates) but also the institutions which register cheating candidates are equally culpable. For, when they (students) finally acquire certificates whose academic contents they can hardly measure up to in any competitive interview, the schools, colleges and universities which housed them are equally underrated. As soon as particular educational institutions are associated with examination malpractices, their graduates, and even certificates issued from such institutions are not recognized and accepted on the job market (Akaranga and Ongong, 2013).

On the international scene, the education system of a country known for examination malpractice is underestimated. To correct such negative perception is not an easy exercise. This is why examination irregularity in all its forms must be eradicated from every institution of higher learning. The concern is whether the stringent regulations put in place by institutions of higher learning are able to deter those being examined from the vice (Akaranga and Ongong, 2013).

The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) is the examining body for all TEVET institutions in Zambia. It was established through the TEVET Act of 1998 to regulate TEVET programmes and activities. The mandate of TEVETA is to regulate, monitor and co-ordinate technical education, vocational and entrepreneurship training in consultation with industry, employers, workers and other stakeholders. It is responsible for the implementation of the TEVET policy (International Labour Organization, 2006). The main aim of TEVETA is to foster and enhance better management of higher education institutions in the

TEVET sector as a quality assurance agency. Its major focus is on the Technical Education Vocational Training (TEVT) institutions in the country, which are considered part of the higher education system. Before the establishment of TEVETA, the Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE), now the Ministry of General Education was responsible for quality assurance in the education sector including the TEVET sector (TEVETA, 2012).

TEVETA has a number of functions, some of which are; advising the Minister of Higher Education on TEVET in Zambia, developing national curricula in consultation with stakeholders, registration and inspection of both public and private TEVET institutions, accrediting and registering trainers, examiners and assessors, regulating and advising institutions established or registered under this Act, charging and collecting fees in respect of examinations, assessment and other services provided by the authority, regulating and conducting examinations and assessments relating to technical education vocational and entrepreneurship training, as well as awarding certificates to persons who succeed in examinations and assessments undertaken under this Act (TEVETA, 2012).

The TEVET system is designed in such a way that students are evaluated by Continuous Assessment (CA) tests at the middle and end of each term, as well as final examinations (TEVETA examinations) at the end of each year of a course. It is these final examinations that determine whether a student can move from one level to the other or qualify to graduate. Unfortunately, examination malpractice is common in both internal and external examinations. A recent study done by Maheka (2015) indicated that some students who were enrolled into colleges and universities were products of examination malpractice. Despite the measures put in place by TEVETA, TEVET institutions and well-meaning individuals to get rid of examination malpractice, the problem had continued in TEVET institutions (TEVETA, 2018). It is against this background that this study was

designed to assess the management of examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province. This knowledge gap is therefore, what this study sought to contribute to.

### *1.2 Statement of the Problem*

There are reported irregularities in the administration and management of public examinations worldwide (Adeyemi, 2010) and Zambia in particular, and each year, there are reports of examination malpractice recorded. In 2018, some Examination Council of Zambia grade 7, 9 and 12 examinations in Zambia were suspended due to examination malpractice in form of rampant leakages (Mwila, 2018). In one TEVET institution under investigation, it was reported that during the April/May 2018 examinations, twenty students were involved in examination malpractice (TEVETA, 2018). At the same institution, the July/August, 2018 examination statistics indicated that seven students were caught cheating during examinations (TEVETA, 2018). This questions the effectiveness of the administration and management of TEVETA examinations. It appears that no study has been undertaken on examination malpractice in tertiary institutions in Zambia. Hence the need to research on the management of examination malpractice at the selected TEVET institutions. If this study is not carried out, TEVETA and TEVET institutions may continue to award certificates to undeserving students, thereby compromising the standards of TEVETA examinations. This will in the long run undermine society's confidence in TEVET trained graduates. In view of the constant incidents of examination malpractice in the TEVET examinations, it was necessary to conduct research on this topic before certificates issued by TEVETA become worthless.

### *1.3 Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study was to explore the management of examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province.

#### *1.4 Objectives of the Study*

The study aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- i. To investigate the forms of examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province.
- ii. To assess the causes of examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province.
- iii. To establish strategies to help in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province.
- iv. To examine the effectiveness of the TEVETA examination guidelines in curbing examination malpractice.
- v. To determine the challenges faced in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province.

#### *1.5 Research Questions*

The following research questions were a mirror of research objectives:

- i. What forms of examination malpractice occur during TEVETA examinations in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province?
- ii. What factors lead to examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province?
- iii. What should be done to curb examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province?
- iv. To what extent are TEVETA examination guidelines effective in curbing examination malpractice?
- v. What challenges do you face in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province?

### *1.6 Significance of the Study*

The information generated from this study may be of assistance to TEVET College Principals to develop strategies of curbing examination malpractice. In addition, it may possibly help policy makers and decision makers at TEVETA and the Ministry of Higher Education to make informed policy on how cases of examination malpractice could be reduced to a bare minimum in TEVET institutions.

## **2.0 Methodology**

A descriptive survey was used in this study to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena of examination malpractice at the four institutions under investigation. The study was conducted in Ndola and Luanshya districts of the Copperbelt Province. Four institutions were involved in the study. These were Northern Technical College, Luanshya Craft School, National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre and Luanshya Business and Technical College. This study targeted second and third year students and those students who had sat for TEVETA examinations before, as well as key informants who included lecturers, examinations officers from the targeted institutions and an assessment specialist from TEVETA. Due to methodological triangulation adopted in this study, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select actual participants in the study. These were purposive and random sampling techniques. The purposive sampling technique was used to select students who had sat for TEVETA examinations before and key informants as they were considered to be rich with information on examination malpractice. Random sampling techniques was used to select the second and third year students from the four institutions.

The study sample comprised of 21 key informants (i.e. 5 from each school and one Assessment Specialist based at TEVETA) and 124 students (i.e. 31 from each institution). The total study sample therefore, amounted to 145 respondents. The study was qualitative

in nature. Three types of instruments were used to collect primary data. These included semi-structured interviews employed to collect qualitative data from key informants; self-completed questionnaires administered to students and Focus Group Discussions. Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions was coded into themes and sub-themes that emerged through thematic analysis. Quantitative data was entered on Microsoft excel sheet and later interpreted into tables and graphs with frequencies and percentages.

### **3.0 Research Findings**

This study had a total number of 145 respondents. These included 124 students and 21 key informants and all of them participated in the study. This implies that hundred percent response rate was obtained from this study.

#### *3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

##### **3.1.1 Distribution of the respondents by gender**

In terms of gender, 88 respondents were males which comprised 60.7% of the total number of respondents and 57 respondents were females representing 39% of the total number of respondents (table 1).

Table 1: Percentage distribution respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	88	60.7
Female	57	39.3
Total	145	100%

##### **3.1.2 Age of the respondents**

The age distribution of respondents was more confined to the youths. The majority of the respondents were aged less than 25 (51%), followed by those aged between 25 and 30 years (20.7%). 13.0% of the respondents were aged between ages 31-35 while

those aged between ages 36 and above were represented by 15.2 %. Data regarding age of respondents is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 25	74	51
25-30	30	20.7
31-35	19	13.1
36 and above	22	15.2
Total	145	100%

### 3.2 *Forms of Examination Malpractice*

One of the five objectives of the study was to investigate the forms of examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province. Three major themes related to forms of examination malpractice emerged namely: individually enhanced cheating methods, technologically enhanced cheating methods and collaborative cheating methods. These results are presented below.

#### 3.2.1 Individually Enhanced - Cheating Methods.

The majority of the respondents revealed that individually enhanced cheating methods included taking foreign materials into the examination room, body writing, ‘graffiti’ or copying without cooperation and hiding materials in washrooms. During an interview, one key informant stated that:

*Students smuggle all sorts of materials into the examination room such as pre-written answers and parts of note or textbooks despite being searched. They call it the use of “SHIM”, an acronym referring to SELF HELP IMPROVISED MATERIAL. It appears to be the most common form of examination malpractice employed by students.*

The lecturer’s point of view was equally echoed by a student who

also believed that carrying of foreign material into the examination was the most common form of examination malpractice. The student had this to say:

*This is the easiest way of cheating in an examination with less chances of getting caught. We smuggle foreign materials in pants, shoes and bras or place them in strategic points before the examination for easy access. When the invigilator is not paying attention to us, we consult them.*

A similar view was held by another key informant who noted that:

Most of the cases of examination malpractice reported in these TEVET institutions during final examinations involve the use of foreign material in the examination room by students. These cases are common every year.

The majority of the respondents also perceived graffiti or body writing as a common form of individually enhanced form of cheating. These are writings that are done on the bodies using ink or written on the walls strategic to where a student intends to sit. A student from one focus group discussion explained that:

*Some students are capable of having their bodies written with expected answers of examination questions. These can be written on the thighs in the case of female students, palms or arms.*

Another student from a different focus group discussion said that:

Some students go to an extent of writing graffiti on the walls and desks in the examination room so that they can easily access the information during the examination.

Following the findings of the study, it was evident that ‘graffiti’ or copying without the knowledge of another candidate was another prominent type of examination malpractice that was put forth by the respondents. One key informant stated that:

*Students do a lot of ‘graffiti’ during exams if an invigilator is not watchful. This is where they raise their necks high in*

*order to copy from their fellow students with or without their permission, the way a giraffe raises its neck to see what is ahead.*

Furthermore, most student respondents pointed out that hiding of various forms of literature in the washrooms to aid them during the examination was common among students. One student stated that:

*Some students are fond of deliberately leaving notes in the ablution blocks in order to help them when they are stuck in the examination. This is better than smuggling them into the examination room, just in case the invigilator assigned to that examination venue is very strict.*

### 3.2.2 Technologically Enhanced - Cheating Methods

The majority of the respondents agreed that technology was certainly playing a part in examination malpractice. The most common form of technologically enhanced –cheating methods was the use of cell phones and other electronic gadgets like programmable calculators. One student revealed that:

*Some students manage to use devices such as smart phones, tablets and programmable calculators. If the invigilators are not strict, one can browse the internet or check for answers on the snapped pages of textbooks or note books on their phones. They can even ask for help from outside through text messages and WhatsApp.*

### 3.2.3 Collaborative Cheating Methods

All of the respondents were in agreement that cheating methods where people worked as a team or in pairs were rampant in the TEVET institutions. Collaborative cheating methods reported included leakages, impersonation, collusion, examination markers' malpractice, script swapping and the use of coded or sign language. To illustrate leakages, a key informant stated that:

*Once in a while, we hear students saying that an examination*

*paper leaked. In fact, I once saw one real examination paper days before it was administered on a WhatsApp group which comprised of the members of a class I taught. I think a member(s) of staff at TEVETA supplied students with it.*

A student also indicated that:

*Sometimes, we have access to examination papers before the examination. These are sent on WhatsApp and we get to share answers on this platform. Leakages are rare though.*

On impersonation, student respondents from the focus group discussions revealed that it was another form of examination malpractice, which was not very common, however. They stated that an individual who was not registered as a candidate for a particular examination wrote an examination for a registered student. To illustrate this point, one student asserted that:

*Students who are not registered as candidates for particular examinations may take the place of one who is registered but not ready to sit for the examination, usually for money. Sometimes, this may be in collaboration with an invigilator. At times, the unregistered candidate may do it without the knowledge of the invigilators.*

A key informant also testified that impersonation occurs during examinations:

*Once in a while, we catch students who write examinations on behalf of others. Sometimes we can identify them especially if we have taught them before. We can tell that the examination they are writing is not meant for them.*

Respondents were also of the view that collusion was another form of examination malpractice that was exhibited during examinations. To illustrate this, one student stated that:

Copying through collusion is a form of examination malpractice which is common. Sometimes, students make a deal with the

invigilators so that they ignore any collusion which will be going on amongst the students in the examination room.

A key informant stated that:

*Students have a habit of passing information amongst themselves by exchanging notes, answer booklets or question papers with answers written on them. This is usually done when the invigilators are not strict in their invigilation.*

Still on collaborative cheating methods, the majority of the student respondents shared the view that examination malpractice during the marking of examinations was rampant. Regarding this particular situation, one student respondent substantiated that:

*Students usually connive with the examination markers (lecturers) so that they can be made to pass the examinations. Of course, money is involved. I think some lecturers also deliberately decrease the student's marks in order to punish them due to personal differences.*

Some respondents also recognized script swapping as another form of examination malpractice that was in TEVET institutions. One key informant asserted that:

*Taking in already answered answer booklets and replacing them with the answer booklet given in the examination is also a form of examination malpractice among students. This is not common though.*

One student also echoed similar sentiments:

*Students are craft. They are able to swap scripts written elsewhere with the one given in the examination room provided the answer booklets are the same. All they have to do is arrange with someone outside the examination room to write the examination for them as they pretend to also be writing in the examination. When the examination is almost over, they get permission to go outside with the intention of going to*

*collect that answer booklet. Then they smuggle that booklet into the examination and submit it to the invigilator. The one that they were given in the exam room could be smuggled out of the examination room and destroyed wherever.*

The use of coded or sign language was the last but not the least form of examination malpractice advanced by the respondents under collaborative cheating methods. One student explained that:

*Sometimes it's possible to use sign language to help a friend in need. It helps us as some invigilators may not notice what is going on in the examination room.*

### *3.3 Causes of Examination Malpractice*

The views of the respondents on the causes of examination malpractice were categorized into five (5) major sub-themes that emerged during analysis. These included the following: personal factors, academic factors, social factors, psychological factors, and environmental factors.

It was evident that some factors that led to students' involvement in examination malpractice were personal in nature, which included inadequate preparation for examinations and laziness towards academic work. On inadequate preparations for exams, student respondents were of the view that most students had no time to prepare for examinations due to their involvement in various non-academic activities. A key informant stated that:

*Lack of preparation or inadequate preparation for examinations and lack of effective study skills lead to examination malpractice among students. They don't study as much as they should. Apart from that, they also don't seem to know how to divide their time. They would rather wait until the examinations approach for them to start studying. This puts them under pressure to understand so many things at once. A student who studies hard will definitely have no need to cheat in an examination.*

The findings from the respondents also revealed that lack of seriousness towards academic work caused students to engage in examination malpractice. One key informant had the view that:

*Some students seem to be naturally lazy to prepare for examinations nowadays because they know that one form of examination malpractice or another will help them pass the examinations. Besides, there is a lot of absenteeism from lectures. This makes them miss out on very important data that would be useful in the exams. Some of them don't even submit assignments and if they do, you can even tell that no serious effort was put in.*

The study revealed that some factors that led to examination malpractice were also academic in nature and included the following: examination questions set out of the syllabus, poor programme structure by TEVETA, lack of study break, lack of seriousness by some lecturers as well as low calibre of students enrolled. To start with, the researchers discovered that some students cheat during examinations due to some examination questions being set out of the syllabus at times. A student explained that:

*TEVETA sometimes brings questions out of the syllabus. Of course we alert the invigilator and reports are written and sent to TEVETA. However, we still doubt that TEVETA will do something to favour us. As a result, we get out of the examination room to go and google the answers. I cannot risk failing an examination when it is not my fault.*

The study also made known what students thought was a poor programme structure for Diploma in Electrical Engineering as being a cause of examination malpractice. A student stated that:

*The second year syllabus is compressed. We cover work that should be done in three terms in two terms. The work is too much to be studied in a short period of time. We sometimes cheat in examinations because we never have enough time to*

*understand a number of things which we learn in class or did not learn if the lecturer did not complete the syllabus.*

A key informant echoed similar sentiments:

*The syllabus for the second years that are doing Diploma in Electrical Engineering is too bulky but it has to be completed in two terms. I think the work is too much for our students. A student who is academically weak may not handle the pressure very well and end up cheating in an examination.*

The study further revealed that some students engaged in examination malpractice as they were not given a study break before the final examinations. A student explained that:

*The academic calendar is structured in such a way that we are not given a study break the way the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University do to their students. What time do we have to study when straight after lectures on a Friday, the following week on Monday examinations start? To make matters worse, we usually have an examination or two every day. It would have been better if the exams were spaced. This situation of not having enough time to study makes us do wrong things in order to pass our examinations.*

Another cause of examination malpractice as shown by the findings of this study was that some lecturers lacked seriousness in the delivery of their lessons. As such, they did not adequately prepare their students for examinations. A student illustrated that:

Some lecturers are not serious with teaching. Sometimes, they are not available when it is time to teach us. As a result, when examinations are approaching, they overload us with assignments and notes during make- up lectures. This trend gives us less time to prepare for examinations. In certain instances, they do not even complete the syllabus. This makes us cheat during examinations.

Moreover, the findings of the study also revealed that the quality of students being enrolled at the TEVET institutions was generally poor. This caused students to rely on examination malpractice to complete their studies and acquire a certificate. As one key informant stated that:

*A student who has a poor academic background from secondary school will most likely have difficulties in coping with advanced subjects at college. As such, one of the options of passing examinations is through examination malpractice. Furthermore, when students are promoted to the next level with some arrears in some subjects at the previous level of study, they tend to be ill equipped to handle subjects at the more advanced level. Like that, examination malpractice is expected.*

Most common causes of examination malpractice related to social factors were peer pressure, societal preference for paper qualifications and low allowances paid to markers of examinations. The majority of respondents agreed that peer pressure led to students engaging themselves in examination malpractice. One student respondent said that:

*Some students get involved in examination malpractice simply because their friends do it. Why would I waste my time studying when my friends are using an easier way to pass?*

Additionally, the findings from the study also revealed that the Zambian society emphasises so much on obtaining a certificate in order to seek a job on the job market. Therefore, this has led students to involving themselves in illegal activities in order to pass examinations. A key informant revealed that:

*Society regards the possession of a certificate as being more important than the skills one delivers. An individual is only recognized if he possesses a certificate. Therefore, students are prompted to engage in examination malpractice to obtain a certificate.*

Another key informant echoed the above sentiments:

*Wrong value system in society has led to a serious quest for the acquisition of certificates instead of knowledge and skills, resulting in students involving themselves in examination malpractice. There is need to revisit the education system and curriculum in the country.*

This study further revealed that low allowances paid to markers of examinations by TEVETA were another cause of examination malpractice in TEVET institutions. One key informant indicated that:

*TEVETA pays us very low allowances for marking examinations. Therefore, when a student offers me money to help him or her pass an examination, I do not deny the offer especially if it is a good amount.*

The findings of the study showed that psychological factors such as fear of failing examinations, lack of self-confidence and fear of loss of employment had resulted in many students and lecturers indulging in examination malpractice. The findings of the study revealed that students were afraid of failing examinations. For this reason, they engaged in examination malpractice. One student observed that:

*No student wants to fail an examination, even when they have not been studying. It is embarrassing. We do not want to disappoint our parents, or rather sponsors. No wonder we make sure that we pass the examinations regardless of the methods used.*

Some lecturers and key informants also believed that a lot of students lacked self- confidence to face the examinations and hence engaged themselves in various forms of malpractices in order to pass. One key informant was of the view that:

*Lack of confidence makes students get involved in examination malpractice. The problem with these students is that they do*

*not believe in themselves. They think they cannot pass an examination without cheating.*

The study brought to light another factor which contributes to examination malpractice as being the fear of losing employment by lecturers if they did not produce high pass rates. One key informant explained that:

*Management expects us to produce not less than 75 percent pass rates. But looking at the low caliber of students that we have, sometimes which is not attainable without giving them a bit of help. Constantly producing low pass rates puts one's job on the line. Who would want to lose their job like this when there is an easy solution?*

The findings of the study also brought to light that environmental factors had a bearing on causing examination malpractice in TEVET institutions. The environmental factors include overcrowding of students in examination rooms, inadequate invigilators, inadequate training of lecturers in examination management and inadequate sensitization of the rules and regulations governing examinations to students. In the first place, the study revealed that insufficient infrastructure led to overcrowding of candidates in examination rooms and was a significant cause of examination malpractice. One key informant echoed that:

*College facilities are not adequate and the students are too many. This brings about overcrowding in examination rooms. As a result, it is very easy for students to cheat.*

The findings of this study also showed that when the invigilators who were allocated to a particular venue were inadequate, examination malpractice was likely to take place. A key informant indicated that:

Cheating in an examination is made easier for students when the invigilators assigned to a venue are a few and worse off, if they are not vigilant.

Another key informant added that:

*The shortage of invigilators sometimes leads to a situation where a lecturer is assigned to invigilate an examination in the subject that they teach. If this invigilator is not morally upright, they may show answers to candidates who are stuck in the examination.*

Some respondents reported that invigilators, who usually happen to be lecturers, were not well oriented on the management of examinations, contrary to the critical role that they were expected to play in ensuring that the process was free from all forms of malpractices. This was a contributing factor to examination malpractice. One key informant stated that:

*Some lecturers shun meetings which should serve the purpose of reminding them about invigilation guidelines. Hence, there are inconsistencies in the way examinations are handled. For example, some lecturers may allow students to get into the examination room with cell phones but ask them to switch them off, while others will totally not allow that. As such, invigilation guidelines are not applied evenly.*

The findings of this study revealed that sensitisation campaigns to students on the rules and regulations governing examinations as well as the dangers of engaging in examination malpractice were not common at the institutions under investigation. One student respondent testified that:

*We are hardly sensitised about the rules of examinations and the effects of examination malpractice. Some students may not know the dangers of the vice or even what constitutes examination malpractice. I think that is why examination malpractice is common at this college.*

### *3.4 Strategies to Curb Examination Malpractice*

The third objective of the study provided the researcher an

opportunity to explore strategies that can be used to curb examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province. From the responses given, five major themes emerged which were government strategies, TEVETA strategies, educator based strategies, community based strategies, technological/security based strategies and mass awareness campaign strategies. Presented below are these strategies.

#### 3.4.1 Government strategies

From the findings of the study, the respondents suggested that the government should establish a clear and strong regulatory framework, backed by renewed political commitment and adequate funding to support the implementation of an Anti-Examination Malpractice regulatory framework in higher education. To illustrate this point, one key informant advised that:

*The government should develop policies which ensure that examinations are only manned by officers trained in examination management.*

Another key informant suggested that:

*One of the ways of dealing with the problem is to introduce effective and comprehensive legislation, providing for stringent penalties against the use of unfair means in examinations. The government should ensure that anybody caught in the act of examination malpractice should be adequately punished irrespective of their status or position in society.*

#### 3.4.2 TEVETA strategies

The majority of the key informants also suggested that TEVETA had a major role to play in formulating strategies to curb examination malpractice. To illustrate this, one key informant advised:

*TEVETA should apply very stiff punishment to culprits of examination malpractice. TEVETA and TEVET institutions must demonstrate their firm commitment to fight and prevent*

*corruption by implementing the penalties attached to examination malpractices adequately. This can be in form of blacklisting students and/or nullifying their results at TEVETA, expelling them in colleges and deregistering institutions where there is evidence of rampant examination malpractice. Contracts of officials at the examination body and lecturers involved in perpetrating examination malpractices should be terminated to deter would be offenders.*

Another key informant added that:

*TEVETA should intensify the monitoring of teaching by lecturers and the administration of examinations in these institutions. When lecturers know that TEVETA officials are around, they tend to be more serious with their work.*

Further, another key informant stated that:

*Lecturers should be paid reasonably and promptly for the services that they render to TEVETA. That way, lecturers will not easily be bribed by students.*

#### 3.4.3 Educator based strategies

Most respondents believed that the institutions themselves were the key to ending examination malpractice through strict adherence to and sensitising examination guidelines. To illustrate this point, a key informant advised:

*There is need for concerted effort on the supervision of students during examinations and the full coverage of the syllabus... There is also need for moral instructions and value re-orientation of students by administrators in the colleges.*

Another key informant observed that:

*TEVET institutions should cultivate good reading habits among students as well as establish more strict examination policies within the school to beef up TEVETA policies governing examinations. Of course, students should be made*

*aware of these examination guidelines and the consequences of engaging in examination malpractice. Besides, any invigilator who is found not adhering to the invigilation guidelines should have disciplinary action taken against them.*

#### 3.4.4 Community based strategies

The majority of the lecturers also believed that the community had a critical role to play in curbing examination malpractice and needed to be involved in efforts to curb the vice. One key informant explained that:

*Parents/guardians and the community should endeavour to give moral upbringing to these children, who must also be talked to by learning institutions on the dangers of examination malpractice.*

Another key informant had this to say:

*Non-Governmental Organisations should collaborate with TEVETA by organizing sensitization workshops, conferences and seminars to key players in the education system on how examinations should be managed.*

#### 3.4.5 Technological/ security based strategies

The findings of the study indicated that technology could play a vital role in preventing examination malpractices in learning institutions under TEVETA. To illustrate this, one key informant said:

*Institutions should install surveillance cameras in the examination rooms to deter students from entering with and using foreign material in the examination room.*

#### 3.4.6 Mass awareness campaign strategies

The findings of the study also pointed to the idea that the majority of respondents thought mass awareness strategies could help to prevent students from engaging in examination malpractice.

One key informant suggested that:

*There is need for debates on examination malpractice on mass media to raise public awareness on the subject. It could be on television and radio. A lot of articles should also be written in newspapers on the same subject.*

### *3.5 Effectiveness of TEVETA Examination Guidelines*

The fourth research objective provided the researcher with an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of the TEVETA examination guidelines for curbing examination malpractice. Most of the respondents were of the view that TEVETA examination guidelines were not effective.

### *3.6 Challenges Faced in Curbing Examination Malpractice*

The fifth research objective provided the researcher with an opportunity to explore the challenges faced in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province. During analysis, nine (9) sub-themes emerged on the challenges and these were inadequate resources, inadequate training of lecturers in examination management, low allowances paid to examination markers, inadequate sensitization programmes To educate students on examination rules and the dangers of examination malpractice, inadequate implementation of examination guidelines, advancement in technology, lack of thorough searching of candidates, failure to cover all items in the syllabus by some lecturers as well as intimidation and threatening of violence to lecturers.

#### *3.6.1 Inadequate resources*

The majority of respondents in the study perceived inadequate examination rooms and invigilators as being a huge challenge in curbing examination malpractice in the TEVET institutions. One key informant stated that:

*Allocating inadequate invigilators to an examination room is a recipe for examination malpractice. This is sometimes the case in some venues. Besides, some venues tend to be too*

*small for a large number of candidates to write examinations there. Hence, the space between the desks is small. This makes it very easy for candidates to cheat in examinations.*

### 3.6.2 Inadequate training of members of staff in examination management

The study showed that inadequate training of members of staff to manage examinations was one serious hurdle in curbing examination malpractice. To illustrate this point, a key informant observed that:

*Sensitisation workshops are rare, if not, non-existent in our college. Even when meetings are called upon to remind lecturers about the invigilation guidelines, some lecturers shun them. This makes them 'flexible' in the way they handle the invigilation process.*

### 3.6.3 Low allowances paid to examination markers

The findings of the study revealed that the allowances that TEVETA paid the markers of examinations were poor. For this reason, examination malpractice involving markers of examinations was difficult to control in the TEVET institutions. A key informant stated that:

*TEVETA pays us very little for the scripts that we mark for them, yet there is a lot of work involved. Like this, it is difficult to resist the temptation of being bribed. Examinations provide us with an opportunity to make money through malpractice. However, if we were paid fairly, examination malpractice involving markers would be less.*

### 3.6.4 Inadequate sensitization programmes

The respondents were of the view that inadequate sensitisation programs to educate the community and students in particular about the dangers of examination malpractice were a serious challenge that TEVET institutions were facing. To illustrate this, a key informant stated that:

The country doesn't have adequate awareness campaigns to educate people on the dangers of examination malpractice. Dissemination of awareness material/information through various avenues such as public and private media, drama and books has been not given paramount importance in this country.

Another key informant also stated that:

*Students are hardly educated about the rules and regulations of examinations, as well as the dangers of examination malpractice. As such, some of them don't know what constitutes examination malpractice. Overall, they think this practice is a normal way of passing examinations as they see nothing wrong with it.*

### 3.6.5 Inadequate implementation of examination guidelines

The findings of the study also indicated that TEVET institutions have been riddled with the inadequate implementation of examination guidelines. Hence, it was difficult to curb examination malpractice. To illustrate this, a key informant asserted that:

*Despite TEVETA formulating rules and regulations to govern the administration of examinations in its affiliate institutions, examination malpractices are rampant because these guidelines are not strictly adhered to at this college. In some cases, certain candidates who are caught engaging in examination malpractice are not punished severely enough to frighten would be culprits. Sometimes, candidates who engage in examination malpractice are not punished at all. That way, students see the examination rules as being 'flexible.'*

Additionally, a student respondent explained that:

*Examination guidelines are not always followed by invigilators. Some invigilators can catch a student practicing examination malpractice but will not report the matter to the*

*relevant authorities. They just forgive the student and let them continue writing the examination. Students take advantage of such lecturers when they are invigilating since they know that they can engage in examination malpractice and get away with it. If lecturers continue operating like this, this vice will never end.*

### 3.6.6 Technological challenges

The respondents also thought that technology had hampered the fight against examination malpractice in the TEVET institutions. The following was the view of one key informant:

*Sometimes students have access to examination questions prior to the examination through WhatsApp. In as much as our college may put measures to curb examination malpractice, we cannot control social media. This poses a huge challenge in curbing the vice.*

### 3.6.7 Lack of thorough searching of candidates

This study revealed that another challenge faced in curbing examination malpractice was that some lecturers did not take time to search the students adequately before they were allowed into the examination room. One key informant observed that:

*Some lecturers do not search the students thoroughly. They are either not interested in searching them or arrive at the venue of the examination late. Hence, they search the students in a hurry. Besides, the majority of the lecturers in these TEVET institutions are men due to the fact that they mostly offer Engineering Courses...In a situation where female invigilators are not assigned to invigilate certain examination rooms, male invigilators cannot thoroughly search the female candidates for fear of being accused of sexual harassment. Overall, when invigilators do not fully search the examination candidates, it is easy for them to sneak some foreign materials into the examination room. Their relaxation to search the*

*candidates promotes examination malpractice.*

### 3.6.8 Failure to complete teaching the syllabus by some lecturers

Some students during focus group discussions complained that some lecturers did not complete the syllabus at times. This prompted them to cheat during examinations. This factor made it difficult for institutions to curb examination malpractice. One student respondent explained that:

*Some lecturers are not serious. Most times when it is their period, they are not available. Then towards exams, they want to have make up lectures. Sometimes, they don't even finish the syllabus. They just give us notes to study and some topics are difficult. We have difficulties in understanding them on our own. So, when a question comes in the exam on a topic that we didn't do in class, we use our phones to Google the answers in or outside the examination room. Alternatively, we write those notes on small pieces of paper or take pictures of them on our phones, and use them in the exam room. If the trend of not completing the syllabus continues, we shall also continue cheating in the exam.*

### 3.6.9 Intimidation and threatening of violence to lecturers

Another factor which came to light during this study was that invigilators faced risks to their lives and property as they tried to fight against examination malpractice. In addition, it was revealed that some students were usually indiscipline during examinations and that lecturers had limited control over them. This made it difficult to curb examination malpractice. A key informant stated that:

*Prior to an examination, as invigilators try to sit candidates in an order that will prevent examination malpractice, the latter do not always comply with the instructions. When reported to the higher authorities, these students are usually not punished severely. Moreover, we fear for our lives and property as we are not fully protected by our college management. This*

*demotivates us and makes us ignore some candidates who engage in examination malpractice during the examination... We fear to be beaten by students.*

#### **4.0 Discussion of Findings**

To start with, there were more males than females who participated in the study. This could be attributed to the fact that science-based programmes do not attract more females because of their technical and practical in nature. Therefore, there are few female students and hence few females who become lecturers in TEVET institutions. In addition, participants aged less than 25 years were more compared to other age ranges because more of the youths nowadays would want to venture in programmes where they can be self-employed.

The study established that examination malpractice is real in TEVET institutions. This finding concur with Chileshe's (2010) observation that no examination session, sadly, goes by without examination leakages and related malpractice resulting either in nullifying, suspension or expulsion of some students. The students in most cases use whatever means to acquire prior knowledge of questions which include among others, blackmail, bullying, extortion, money and sex. In almost all learning institutions in Zambia, lecturers are pressurized by students and sometimes relatives wanting to have access to the dreaded examinations beforehand (Chileshe, 2010). Evidence from the field revealed three forms of examination malpractice that exist in the TEVET institutions namely, individually enhanced-cheating, technologically enhanced -cheating and collaborative cheating methods. The findings unveiled that individually enhanced cheating methods include taking foreign materials in the examination room, tattooing or graffiti or copying without co-operation. Contrary to the findings of Mtanga et al. (2012) where it was established that pupils appreciated the use of technology like mobile phones and Internet to find a lot of useful information thereby supplementing the shortage of textbooks in

schools, the results of the current study showed that technology enhanced cheating in examinations was common in form of use of text messages and WhatsApp on cell phones and other electronic gadgets. According to Mulauzi et al. (2012), ICTs have the potential to empower students with unique as well as direct access to information. Thus, students can have access to electronic learning resources and other scholarly articles available electronically that have the potential to increase their knowledge and add value to the student learning process instead of them using technology to cheat during examination.

Additionally, research findings unveiled collaborative cheating methods in the learning institutions including leakages, impersonation, collusion, examination markers malpractice, script swapping, hiding materials in washrooms and the use of coded or sign language. These results are consistent with the findings of Irira (2014), Jokthan (2013), Arakaranga and Ongong (2013), Fatai (2005) and Chapi (2011) whose findings revealed the most prevalent form of cheating in examinations to involve the diverse use of synoptic notes that may be written on well folded sheets of paper, on the arms, thigh, hems of clothes, handkerchiefs, calculators or toilet papers; giraffing; bribery; leakage; shortage of invigilators; overcrowded examination halls and use of mobile phones to send text messages on the questions to people outside the examination hall, who will then text the answers back. The findings of this study established that examination malpractice takes place before, during and after the examinations and is done by students, invigilators, examination markers and sometimes, officials at TEVETA. However, it appears unlikely that lecturers who set examinations are involved as their duty is to set and submit examination question papers to TEVETA when called upon. Surprisingly, lecturers are asked to set a number of different question papers per subject from which TEVETA decides which ones to administer in the April, August and December examinations. But how lecturers come to know which papers are to be written in a particular session remains questionable.

The study revealed numerous causes of examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province and these included personal, academic, social, psychological and environmental factors. Personal factors included inadequate preparation for examinations and lack of seriousness towards academic work while social factors included peer pressure, societal preference for paper qualifications and low allowances paid to markers of examinations. Academic factors included questions being set out of the syllabus, poor programme structure by TEVETA, lack of study breaks, lack of seriousness by some lecturers as well as low calibre of students enrolled at these TEVET institutions. Psychological factors included fear of failing an examination, lack of self-confidence and fear of losing employment. Lastly, environmental factors included overcrowding of students in examination halls, inadequate invigilators, inadequate training of lecturers in examination management and inadequate sensitisation of the rules and regulations governing examinations to students in the four TEVET institutions. Findings on the causes of examination malpractice such as inadequate preparation, lack of self-confidence, laziness of students, peer pressure, societal preference for paper qualifications, low allowances paid to markers of examinations, lack of seriousness by some lecturers, low caliber of enrolled students, fear of failing examinations, overcrowding of students in examination rooms and inadequate invigilators concur with those of Badmus (2006), Olushola (2006), Nwankwo (2011) and Mudenda (2016). Similar to the current findings, these authors established that the major forms of examination malpractice include leakage of question paper; bringing foreign materials into the examination room; swooping of scripts in the examination room; writing on handkerchiefs or tights; girrafining; secretly breaking into a strong room where exam papers are stored; colluding with a medical doctor to obtain a fake medical certificate and mobile text messages. Other scholars pointed out that lecturers involve in examination malpractice for financial gains from students (Maheshwari, 2011)

and so deliberately do not cover all items in the syllabus (Nwankwo, 2011) so that students pay them to access information on what is not covered.

Examination malpractice according to Chileshe (2010) is exacerbated in Zambia with the fact that passing examinations is highly emphasized with those who fail to score highly being abandoned along the way and labeled as ‘drop-outs’ or ‘failures’. Some students tend to be under pressure and resort to examination malpractice in order to perform well. This is supported by Maheshwari (2011) who argued that a society that puts extremely strong emphasis on the achievement of goals without a corresponding emphasis on institutionalized methods of achieving these goals is likely to put some members of the society under pressure to employ any technically convenient methods of achieving these goals regardless of whether the means used are legal or not.

Findings of the study also revealed another form of examination malpractice where candidates would consult each other in the examination room if the invigilators are not vigilant or use their cell phones to search for answers on the Internet. Another discovery was that students cheat in examinations because they were not given enough time to study. The fact that they are overloaded with assessments every term and have no study break put them under pressure to assimilate all the information in their respective courses. To make matters worse, some of them are academically weak. Hence, they are prompted to engage in examination malpractice so as to pass their examinations with ease.

In addition, the study revealed that the syllabuses were too wide and that time was not enough to cover all the topics before the examination. This gave an impression that the workload to be covered for a short period of time tended to be too much. Some of the students were reported to be academically weak and as such, succumb to cheating in examinations as they could not manage to handle the academic pressure very well. Another revelation from the study was that there was little or no sensitization about the rules

and regulations of examinations and the dangers of engaging in examination malpractice. Without sensitization campaigns or talks, some students were not even aware of the regulations governing examinations, the penalties that were attached to the violation of these regulations as well as the dangers of engaging in examination malpractice.

It was further discovered that in some institutions investigated, the examination guidelines were inadequately implemented. When students notice that culprits of examination malpractice were not punished severely or not punished at all, others followed suit, knowing that the penalties attached to breaking the regulations of the examinations were not stiff. Consequently, students keep on engaging in examination malpractice as it seems like a normal thing to do. The study further revealed that lecturers feared to lose their employment if they produced low pass rates. They are under pressure to ensure that their students pass the examinations. This leaves them with no option but to show the students answers in the examination room, write the examination for them or better still, inflate their marks during marking.

Many causes of examination malpractice were brought to light by the respondents but ultimately the main reasons for the existence of this trend is that no student wants to fail an examination, whether they had been studying or not and all of them want to obtain a certificate at the end of their study. The findings therefore, entail that an education system marred with examination malpractices is likely to produce citizens who would not contribute positively to the economy of the country as they would be not knowledgeable enough to handle critical issues. This means society would face serious challenges in realizing its developmental agenda. Furthermore, students who are products of examination malpractices once given leadership positions would be liable to exhibit dishonest acts such as corruption and laziness.

Several strategies to curb examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions were suggested by the respondents. These

strategies were grouped in five major themes: government strategies, TEVETA strategies, educator based strategies, community based strategies, technological/security based strategies and mass awareness campaign strategies. These results were consistent with the findings of Oduwaiye (2014) and Sylvanu (2016) who reported similar solutions to the problem.

Regarding the effectiveness of the TEVETA examination guidelines in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province, findings from the field indicated that majority of the respondents were of the view that TEVETA examination guidelines were inadequate to curb examination malpractice in the affiliate institutions. On the challenges faced in curbing examination malpractice in selected TEVET institutions on the Copperbelt Province, results of the study revealed that lack of thorough searching of candidates, inadequate resources, inadequate sensitization programs to educate students on the dangers of examination malpractice, non-completion of the syllabus, low allowances paid to markers, inadequate implementation of examination guidelines to curb examination malpractice, advancement in technology, intimidation and threatening of violence to lecturers, blaming lecturers for low pass rates and lack of or inadequate training of members of staff on the management of examinations were the challenges faced by TEVET institutions in curbing examination malpractice.

Additionally, the study revealed that some invigilators do not thoroughly search the candidates before they enter the examination room. This could be done out of negligence or circumstances such as male invigilators having to search female examination candidates due to the examination venue not being allocated a female invigilator, owing to the fact that female lecturers are a few in these TEVET institutions. This provides the candidates with an opportunity to sneak forbidden materials like cell phones and small papers with written answers into the examination room. Findings from a study that was done by Gisore (2016) indicated that it was

difficult for a male invigilator to search female candidates as they would be accused of sexual harassment. The sneaking in and use of cell phones by students in the examination room if there was no strict security was a challenge in curbing examination malpractice. This was consistent with the findings of this study.

This study also found out that inadequate resources in colleges make it difficult to curb examination malpractice. When candidates sit very close to each other in the examination rooms, they can easily cheat. It is possible for them to exchange answers, whisper to each other and copy from each other with less chances of being noticed especially if the invigilators are not vigilant. In as much as they may be vigilant, some tactics may go unnoticed as the invigilators cannot freely walk around the examination room due to insufficient space between desks. In addition, inadequate invigilators allocated to examination rooms was another challenge faced to curb examination malpractice. Gisore (2016) reported similar findings that lack of adequate supervisors, invigilators and security personnel were the challenges faced in curbing examination malpractice. When invigilators are too few in an examination room, it is difficult for them to notice all the irregularities in that examination.

Furthermore, inadequate sensitization of the rules and regulations governing examinations as well as the effects of examination malpractice posed as a challenge in curbing examination malpractice. Some students do not know what constitutes examination malpractice and its negative effects. Hence, they find themselves doing it as passing their examinations is all they are interested in. Lack of or insufficient knowledge of examination malpractice by students makes them unaware of the damage they are doing to themselves and the nation at large when they are involved in it.

This study further revealed that some lecturers do not complete the syllabus, thereby making it difficult to curb examination malpractice. This could be attributed to lack of seriousness by some lecturers or the syllabus being too wide. Some lecturers do not put in their best to deliver quality lectures to their students and only go to

teach when it is convenient for them. This compels students to use illegal ways of passing the examination when they find questions in the examination on topics that were not covered in class. Methods such as using the Internet on their phones to search for answers or even bribing the markers of those examinations so as to inflate their marks are used. Ifijeh et al. (2015) had similar findings and reported that teachers leave the students with no option but to cheat when they do not go to classes to teach expected.

Another challenge that this study revealed were the low allowances that are paid to the markers of TEVETA examinations which make them prone to corruption by students. In this harsh economy, it is difficult to resist money even when the deal is illegal. As such, it is easy for students to bribe some lecturers. When a lecturer is offered money by a student, the former is forced to do whatever the latter wants such as using foreign material in the examination room, discussing or sharing written answers with other examination candidates and inflating their marks during marking. This defeats the purpose of the examination as the results will not show a true reflection of that student's comprehension of the subject. Students who failed to prepare for examinations but want to obtain good grades at all costs are the major culprits. Ifijeh et al. (2015) reported similar findings and acknowledged that corruption poses a great challenge to curbing examination malpractices.

The respondents also made it known that the advancement of technology had hindered the effort to curb examination malpractice. The fact that anyone can post a leaked examination paper on social media like WhatsApp renders the powers of the TEVET institutions useless in controlling its spread. It is practically impossible to stop the students from viewing and distributing that material.

The findings also revealed that intimidation and threatening of violence to lecturers who dared to fight against examination malpractice was a challenge in curbing examination malpractice. Thus, when an invigilator comes across a violent examination candidate in examination malpractice, they would rather do nothing

about the situation for fear of being hurt or having their property damaged especially if they feel that the college management would not give stiff punishment to the culprit.

This study also discovered that the tendency by management to blame lecturers for the failure of students in the subjects they teach, puts lecturers under pressure to produce high pass rates, which may sometimes be through illegitimate means. This makes it difficult to curb examination malpractice as lecturers may be compelled to inflate the marks of the students as they mark the examinations or dictate answers to candidates during the examination, in an effort to make their students pass the examinations. It is not always the case that lecturers underperform. It could be that the students themselves are not serious with academic work or simply have a poor academic background from primary and secondary school, and probably made their way into college through examination malpractice. Inadequate training of lecturers on the management of examinations makes it possible for them to forget some dos and don'ts of the invigilation process. Ultimately, if the rules and regulations of examinations are not applied uniformly by lecturers, the standards of examinations tend to be compromised. This makes it difficult to curb examination malpractice

Students are very sophisticated and always look for weaknesses in the examination system which they can take advantage of. TEVET institutions have a number of challenges which hinder them from curbing examination malpractice effectively. Some of these challenges are caused by the institutions themselves. These include inadequate sensitization programmes, inadequate implementation of examination guidelines, lecturers not completing the syllabus, intimidation and threatening of violence to lecturers as well as blaming lecturers for producing low pass rates. This entails that if these TEVET institutions do not work on the challenges that they are facing in curbing the vice, they will continue to produce ill trained workforce which will eventually contribute little to the developmental agenda of the nation. Hence, they need to find lasting solutions for these problems so that the vice can be put under control.

## **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

### *5.1 Conclusion*

The study revealed that examination malpractice was evident in all the institutions under study. The most common forms of malpractice were the sneaking in of foreign materials into the examination room and collusion. Three major forms of cheating emerged, one of them being individually enhanced cheating methods, where an individual acted alone by for instance, taking foreign material into the examination room. Technologically enhanced cheating methods involved the use of text messages and stored material using cell phones and other electronic gadgets, while collaborative cheating methods involved situations where people worked as a team.

The study revealed that some factors that led to students' involvement in examination malpractice were inadequate preparation, lack of self-confidence and laziness on the part of students. In addition, society exerted pressure on the students through friends and relatives to pass their examinations. For fear of failing examinations, students did everything in their power including cheating, in order to pass the examinations. They took advantage of overcrowded examination rooms and inadequate invigilators, among other things, in order to advance their cheating tactics.

The findings revealed that despite TEVET institutions having rules and regulations governing TEVETA examinations, these regulations were to a high extent not effective as evident from the frequent occurrences of examination malpractice. These institutions have measures put in place to curb the vice but their efforts are hindered by challenges such as inadequate sensitisation to students about the rules and regulations governing examinations and the consequences of breaking them, inadequate resources, inadequate implementation of examination guidelines, intimidation and threatening of invigilators, as well as low allowances paid to examination markers. This study has reaffirmed the findings by other researchers that examination malpractice is a reality in many institutions of learning. It is hoped that this study will help administrators and policy makers to devise stringent measures of curbing this growing trend which has the potential to regress any nation's development.

### *5.2 Recommendations of the Study*

Based on the findings revealed by the study, the following are the recommendations:

1. The government should establish a clear and strong regulatory framework, backed by renewed political commitment and adequate funding to support the implementation of an Anti-Examination Malpractice regulatory framework in higher education.
2. Stiffer punishments should be given by TEVETA and TEVET institutions to culprits such as expulsion, blacklisting and nullification of results for students, and suspension or even termination of a contract for lecturers who are caught engaging in examination malpractice.
3. TEVETA should intensify the monitoring of teaching as well as how examinations are conducted to make sure that students are receiving quality lectures which will adequately prepare them for the examinations, and that the invigilation guidelines are adhered to.
4. TEVET institutions should engage female casual workers to screen the female examination candidates because most of the invigilators were male.
5. TEVETA with other stakeholders should be conducting regular sensitization programmes to lecturers in TEVET institutions through workshops on the management of examinations.

### *5.3 Suggestion for Future Research*

A number of studies have been conducted in Zambia on examination malpractice but it seems they focused on secondary schools. For this reason, there would be need for future research on:

- i. The impact of examination malpractice on the economic development of the country.

- ii. How cases of examination malpractice involving lecturers in TEVET institutions are handled.

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