UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND STUDY HABITS ON EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES IN BASIC EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

DAVID ARHIN

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BY

DAVID ARHIN

Thesis submitted to the Department of Education and Psychology of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in Measurement and Evaluation

MAY 2022

DECLARATION

Candidates' Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's signature…… Date: ……..

Name: ……..

Supervisor's Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's signature…… Date: ……..

Name: ……...

Co-Supervisor's signature……. Date: ……..

Name: ……...

ABSTRACT

Examination malpractice is inconsiderate, illicit, or unwanted behaviour by learners in a prescribed examination of their knowledge or skill in a specific subject. Education stakeholders in Ghana have expressed worry about the implications this menace has taken on since it works against the growth and aims of the country's educational systems and defuses the purposes of validity and reliability. The study examined the influence of study habits and self-efficacy by learners on examination malpractices in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the Asante Akim North Municipality. The study was a descriptive survey design with a quantitative method, with a sample size of 274 learners. This was chosen with a multi-stage sampling procedure from an available population of 866 learners. Data was collected using L-EMQ adapted questionnaires with an r = .727 strong correlation coefficient. Frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, Pearson Product Moment correlation, r and Independent Samples T-Test were used to analyse the data collected. The study discovered that the majority of the municipality's learners have high self-efficacy and that it has a significant influence on examination malpractice. The study also found that most learners in the municipality had good study habits because they used distributed learning. It was shown that there is a low-level positive relationship between study habits and examination malpractices. It was recommended to stakeholders (GES, teachers and parents) that they should support initiatives on self-efficacy development to be a major component in child design and development and a measurable consequence of in-service teacher training to enhance learners' self-efficacy.

KEYWORDS

Self-Efficacy

Study Habits

Examination Malpractices

BECE

JHS Learners

Gender

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DEDICATION

To my family, my friends, and my children, Emmanette Osei Arhin and Davin Gil Osei Arhin

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The educational organisation provides for intermittent assessment and evaluation of the rate of teaching and learning to learners as an examination to determine their readiness and capability for life ahead. Examinations are not the sole tool for estimating learners' fundamental acquaintance, but they have historically been at the forefront and have established themselves as the most efficient and hands-on method of assessment for the time being. Olatunbosun and Omogerie (2012) as cited in Asante-Kyei and Nduro (2014) claim that it is still the best method for empirically measuring and gauging what learners have learned over a school year. The examination has put pressure on both learners and teachers to come up with all kinds of malicious plans to get over this obstacle. These include impersonation, the trading of answer scripts, the use of cheat sheets, and the unethical use of academic resources, to name a few (Makaula, 2018).

It has become routine to participate in examination malpractices during examinations across the country regardless of the stake of the exam. Examination malpractice, according to Badejo and Gandonu (2012), is thoughtless, illicit, or undesirable behaviour by learners in a prescribed examination of their knowledge or skill in a specific subject. Education stakeholders in Ghana have expressed worry about the implications this menace has taken on since it works against the growth and aims of the country's educational systems. The purpose of this study is to

examine the influence of study habits and self-efficacy of learners on examination malpractices.

Background to the Study

Asamoah-Gyimah and Anane (2019) asserted that social expectations, hopes, and ambitions are linked to educational frameworks and objectives, and this is often assumed that providing our children with a good education prepares them to integrate into society. Outcomes of learning are completely realised after comprehending the construct validity of a person's performance in education, which is defined by grades, according to Asamoah-Gyimah and Anane. In a nutshell, an examination is one of the techniques for assessing a learner's academic accomplishment, which is assessed by results.

An examination in this setting is a valuation of the examinee's or learner's performance using a set of test items, questions, or activities to identify the individual's level of knowledge, talents, attitudes, or other behaviours, as well as the amount to which he or she can apply them and their utility (Azuru, 2009). Azuru went on to say that the examination can be oral or written and that it is utilised for many purposes such as instructional management, grading, certification, selection, and placement. As a result, Arhin (2020) asserted that any activity intended to destabilise the examination poses a significant risk of jeopardising the soundness and consistency of the examination's results.

Arhin goes on to claim that "examination malpractices" are one of the main challenges troubling the educational sector. It is a worldwide event that has been widely covered in Ghana, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, and the

UK. The temptation to cheat on examinations has grown to the point that achieving the declared goals of learning and instruction in educational institutions for true development is jeopardised as asserted by Bello and Oke (2011). Examination malpractices, according to Evers and Walberg (2003), are mutually shared disruptions that endanger all levels of the educational division, and the fact that they have even infiltrated elementary school learners is even more unpleasant. Examination malpractice is an illicit activity undertaken by an examinee earlier, during, or afterward in an examination to gain a partial benefit or get an undeserved grade (Azuru, 2009). Examination malpractices are defined as "any improper behaviour demonstrated by candidates or anyone assigned with the obligation of conducting examinations in or outside the examination hall, before, during, or after such examination" (West African Examination Council, 2003).

Examination malpractice, according to Jega (2006), is any form of misbehaviour that outcomes in variation or interference with the established ways of directing examinations in any scheme. It may also be defined as an oversight or behaviour that jeopardises the soundness and veracity of an examination (Okwu, 2006). Examination malpractice is defined as a deliberate act of wrongdoing carried out in violation of official standards to fairly benefit or disadvantage an applicant; it is applicants' sloppy, unlawful, or undesirable behaviour through a prescribed examination of their knowledge or competence in a specific field (Philemon, 2007). Any act or action that jeopardises the soundness, consistency, or veracity of any assessment or valuation scheme (for example, violations of examination ethics or carelessness) is prohibited (Obo, 2008). As a result, examination malpractice is an

abuse of the directions and principles for the appropriate conduct of any examination or evaluation method.

Researchers focused on variables impacting (causes); effects; and important players in examination malpractices, according to Arhin and Kwakye (2020), who used a meta-analysis to show that there have been several studies on examination malpractices. An existing study only considers the effect factor of variables affecting examination malpractices globally and in Ghana, but not the effect factor of variables manipulating examination malpractices in Ghana. As a consequence, the impact of study habits and self-efficacy as independent variables on examination malpractices should be examined further in my research.

For example, Achio, Ameko, Kutsanedzie, Alhassan, and Ganaa (2012) looked into the methodology, affecting variables, and primary players of examination malpractices, as well as fines and processes, to reduce the danger. The findings of Achio et *al.* discovered that the common leakages that lead to examination malpractices originate from a candidate's peers, with 66.7 per cent of respondents agreeing. They also discovered that writing on substances (which had a 100% response rate) and writing on examinees' bodies were the most common examination malpractices (83.3%). The data show that the number of methods for engaging in examination malpractices increased by 140 per cent between 2000 and 2011, from 5 to 12 distinct categories. Finally, Achio et *al*. discovered that almost 37 per cent of learner respondents had been involved in examination malpractices, with 94.5 per cent acknowledging that the conduct of examination malpractices is a serious offense and unethical.

Cornelius-Ukpepi, Ndifon, and Obinna (2012) examined "the factors that influence examination malpractices and academic performance in Primary Science among the primary six learners in Cross River State, Nigeria". They observed that there was a relationship between parents' and teachers' contributions to examination malpractices and learners' performance in ordinary science academics at the elementary level in their research. Similarly, Akaranga and Ongong (2013) investigated "examination malpractices in educational institutions, with a particular focus on two Kenyan public universities." Conferring to the report, the most prevalent sorts of examination indiscretions comprise "candidates working with invigilators and examiners; impersonation, and fabricating synoptic notes." Furthermore, the investigators recognised their inquiry on "Thomas Hobbes' theory of State of Nature" as a result of principled interrogations, and discovered that examination malpractices were common incidences in tertiary institutions, senior high schools, and elementary schools in almost every part of the world.

Similarly, Suleman, Gul, Ambrin, and Kamran (2015) examined the "factors that contribute to examination malpractices at the high school level". It was revealed in the study's findings that numerous reasons contribute to misconduct in the examination. The reasons consist of "corruption; poor implementation of examinations rules; learners and parental threats; no fear of punishment; inadequate preparation for examination; poor invigilation; collusion; disloyalty of examination bodies; fear of failure; poor morale; and economic depression of supervisory staff; etc". Also, the findings of the study revealed that "the act of bringing of unsanctioned materials to an examination hall; sending of prepared answers to

learners by teachers and parents; impersonation; questions and paper leakage; cheating; and scripts changing are the various forms of examination malpractices".

Phiri and Nakamba (2015) explored the "effect of examination malpractices (leakages) on learners' academic performance in Geography in selected high schools in the Kitwe Municipality, Zambia". The results of the study revealed that "examination malpractices (leakages) had a negative influence on learners' academic performance because they influence learners to lose self-confidence, the desire to learn, to study hard and acquire knowledge and skill". They also observed that most learners who desire to or are interested in test cheating dedicate less time to academic activity, particularly during examination times; learners waste a large percentage of their study time on cheating. Furthermore, respondents in the survey testified that the principal impacts of examination delinquencies on learners' academic performance comprise "poor academic performance, less focus during classes, indiscipline and lack of respect for teachers, and terror during examinations, to mention just a few."

Likewise, Oko and Adie (2016) examined "the various forms of examination malpractices and the causes of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities, using the Cross River University of Technology as a case study and commended potential means of resolving the dreadful development". They discovered that legitimate societal concerns and the want for certification in the face of subpar academic performance are the main contributors to test fraud in Nigeria. They also revealed that several factors, including what most people referred to as a flawed value system that encourages a serious pursuit of

certification instead of knowledge and skills, laziness, a lack of preparation or insufficient preparation for the examination, a lack of confidence, subpar school facilities (such as an inadequate examination hall), an uncomfortable seating arrangement, socioeconomic factors, etc.

Osadebe and Bini (2018) surveyed to verify "teachers' assessment of senior high school at the various factors affecting examination malpractices in Delta State". The findings from their survey discovered that "teachers' role, supervisors' role, societal value, and learning environment are major players in influencing examination malpractices". They also exposed that "gender; qualification and rank of teachers shape their opinion about these factors of examination malpractices". Likewise, Okey and Ewa (2019) examined the "correlation between examination malpractice and corruption among learners at CRUTECH". The results show that "cheating, gratification, and bribery have significant relationships with corruption among learners at CRUTECH". Simply expressed, the findings represent one of the methods used by learners to commit examination fraud.

In the Ghanaian context, Thompson, Ansoglenang, and Laar (2019) explored the causes of "why learners engage in examination malpractice during examinations at the University of Development Studies (UDS)". The results suggest that "smuggling of prepared notes on pieces of papers (foreign material) into the examination hall; writing of examination answers on palms; thighs and other body parts; and communication by seeking for answers from colleagues are the three primary forms/methods learners engage to cheat during examinations". Furthermore, the survey found that some learners aspire to achieve excellent grades,

while bright learners drive to engage in examination irregularities. Arhin (2020) examined "the perceived factors influencing examination malpractices in BECE among learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality and specifically considered school ranking and non-completion of syllabus contents as independent variables. The findings of his study showed that a majority of teachers in the municipality perceived that school ranking and non-completion of syllabus contents influence learners' involvement in examination malpractices in BECE. However, he asserted that teachers are irritated about what the study describes as a dire phenomenon, thus examination malpractices vis-á-vis disagreeing with the statement that learners cheat in examinations because they have not been taught the content(s) being assessed" (Arhin, 2020, p.7).

Finally, Adzrolo, Asamoah-Gyimah, Cobbinah, and Annan-Brew (2021) in a study "investigated the causes and possible strategies to minimise examination malpractices in Senior High Schools in Ghana" (p. 200). Their study found that the major reason for examination misconduct includes "inadequate learners' preparation for examinations," with community schooling on the consequences of examination misconduct emerging as the most effective method for reducing the threat. Amofah (2019) established in an article on Modern Ghana's new page online that,

> "… *in Ghanaian Basic schools, it is common to see children girraffing onto colleagues' work to copy during class exercises*. It is also common to see BECE and WASSCE questions leaked as far as the groundnut seller days to the examination. … Finally, in Ghana, academic credentials and titles are

> hailed so much that, most learners are ready to pay their way through various courses and programmes of study. This has infiltrated our modern politics, chieftaincy, and even Churches such that when a minister, chief, or pastor is named, people are cock ears ready to hear the academic title accompanying the name. Shall we ever name a Moderator of a church without a Ph.D.? We need to look beyond the horizon. *The nation needs to review the placement system and method of assessment so as not to put any learner at a disadvantage*. Every school should be well-resourced to provide fairness in the writing of the standardised examinations. If schools are well-resourced, the nation can think of the installation of Closed-Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) in examination halls to check this ugly menace. *The war against examination malpractices demands a collective effort inscribed in commitment*."

In connection to this assertion, we must adhere to Mornah (2020) who advised learners in his pronouncement that they (learners) should avoid being involved in examination malpractices although they happen to write their examinations in the difficult era of COVID-19.

As a result of the foregoing literature assessment, it is clear that the majority of current studies on examination malpractices are focused on causal elements, effects/consequences, and external factors of perpetrators. None of the studies looked at the impact of study habits and self-efficacy on examination malpractices. Examination misconduct is a common occurrence in Ghana. The following are the findings of inquiries into incidences of examination malpractices uncovered during

the administration of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) 2019 according to the Chief Examiner's Report (2019): “173 candidates had their subject results cancelled for bringing foreign material into the examination hall; 19 candidates had their entire results cancelled for bringing mobile phones into the examination hall, and 2,497 subject results were withheld pending the conclusion of investigations into alleged examination malpractice” (p.5). It was unsurprising, given that the outburst of examination malpractices in Ghana was labelled by the late Prof. J. E. A. Mills, the third president of Ghana's fourth republic, as “an upsetting development in the landscape of Ghana and fascinated civil society, the church, and parents to aid in instilling desirable decent and wholesome attitudes among learners” in 2009 by Ghana News Agency (2009, p.3).

Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky (2007), as cited in Mensah and Asamani (2013) pointed out that self-efficacy is a certainty, and also a family or other roles that can interact and positively cause the quality of life and personal growth, including working life quality. Self-efficacy beliefs, according to Amtmann et *al*. (2012) and Mensah and Asamani (2013), determine the course of action that an individual takes. They went on to say that one's principle in one's potential to achieve influences inspiration, the level of stress faced, the amount of work done, and the degree to which one persists in the face of adversity and ambiguity.

Learners who have a high level of self-efficacy do not cheat (Cornelius-Ukpepi, Ndifon, & Obinna, 2012); yet, there was a strong adverse relationship between self-efficacy and examination malpractice ($r = -.824$, $p < .05$) (Ofodile, Odiato, Adenugba & Edun, 2019). The present research is poised to address these

established contradictory findings. Mensah and Asamani (2013) posited that "Self-efficacy is about how an individual believes that he or she can perform a task and that the higher one's self-efficacy, the more confidence he or one can succeed in a task. They further suggested that in difficult situations, we can find people with low self-efficacy more likely to lessen their effort or give up altogether while those with high self-efficacy try harder to overcome challenges" (p. 195).

Furthermore, solid study habits, pointed out by Adeninyi (2011), allow learners to study freely at home and pursue further education ambitions. The accomplishment of learners in external tests like the West African Examinations Council is also a factor in the development of healthy study habits in high school (WAEC). Agba (2013) pointed out that unmotivated learners study in whichever manner they can without following any precise tactics, and they are more likely to achieve below normal. As a consequence, he discovered that appropriate study habits permit learners to attend courses on time and regularly. It also assists learners in finishing coursework on time, understanding attentively for examinations and taking proceedings and emerging ideas independently, and asking relevant questions in class, all of which contribute to excellent scores after the term or semester. In an essay about improper study habits, Monday (2008) claims that adopting excellent study habits in school would support learners to flourish and succeed in class and accomplish their academic goals to benefit society or the nation as a whole.

Abdulmumin, Abdullahi, and Ibrahim (2020) on the second independent variable (study habit) revealed that study habits would influence examination

malpractices only if there is another predictive variable (R^2 = 0.08, F (2,597) = 26.99, p<.05). However, study habits as a lone variable does not influence examination malpractices (β = 0.02, t=0.57 p>.05). I, therefore, want to either agree or disagree with the findings of the current study. Finally, the preceding research indicates that examination malpractices appear to have a constant up-and-down tendency. As a result, educational stakeholders must work together to address the dire situation, which has far-reaching consequences. The repercussions, according to Hang'andu (as stated in Phiri & Nakamba, 2015), are grave not just for the educational sector but also for learners, instructors, parents, and Zambia as a whole. It is, therefore, needful for Ghana to take a serious look at this dire situation by considering internal constructs such as study habits, self-efficacy, personality types and self-regulation of direct perpetrators (learners) of examination malpractices.

Statement of the Problem

Examination malpractices are widely publicised and are often regarded as serious and disciplinary offenses, resulting in the immediate dismissal of examinees or the dismissal of the examination officials concerned. Despite these large numbers of threats, perpetrators are either not prosecuted or are simply ignored. Examination malpractices remain, unfortunately, even when the perpetrators of test irregularities are apprehended and sentenced. As a result, it is assumed the prior assumption was true since previous empirical studies on the sources/causes and repercussions of examination malpractices were not considered and explored. Therefore, it is essential to examine the causes and implications of examination misconduct from an ethical perspective.

The quest to curb examination malpractices seems to be so vital since it has rapt the attention of several studies (Adeyemi, 2010; Amadi & Oputyo, 2018; Jimoh, 2009; Makaula, 2018; Muhammad, 2015; Oko & Adie, 2016). Other studies also aim to curb the delinquency of examination malpractice having deployed dissimilar independent variables (Adeyemi, 2010; Jimoh, 2009; Oko & Adie, 2016); with diverse findings evolving accordingly. For example, some studies show a substantial relationship between societal factors and provenance to examination malpractices (Anagbogu & Idajor, 2016; Animasahun & Ogunnira, 2014); as well as teachers' involvement (Cornelius-Ukpepi, Ndifon & Obinna 2012; Maciver, 2017).

There is an alarming upsurge in the number of learners who cheat on examinations at school. Given the context of the present study, it is clear that the examination plays a significant part in the educational sector. Examination malpractices at any level of education pose a danger to the soundness and consistency of test outcomes and, as a result, to the authentication and validation credentials or certificates that are disseminated (Abuga, 2015). In support of this, Arhin and Kwakye (2020) found that examination misconduct is common, particularly in various sections of the African and Asian areas. Examination malpractice, sometimes known as cheating, has plagued the educational system in many nations for years, as mentioned by Nyamwange, Ondima, and Onderi (2013). Examination misconduct is another social deviant plaguing Ghanaian education, and it has to be addressed quickly.

Impersonation and the leakage of test questions have been highlighted in the Ghanaian media as a reoccurring act commonly linked with the West African Examination Council, which is the country's assessing agency for technical, senior high, and basic schools. Examination malpractices appear to be perpetrated by learners, parents, and school officials. For example, the Chief Examiners' Report (2019) revealed that about 2,689 examinees have had their results either revoked or withheld after the examining board conducted inquiries. Learners' fear of failing or receiving low grades motivates them to participate in examination malpractices (Phiri & Nakamba, 2015). Ghanaweb (2020, September 18) reported that

> *"The West African Examinations Council has revealed that eleven (11) persons have been arrested over the leakage of the mathematics paper of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).* The paper leaked on Thursday, September 17, 2020. Pictures of the Mathematics paper which was scheduled to have been written on Thursday went viral on social media a few minutes before the start of the paper. Head of Legal Affairs at WAEC, Rev. Victor Brew, disclosed that the arrested persons will assist with investigations. *Now, with the leakage issue, we have gone ahead and reported these allegations and handed them over to the security agencies, specifically National Security and BNI. Some of the persons have been apprehended to assist with investigations into these issues of snapping of question papers after the examination has begun."*

Records on examination malpractices in five selected years from 2009 to 2019 confirm the prior statements. Table 1 summarises the information.

Table 1

Rate of Examination Malpractices

Year	Quantity of Cases	Difference in Percentage Rate
2009	525	
2010	1,083	106%
2011	1,127	4.10%
2018	2,278	102.1%
2019	2,689	18.04%

Source: Online Field Data from WAEC, 2020

Furthermore, it has been discovered that examination malpractices have some detrimental consequences. For instance, learners admit that the grades they received were not merited (Arhin, 2020). Furthermore, it was discovered in conversations with colleague teachers at the municipality's senior high schools under investigation that the learners they get from the basic schools with decent scores perform abysmally on their end-of-semester examinations.

This has prompted some questions, which include "Do learners receive genuine scores during the BECE?" Even though several studies have been conducted on the causes, repercussions, and key players in examination malpractice, the purpose of the study is to examine the influence of study habits and self-efficacy on examination malpractice. Furthermore, the statistics in Table 1 on examination malpractices in Ghana, as well as the empirical studies examined

so far, appear to imply that there is still more to explore about examination malpractice in Ghana, particularly in national examinations like the BECE. Also, it appears no study has explored the perceived independent variables (study habits and self-efficacy) in the Asante Akim North specifically. The study aimed to find out how learners' study habits and self-efficacy affect examination malpractice.

Examination malpractice, a persistent concern in the educational landscape, has garnered significant attention due to its potential to compromise the integrity of assessment processes and undermine the quality of education (Adie & Oko, 2016; Adzrolo et *al.*, 2021). While numerous studies have explored the prevalence and consequences of examination malpractices, there remains a gap in the literature concerning the underlying attitudes and factors contributing to such behaviours, particularly within the context of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). The attitudes of learners toward examination malpractices have been identified as a critical factor in shaping their engagement in unethical behaviour during examinations (Anierobi et *al.*, 2017). Moreover, Bandura asserted that self-efficacy refers to an individual's certainty in their competence to complete tasks effectively, which has been shown to influence behavioural choices and outcomes (Hoy, 2004).

However, the relationship between learners' self-efficacy and their involvement in examination malpractices within the BECE context has received limited empirical attention. Furthermore, the study habits of learners have been implicated in academic performance (Bhat et *al.*, 2015). An understanding of the link between study habits and intent participation in examination malpractices

among BECE candidates could provide insights into how learners' approaches to learning may inadvertently contribute to unethical conduct during examinations. Additionally, gender differences in self-efficacy and engagement in examination malpractices have been observed in several educational sceneries (Griggs et *al.*, 2013). Yet, a comprehensive exploration of whether male and female learners exhibit disparities in self-efficacy levels and their inclination towards examination malpractices within the BECE context remains scarce.

Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to address these gaps by examining the attitudes of learners towards examination malpractices, their levels of self-efficacy, the potential influence of self-efficacy on examination malpractices, study habits, and the relationship between study habits and intent participation in examination malpractices. Additionally, the study seeks to determine whether gender plays a part in shaping self-efficacy levels and intent engagement in examination malpractices among BECE candidates.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of self-efficacy, and study habits of learners on examination malpractices in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the Asante Akim North Municipality. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research objectives:

1. To examine the attitudes of learners towards examination malpractices in the Asante Akim North Municipality.
2. To examine the levels of self-efficacy of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality.

3. To examine the influence of self-efficacy on examination malpractices in BECE.
4. To examine the study habits of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality.
5. To determine whether there is a relationship between learners' study habit and their intent participation in examination malpractices in BECE.
6. To determine whether male and female learners differ in their levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractice.

Research Questions

The study answered the subsequent research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of learners towards examination malpractices in the Asante Akim North Municipality?
2. What are the levels of self-efficacy of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality?
3. How does learners' self-efficacy influence examination malpractices in BECE?
4. What are the study habits of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality?

Research Hypotheses

The study also tested the subsequent research hypotheses:

1. H_0: There is no statistical relationship between learners' study habits and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE).

H_1: There is a statistical relationship between learners' study habits and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE).

2. H_0: There is no significant difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractices.

   H_1: There is a significant difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractices.

Significance of the Study

As I make the report publicly available online and present the results at workshops, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ghana Education Service (GES), the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA), the West African Examination Council (WAEC), the heads of educational institutions, teachers, learners, and potential researchers will all benefit from the study's findings.

The results of this study would reveal how the teachers' attitudes and learners impact their intent to cheat and cheating conduct during the examination. As a result, from that standpoint, steps to stop the conduct would be informed. Third, the outcomes of the study would assist WAEC in determining the quality of teachers to be deployed for examination invigilation.

The findings from the study would improve the insight on examination malpractices to school overseers, educators as well as guidance and counsellors' coordinators to aid in their quest to curb mechanised cheating behaviour during

examinations in schools. Findings would serve as literature for investigators in the field of examination malpractice.

The findings of this current study would provide awareness of examination malpractices to school administrators, educators, and guidance and counsellors coordinators, all of whom would be aided in their efforts to reduce or eliminate mechanical cheating during examinations in schools. The study's results, recommendations, and proposals would guide future studies.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the limits that define the study's settings, variables, content, and so on (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The study was narrowed to ten junior high schools in the Ashanti Region's Asante Akim North Municipality. The participants were learners from ten junior high schools in two circuits: Owerriman North and Owerriman South. Finally, the research was narrowed down to two independent variables (study habits and self-efficacy) and one dependent variable (examination malpractices).

Limitations

Limitations are defined by Best and Kahn (2007) as circumstances outside the researcher's control that limit the study's results and their consequences. It was difficult to move to respondents to assist in filling out the questionnaires that were handed to them. I, therefore, trained one research assistant in each school to do that work. Furthermore, because the sample consisted of respondents from a single area with a distinct culture, the conclusions of this study may not apply to other municipalities or the country as a whole. Likewise, the supporting literature was

more foreign than local, cultural differences may have influenced the findings to some extent. I, therefore, ask researchers and stakeholders to take caution when they want to generalise the findings from this present study. Despite these limitations, reasonable procedures were made to restrict their influence on the outcomes of this current investigation.

Definition of Terms

The subsequent are the definitions of the main terminology used in the research:

Cheating: It denotes learners who dishonestly behave themselves before, during, or after examinations (BECE) to improve their marks.

Curriculum: The term "curriculum" refers to a set of guidelines for what learners are taught in school. That is the theory and practice-based substance of teaching and learning.

Education: Education is the process of cultural transmission. It is the development of a person's mind and body (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains) so that he or she can contribute to society.

Educational administrator: Someone who controls an educational organisation of a unit within the organisation, such as a system or an institution such as a university, polytechnics, or college, is known as an educational administrator.

Examination: It is a means of assessing how well a candidate knows a subject in a precise study field. To put it another way, it is a procedure through which research is assessed or tested to determine the quality of information gained over some time.

Malpractice: It relates to learners' suspicions of unethical activity before, during, and after tests to aid in cheating.

Examination malpractice: It refers to any conduct or omission that goes against the examination body's (WAEC) norms and regulations to the point where the test results' reliability and validity, as well as the legitimacy of the certificates given, are jeopardised.

Self-Efficacy: Refers to respondents' determinations in accomplishing a task. There are respondents with high self-efficacy, moderate, and low self-efficacy. The levels are created as low (25 to 59), moderate (60 to 83) and high (84 to 120) using the indicators from the questionnaire.

Study Habit: Refers to the ways of studying (Semantic process, distributed learning, massed learning, cramming) on a particular subject. The measure was done under a scale as follows: 1-cramming (19 to 28), 2-massed learning (29 to 47), 3-distributed learning (48 to 66), and 4-semantic process (67 to 76) using the indicators from the questionnaire.

Gender refers to whether a respondent is a male or a female.

Organisation of the Study

There are five sections to the study. Following the first, the second chapter is ardent to a review of relevant literature. There was a theoretical framework, a conceptual review, a conceptual framework, an empirical review, and a literature review summary. In the third chapter, the research methodologies are described. Topics covered include research design, study area, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instrument, instrument validity and reliability, data collection procedure, ethical issues discussed, and data processing and analysis. The study's findings, as well as a discussion of them, are provided in

Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, the last chapter, the summary, key findings, conclusions, recommendations, contribution to knowledge, implications and suggestions for future research are all discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The section reviews relevant literature on the influence of study habits and self-efficacy on examination malpractices at various levels of education, outlined under the theoretical framework, conceptual review, empirical review, conceptual framework, and summary of the literature review.

Theoretical Framework

The research was directed by the subsequent three theories namely Achievement Goal Theory (Ames, Ames, & Felker, 1977), Ethical Theory (Mackinnon, 2012), and Self-Efficacy Theory (Feltz, Short, & Sullivan, 2008)

Achievement Goal Theory

Ames, Ames, and Felker (1977) established the Achievement Goal Theory, which focuses on recognising distinct types of goal orientations among learners, motivational processes associated with diverse goals, and goal-eliciting situations. Learning-oriented vs. performance-oriented (Dweck & Elliott, 1984); mastery vs. ability-focused (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980); and mastery vs. ability-focused (Maehr & Nicholls, 1980) have all been used to compare goal orientations (Ames & Ames, 1984; Maehr & Nicholls, 1980). These perspectives have been combined to establish mastery and performance goals, respectively. These ideas have been blended, and the results are performance objectives and mastery goals, respectively. Both ego-performance ability objectives and task-learning-mastery goals are

converging; both viewpoints have been combined and are now known as mastery and performance goals, respectively (Ames & Archer, 1987).

In the case of a performance goal orientation, the previous assumption that there is a fear of being charged may be inferred, and success, surpassing others, or attaining success with a modest determination can be inferred as a signal of ability. The focus of a performance goal is on skill and the standardisation of good results. On the other hand, with a mastery goal, the value of learning new skills is emphasised. Ames et *al*. (1977) asserted that learning is valued in and of itself, while mastery is seen as the outcome of hard labour. Situational pressures, as well as individual differences, are known to influence achievement target orientations (Maehr, 1983). There has been extensive study and evidence that situational demands can impact the salience of individual aims, resulting in varied emotional, cognitive, and psychomotor patterns, according to Ames, Ames, and Felker (1977).

When a social comparison is emphasised, learners' attention is drawn to their ability (cognitive), and these self-perceptions enhance psychomotor and emotional reactions to realisation and/or chaos. When absolute standards, self-improvement, or involvement are stressed, learners are more likely to focus on their effort and implementation tactics. Similarly, Dweck (1988) asserted that laboratory studies, rather than continuous classroom research, have amassed substantial data connected to various goal orientations with explicit motivational techniques.

In examination scenarios, informational cues that may assist in highlighting one aim over another are frequently jumbled and may not hold up over time. As a result, how each learner develops his or her classroom social reality determines the

extent to which each learner adopts mastery or performance goal orientation (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1984). With this in mind, it is plausible to presume that the study's purpose is to learn more about how particular motivation patterns are linked to the importance of performance objectives and mastery of national assessments (BECE). The theory, consequently, suites the study since examination malpractices place examinees in a position to possess a strong stance of achieving better grades in the Basic Education Certificate Examination. Motivation factors include the urge for learners to journey to the next educational level and eventually land into their preferred professions since the nation's system is final examination grade-oriented.

Ethical Theory

An ethical theory is an organised examination of a certain point of view on the nature and foundations of right and wrong. It establishes standards for determining whether actions are acceptable or bad, and it strives to defend those standards. Mackinnon (2012) asserted that "an ethical theory provides ethical principles that embody certain values" (p. 9). These ethical ideas are thus important to the study's goal because, after examining the rate of effect of the independent variables, they will play a crucial role in preventing examination malpractices. Henceforth, I recommend that we embrace these ethics. Generally, it can be inferred that examination malpractices escalate when stakeholders disregard these ethics which uphold, maintain, and sustain sanity and ensure credible results in examination. It is obvious from the statement of the problem of the study that these

theories do not adhere to our quest of conducting examinations, especially BECE which should give us credible results for crucial decisions in our education system.

Deontological theory

Deontological theory or ethics, sometimes referred to as duty-based ethics, is a school of thought that holds that our moral duties as fellow humans are determined by reason rather than by the outcomes of our actions. The person who acts for a worthy cause and out of moral goodness is what Kant refers to as acting "from duty" and does so because they believe it to be the morally correct thing to do. Kant's 1947 thesis was based on the categorical imperative, a moral principle that sets an action as required in and of itself without reference to any aim. As a result, the notion of a highly appreciated will, that is, goodwill, must be developed to support the current study.

As Kant argues, nothing is good without qualification, but only goodwill, and goodwill is pleasurable or in one's self-interest; the will is the person's capacity for logical reasoning. The deontological ethical theory is concerned with people doing morally even when it is harmful to them. As a result, individuals must do the right thing even if the outcome is unfavourable. As a result, to make the best moral decisions, people must first comprehend their moral responsibilities and the appropriate norms that govern them. Following the moral principles alone, however, is frequently insufficient; rather, the right motives are required. Furthermore, rather than being defined subjectively, obligations and duties must be strongminded empirically and unquestionably (Johnson, 2014).

Therefore, lying is always wrong if one has a moral commitment to uphold the truth, regardless of how positive or negative the results may be. It is incorrect because it contradicts the categorical imperative and the next two formulations of Kant's moral rule. This entails behaving in such a way that your action's maxim becomes a universal law, as well as acting in such a way that you value humanity, both in yourself and in others, as a goal rather than a means. The behaviour is unsuitable, as said by Kant since I am not enthusiastic for everyone to do it; it considers other people as means rather than goals; and it does not treat them with respect as rational thinking human beings. Conferring to this viewpoint, cheating, which is a form of examination malpractice, is unethical because if everyone did it, the purpose of the examination, which is to provide reliable results, would be undermined. It requires failing to regard people as rational creatures while fooling them into believing that we know the answers to the test questions.

Utilitarianism

The utilitarian hypothesis is a member of the consequentialist school of ethical thought. According to these viewpoints, the amount of pleasant results a particular action produces is the only factor that determines its appropriateness. Goal-directed actions are defined as those that are justified by the final result. The greatest enjoyment for everyone is the suitable and generally desired outcome of human acts. “The morality of an activity is to be assessed only by an examination of its effects,” (Hinman, 1998, p. 163). It stipulates that “the impact of the repercussions on everyone impacted by the activity in question” be taken into account. Therefore, the morally righteous course of action should be the one that

has the greatest overall effects on the greatest number of people. The issues in this case are both immediate and long-term, and they relate to the overall consequences of test malpractices on educational standards and the socioeconomic performance of the nation.

According to Bentham (1748–1832), an action is morally right if and only if the net benefits (sum of utilities) it generates outweigh the utilities generated by any alternative action the agent could have taken in its place. When compared to the net advantages of all other options, there is one actor whose net benefits are the highest. Mill (1873), who produced a more defensible version of Bentham's utilitarian stance, updated Bentham's notion. Bentham offered two components of pleasure quality in addition to lower-order or fundamental pleasures: higher-order pleasures like the arts and intellectual activities that people enjoy. Act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism are the two varieties. One must consider "what effect would my behaviour or, in this case, lack thereof, have on the broader balance of good over evil" before making an ethical choice. The act is given utilitarianism. We should speak the truth if cheating implies receiving the best outcomes in a certain examination scenario. While Rule Utilitarianism asserts that we must pick the action that best follows the general rule. To put it another way, we should think about “what impact would each individual's behaviour or deed have on the overall balance of good vs. evil?” For instance, even if lying might result in the best results in a certain circumstance, the rule to "always speak the truth" promotes everyone's advantage and must thus be adhered to at all times. Act and rule utilitarianism,

according to Mackinnon (2012), are similar in that they both call for the creation of the most happiness or pleasure for the largest number of individuals (p. 59).

According to utilitarianism, one should think about how their acts will influence the wellbeing of everyone who will be impacted. Because utilitarianism is a universalistic philosophy, it necessitates that one evaluate the effects of their acts on everyone who is touched by them, not only on themselves."Utilitarianism then contends that something is morally good to the extent that it produces a greater balance of pleasure over pain for the largest number of people involved with the greatest good of the action for the greatest number of people concerned" (Thiroux, 1975, p. 23). This theory is consequently crucial in the study since it is obvious that not all learners, as well as other key stakeholders, may wish to engage in examination malpractice no matter how the alarming act may seem pleasant and helpful.

Virtue theory

Unlike utilitarianism and deontological ethics, which are concerned with action, virtue ethics is concerned with the kind of person one should be. Normative behaviours that people ought to exhibit toward one another are explored in virtue ethics. It implies that morality mostly depends on a person's character. The focus is on having excellent character. The idea is how a person's moral integrity or excellent attributes develop over time as a result of good behaviour (Spielthenner, 2012). The habit of acting rationally at all times is known as moral goodness. Living a life of virtue involves recognising and selecting the proper middle ground

between excesses and deficiencies in one's actions, beliefs, and desires—neither too much nor too little.

Vices are the habits that accompany excessive excesses, whereas virtues are the habits that accompany the excesses. Prudence is a virtue that leads one in determining what is reasonable in a particular scenario. For example, rashness and cowardice are both vices, but moderation is a virtue. Virtues are both a means and a component of happiness. Some personality qualities are necessary for a happy existence. Moral virtues are character traits that are usually desirable in the situations that people face in their daily lives (Peterson, 2002). For example, if an honest person comes upon a lost thing, he or she will make deliberate attempts to locate the owner since honesty is in their character. Similarly, we expect a virtuous person to refrain from examination malpractices; this indicates the candidate's charisma as a trustworthy individual. Virtues, on the whole, do lead to appropriate acts since they encourage people to act in ways that are typically right in a given context. It emphasises the importance of being virtuous in leading a moral life and encourages young people to cultivate and embody positive character qualities. As a result, the research advises everyone to practise virtue ethics.

Justice theory

Justice as a philosophy calls for fairness, which is the capacity to judge without taking one's feelings or interests into account. According to the ethical principle of justice, each person should receive what is rightfully theirs or what is owed to them. The key tenet is that agreement on what Rawls refers to as the "original stance" results in the foundations of society, such as justice ideals. In this

instance, people act as though they are unaware of their race, set of circumstances, and social milieu. They must decide on a strategy for creating a society where everyone is treated fairly.

To guarantee that everyone's rank and position are established fairly, Rawls makes these people forget about their existing situation. They hide behind a "veil of ignorance," seeming ignorant of their special situation. Rawls (1971, p. 118) suggested that “no one knows his place in society, his class or social status; nor does he know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence and strength, and the like”. No one "understands his vision of the good, the particulars of his realistic plan of life, or even the peculiar features of his personality, such as his dread of risk or vulnerability to optimism or pessimism," he said. The goal of the veil of ignorance is to ensure that choices and agreements are made impartially. This is because it is easier to stay unbiased when a person does not have access to personal information that might result in biased judgements and conclusions.

Decisions are made in an uncertain environment because those in the initial position lack personal knowledge. The so-called Maximin Principle, according to Rawls, is the logical underpinning controlling judgements under uncertainty, argues Spielthenner (2012). According to this theory, it makes sense to choose the option that maximises the minimum when there is ambiguity. The original stance and Rawls' theory of justice rely on two main ideas: the maximin principle, which guarantees reason, and the veil of ignorance, which assures impartiality. Therefore, it follows that every rational creature has an idea of justice, which means that

everyone can rationally understand what is fair and what is not. No logical creature, for instance, would view living a nice life at the expense of others as a just practice. The ethical theory emphasised keen ethics which are crucial in our quest to curb examination malpractices.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Kolbe (2009) thinks that believing in one's abilities can be imperative in measuring the strength of one's cognitive domain. A person's confidence or conviction that they can successfully fulfill their ambitions or dreams at a predefined level on a certain academic activity or objective is known as self-efficacy, according to Bandura's definition from 1977 (Feltz, Short & Sullivan, 2008). Bandura continued by saying that because it affected people's behaviour and results, it was crucial to define how they felt, thought, and were driven. Conferring to the idea, when a learner has a high level of self-efficacy during teaching and learning and understands the lesson, he or she is more likely to put more effort into the examination and refrain from engaging in examination malpractices, resulting in valid and trustworthy examination outcomes during BECE.

Furthermore, Li et *al.* (2012) stated that a respondent with a high level of self-efficacy regarding his or her academic work would have faith in academics and can encourage and provide genuine and credible examination results. For example, when a learner gets motivated due to his or her high levels of self-efficacy, he or she will need attention and time during instructional periods to perceive how the crucial instruction and learning competencies foster easy assimilation of concepts and constructs. The said individual, therefore, improves their studies and prepares

well for examination hence would not be engaged in examination malpractices. However, when a learner's self-efficacy is poor, he or she is less likely to put out substantial effort during instructional periods, and so is more prone to commit examination malpractices (Li, 2012).

A type of task-specific self-esteem is self-efficacy (Lunenburg, 2011). According to Van der Bijl (2002), the core assumption of the self-efficacy theory is that people are more likely to participate in activities in which they have high self-efficacy and less likely to do so in activities in which they do not. Learners who are confident in their talents tend to cheat less on examinations, but the contrary is also true. Self-efficacy has an impact on a learner's ability to learn, motivation, and performance since they will frequently attempt to study and accomplish precisely those things for which they believe they will succeed (Lunenburg, 2011). Strong self-efficacy makes learners more likely to accept and achieve what they are capable of in the future, which reduces their propensity to cheat on examinations. Studies have shown that teachers and learners with low self-efficacy are more prone to cheat on examinations. The idea was thus integrated into the formulation of the current inquiry.

Conceptual Review

This segment reviews the concept and the themes relating to the study and outlines as follows:

Concept of Examination

Schools, being formal organisations, have a planned or stated way of evaluating themselves embedded in their existence and culture. One of the most

common ways that schools evaluate themselves and their learners is through tests or examinations. As a result, passing a test or an examination at that level of schooling is necessary to demonstrate that one has learned the appropriate degree of knowledge. There is a distinction between a test and an examination. As a result, a test generally focuses on a single topic, whereas an examination includes the whole semester's study. In other words, It is a quick test of abilities and knowledge. "Examining competence or knowledge, skills, orally or in writing, and assessing the appropriateness of these characteristics held by applicants" as defined by Achio, Ameka, Kutsanedzie, Alhassan, and Ganaa (2012, p. 146).

For this study, the words are regarded as interchangeable. In education, the most practical method of assessment is examination. Education is intended to offer complete training for children, which includes periodic examinations and other types of evaluation to determine the degree of knowledge and skill development, and it must be done or managed effectively (Oredein, 2006). Oredein (2006) further asserted that to have high success among all learner groups and strong public trust in schools, there must be an accepted way of evaluating learner performance that promotes public confidence in the school. Similarly, the test is the centre of growth for the whole educational system (Achio et *al*., 2012; Ammani, 2011; Wilayat, 2009).

To be able to judge or appraise the academic progress of children or learners, examination results must be both genuine and trustworthy (Achio et *al*., 2012). The certificate awarded at the end of a term of study will only be relevant if the examination assesses what it is intended to test. A vital part of the teaching-

learning process is examinations. It is a tool to acquire feedback, a study-motivator, and a yardstick for gauging the effectiveness of training, hiring, and placement. Now, a variety of businesses utilise it as a marketing tool (Cornelius-Ukpepi & Ndifon, 2012). Examinations might be conducted internally or outside. It may be communicated orally, in writing, or through a combination of the two. Continuous evaluation tests, semester, terminal, yearly, and promotion examinations are a few examples of internal examinations. The West African Examinations Council administers BECE and WASSCE, which are well-liked in Ghanaian schools.

Concept of Examination Malpractices in Schools

The examination includes two distinct philosophies. It must first accomplish the goal for which it was created and then be measured consistently and accurately (Wilayat, 2009). When anomalies or examination misconduct occur, the reliability and results of the test are questioned. On the other side, examination malpractice is typically described as deliberate behaviour that contravenes established examination standards to award a candidate with a disproportionate amount of merit or demerit (Omonijo, 2010). Omonijo (2010) and Akpa (2012) pointed out that examination malpractice is defined as mischief or inappropriate acts that occur before, during, or after any examination by examinees or other stakeholders to gain an unfair advantage. Conferring to these two definitions, examination malpractice is unethical because it encourages weakness by letting learners who succeed in unusual ways be assessed on the same level as those who struggle to succeed on their own.

Hornby (2005) posited that an examination is a formal test that is intended to examine someone's knowledge or competency in a certain area, generally via the use of practical exercises or questions. As can be seen in the backdrop, significant stakeholders in education have broken the exam's goals and ideals in a variety of ways. Using this strategy, some academics have sought to discover examination malpractices from diverse angles. When examiners, examinees, and the general public misuse the proper usage of examination, the question of whether there is a relationship between examination malpractices and academic performance may arise (Olujuwon, 2007). In Africa, things are not much better. The UNDP (2013) posited that examination misconduct in schools and universities has jeopardised educational institutions. Conferring to the study, examination malpractices start in primary schools, where they are mostly performed by teachers, and then expand to high schools and universities. Learners who had successfully committed examination crimes without getting caught in high school saw it as the only way to pass a university examination. Test results tend to paint a distorted image of the situation; As a result, several school graduates were unable to defend their examination results (Adebayo, 2012; Bassey et *al.*, 2010; Jimoh, 2009).

According to Umar (2004), cheating on examinations is a practice that is all too widespread in Nigerian schools. Many Nigerian schools were somewhat at fault because they wanted their learners to perform well on the examination; as a result, rather than striving to supervise via teaching and learning, they assisted and encouraged examination malpractices. The issue was made worse by a shortage of qualified instructors, a paucity of instructional materials such as textbooks and

science equipment, and inadequate compensation for instructors, supervisors, and invigilators (Alutu & Aluede, 2006). The only option left in these conditions was to assist learners and professors in cheating to pass and make money. Impersonation, the use of unfamiliar tools like books and calculators, exchanging answers with previously written scripts, stealing, converting, and misappropriating scripts, collaboration in the examination room, including copying, and systematic cheating involving teachers and invigilators were all examples of the phenomenon (Aminu, 2006; Onuka, 2011).

The Daily Graphic (2013, January 16) reported that examination malpractices have become more prevalent in Ghana as a result of candidates' lack of commitment to their studies, lack of confidence, laziness, inadequate preparation, and fear of failing. Different cheating methods were created by learners in testing environments. In the teaching-learning process, examination is crucial. It serves as a study incentive, a feedback system, and a standard for judging how well education is delivered, candidates are chosen and placed, and job candidates are hired (Wango, 2009). Examination malpractice, on the other hand, should be seen as inappropriate behaviour because it is a constant destroyer of our educational system. Despite previous efforts by relevant authorities to halt the development of this delinquency, it remains common and its catastrophic repercussions can still be seen in Ghana's educational and testing system.

There is a lot of empirical evidence on factors that impact examination malpractice in the literature. Olatunbosun and Omoregie, as cited in Asante-Kyei and Nduro (2014) suggested that there have been instances of learners, teachers,

and parents being involved in incidents of test misconduct, which have been reported in newspapers like Daily Independent (2004), Vanguard (2005) and Weekend Pointer (2005). They went on to say that the problem is widespread, regardless of the level at which the test is administered or performed, and that the most severe challenge is that it has expanded outside of official educational institutions. Using illegal resources, falsifying information, plagiarism, and supplying aid to other cheats, according to the report, have become the cornerstone for cheating or demonstrating academic integrity violation behaviours. The Nigerian Tribune (2009) revealed that there have been multiple cases where parents and teachers collaborated to cheat. Similarly, parents become engaged by paying bribes to assist their children to achieve excellent marks, while teachers, in exchange for a good name and praise, create an environment that encourages learners to engage in such illicit activities (Alutu & Aluede, 2006).

The situation has reached a commensurate height as a result of the vile engagement of parents, teachers, and school authorities, as well as everyone else who participates in the examination process in any way. The premium or status taken by the canker, as suggested by Olatubunson and Omoregie (2012), has cast doubt on the authenticity of educational institution qualifications and credentials. It is upsetting to see diplomas from prestigious educational institutions belittled and no longer represent the competence and abilities of the goods produced. Individuals should be pointing accusing fingers at teachers, parents, headteachers, examination authorities, and, to a greater extent, security officers, instead of contributing to the deprivation and degradation of the assessment process. When it comes to the

variables that influence examination misconduct, it is always caustic and perplexing to see individuals throw accusing fingers at learners when the word "cheating" is spoken in academia.

Examination malpractices, claimed by Jega (2006) and Obo (2008), are any sort of misbehaviour that causes the defined ways of examining any given system to be changed or interfered with. Examination malpractices, as stated by Afolabi (2010), include the use of foreign materials including scribes, textbooks, textbook pages, current and past test question papers, and blank pieces of paper. Afolabi further claimed that extravagances such as handkerchiefs, shirts, waist clips, and money bills, as well as long notes and photocopies of prepared responses. Afolabi pointed out that candidates scribble notes on their hands and thighs on frequent degrees of immorality and dishonesty, as well as high levels of corruption, tribalism, nepotism, and a lack of job prospects in the nation, which might all play a role in the aforementioned malpractices (Afolabi, 2010). These problems may be found in every facet of town life. Examination malpractice can take several forms, including learner-based, school-based, teacher-based, and even key stakeholder-based.

Examination malpractice, according to Joshua (2008), is "any unauthorised or unapproved action, inaction, activity, behaviour, or practice associated with the preparation, conduct, and process of examinations and other forms of assessment, carried out by any person involved in preparing for, giving, taking, and processing that examination at any level" (p.1). Finally, the

accounts of examination malpractices back up the study's backdrop and thesis statement.

Forms of Examination Malpractices

Examination misconduct has been discovered in the following ways:

Leakage

This means that the substance of the examination, or at least a portion of it, is made public before the test is given. Employees of examination authorities, messengers, printers, and proofreaders are typically involved (Joshua, 2008).

Impersonation

An individual who has not registered as a candidate for a certain examination is replaced by someone who has. The chief examiner and the examination supervisor, in most situations, collaborate to perform the duty. It is typically made up of learners from higher education who are taking the test for money or as a favour for a girlfriend or lover. Male applicants stand in for female candidates in some critical papers, according to Uzoigwe (2007), while some twins write examinations for each other with or without the knowledge of school administrators.

Foreign material smuggling

This form of fraud may be the most common (Joshua, 2008). It speaks about bringing prohibited things inside the testing area (for example, pieces or entire notebooks, textbooks, microchips, and answers). Foreign objects are commonly brought into testing facilities using bras, pants, shoes, hems, or even by test takers or their assistants while they are taking the test (Joshua, 2008).

Copying

The most prevalent type of test fraud is copying or duplicating another candidate's work, with or without authorisation (Joshua, 2008).

Collusion

It is the unlicensed exchange of information between candidates, generally through the exchange of notes. It occurs when an appointed invigilator or supervisor assists applicants in the test hall in exchange for indulgence. In most cases, this is aided by insufficient desk distance and weak monitoring (Joshua, 2008).

Malpractice by examiners

Changing marks on purpose to bloat or lower a candidate's true score (initial mark). Examining officials or applicants can commence this action (Eze, 2012; Olanipekun, 2013).

Cheating on a large scale

This is linked to widespread, organised cheating in which school/examination authorities and candidates answer questions on the chalkboard for applicants to duplicate.

Answer scripts are being smuggled

It entails applicants receiving outside help throughout the test session at the examination hall, where answer scripts are meticulously produced by groups of teachers in collaboration with supervisors, invigilators, and other authorities of the examination.

Dubbing

In the hallway, candidates are allowed to copy from one another while being watched by invigilators or supervisors.

Syndicate and self-enrollment

When the assisted person (syndicate) is enlisted with the application under false identities, this happens during the enrollment procedure. The syndicate will write the examination and then hand over the answer booklet to the candidate at the end.

Supervisors' parcel submissions are late

The custodian is late in presenting their packages after certain designated supervisors. This approach gives the supervisors and touts enough time to finish and modify their scripts. The caregiver is happy after receiving the materials. Furthermore, Ajibola (2011) said that the aforementioned types of examination malpractices might occur before, during, and after the tests and that they could be committed by either applicants or officials with administrative responsibilities.

Examination irregularities before the examination

Leakage is the most prevalent type of examination misconduct that occurs before the examination (Ajibola, 2011). People who have access to the test items, as well as the scoring rubrics (marking schemes), are generally the source of this information. Municipality education examination officers, government officials, headteachers, teachers, former learners, parents, learners, security officials, and examination bodies' officials, such as WAEC and question moderators, are all examples of persons who work in basic schools. Employees working in these

personnel's offices, such as administrators, cleaners, and envoys, may have easy access to the information (Examination Malpractice Report, 2011). Operators of such equipment, as well as "examination contractors," may be sources of question leaks since some examiners offer their questions for typing, printing, and photocopying.

Some individuals invent new ways to "hijack" test items and scoring rubrics from computers and imprinters, particularly those linked to cyberspace. Some applicants, on the other hand, become victims of "fake contractors," who just study the syllabi, compose their test items, and then retail them to their victims. Other sorts of test misbehaviour that might happen before the examination comprise the following:

1. Breaking into the staff office in the dark in search of question papers and/or answer scripts.
2. Staff or co-learners writing project(s) or report(s) for learners.
3. Making false statements about candidates to get them to take a test.
4. Plagiarism is the unintentional modification of someone else's work to get points for promotion or commercial activities.
5. The assignment of one's choice of test centres or the appointment of one's choice of invigilating professionals to certain centres indicates likely cheating efforts.

Malpractice during the examinations

Examination malpractices such as the following are widespread during examinations: Contracting a person(s) to write an examination for a candidate is

known as impersonation. scribbling on things (sheets of paper, handkerchiefs, erasers, and calculator covers); scribbling on portions of the body (arms, thighs, and palms); scribbling on the body (arms, thighs, and palms); scribbling on the body (arms, thighs, and palms); scribbling on the body (arms, thighs smuggling materials into washrooms, pockets, private areas, and pen corks to utilise them as reference materials unlawfully; Answering questions on question sheets and passing them around for others to duplicate; expressing oneself verbally or by gestures; remembering or recollecting learned facts using a coding scheme (coding/decoding); putting up in inconvenient locations in the hopes of receiving aid; bringing in scripts that have already been addressed and replacing them with the scripts that have been supplied to them; Text messaging, borrowing stored content, and utilising mobile phones are all examples of "giraffe" (extending "one's neck to look at and copy the works of others").

Along with other things, they also involve widespread or organised cheating in or around the test room, stealing answer sheets or papers from the examination room, and abusing any supervisors or invigilators. having and using any authorised materials while taking the test (Eze, 1991); sending in hooligans to violently enter testing facilities, removing the question and answer sheets, and then tossing in the answers for test takers to copy (Eze, 1991). Invigilators or supervisors assisting applicants during examinations; exposing other unrequested identities of candidates in answer booklets; and misbehaviour (refusing to follow instructions; interrupting the examination process) are all examples of misconduct (Ajibola, 2011).

After examination malpractices

Examination malpractice is most usually performed by course teachers, examination officials, and the Office of Academic Affairs, and includes working with other members of staff to replace the original responded script with a freshly prepared answered script, paying for or having grades manipulated. “Examination applicants no longer study for extended amounts of time or suffer from examination fever, and examination halls are no longer as silent as a tomb” (Achio, Ameko, Kutsanedzie, Alhassan, & Ganaa, 2012, p. 147). This is because candidates are given advance notice of some examination questions and marking systems or the answers to the questions are read to them in the examination room.

The majority of schools in Ghana were officially run by the government and churches, and they were known for their high levels of discipline and morals. Without a doubt, private schools help to supplement public school difficulties; yet, some of them operate just for profit, neglecting morality and discipline. “The notion of over-competition and the desire to get outstanding results may drive even the administration of such private institutions to utilise whatever means necessary, including different sorts of examination malpractices” (Achio et *al*, 2012, p. 145). This rule was put in place to help applicants pass or pass wills, but it also acts as a marketing tool for schools to recruit more learners to the next registration session, thus boosting their profit margins (Udoh, 2008). Some candidates may attempt to persuade course teachers or test workers to leak questions or manipulate their results rather than complete tests, fail, and pay for registration to skip their following papers, which they are unsure they will pass.

Key Players in Examination Malpractices

Aina; Mahmoud; and Bunza as cited in Olujuwon (2007) identified the under-listed as the perpetrators of examination malpractices: government officials and institutions; parents/guardians; teachers/headteachers; and learners, especially lazy learners. The majority of players in Ghana's education industry are perpetrators of different sorts of examination misconduct. Joshua (2009) also names the following individuals as offenders of various types of examination malpractices:

1. The learners: Most learners are unconcerned about the importance of a work ethic and academic success, and as a result, they are unprepared for most examinations. Learners have lost faith in their ability to write and pass any examination without cheating.
2. The Teachers: Ukpong (2020) posits that teachers are the key players regulating the supervision of examinations in education. Despite this, some instructors assist learners during examinations by bringing prepared test solutions into the classroom, writing the solutions on the whiteboards, and providing refreshments to officials in the teachers' offices during examinations to divert invigilators or supervisors. This is solely done so that learners may openly cheat during examinations with the support and cooperation of their lecturers.
3. Guardians or Parents: Guardians or parents become syndicates in perpetuating examination malpractice. They give money to their children/wards to compensate various people and agencies involved in examination misconduct. Some parents go out of their way to persuade

authorities at testing centers to look the other way and enable their children to cheat in the examination rooms, or to assist in the delivery of illicit materials to them. Some parents go straight to testing agencies to seek higher grades for their children or wards.

4. Administrators of schools: Several administrators of schools in private, government, and mission schools such as headmasters/headmistresses, and principals often are involved in examination malpractice to maintain a "100 per cent pass" in public examinations. Again, most proprietors of private schools get involved in examination malpractices of various forms to increase enrolment for their financial benefits or to maintain the popularity /of their schools.
5. The Government: The government, at various levels, indirectly encourages examination malpractice by putting unreasonable and frightening standards/expectations and providing inadequate service to teachers. Teachers are underpaid and frequently go on strike, causing learners to spend more time at home than in school, even though they must take public examinations. Some governments demand heads of schools to report a particular proportion of children passing in their schools or fear being fired, demoted, or stagnated. Such a policy encourages the heads to cheat.
6. The Society: Certificates are viewed by society as a sign or proof of familiarity rather than a demonstration of talents. Every parent wants to watch his or her child get 5-10 O'-level credits in one session. Parents

are pressed for time, so they pay extra for their children to go to remote places to register for examinations where cheating is rampant.

7. Examining Bodies/Invigilators: Examining staff at the West African Examination Council and other examination bodies have a long history of cheating on examinations. Many of the reasons these officers refuse to follow examination ethics have to do with money.
8. Most examination halls are unsuitable for examination, with insufficient writing desks, lighting, and ventilation, among other concerns. Congestion and discomfort caused by poor facilities can occasionally facilitate examination cheating.
9. Law Enforcement Agents: Law enforcement agents, such as police officers, are frequently involved in examination misconduct. They are typically drafted to maintain discipline and follow norms and regulations. They extort significant quantities of money from learners and school officials in exchange for allowing learners to cheat on examinations.

This is quite discouraging for a growing country like Ghana. It may be inferred from Ammani (2011), who made a comparable assertion and named the same crucial players, that worries about test malpractices affect the whole population of a nation. Examination malpractice is described in the literature as dishonesty inside the educational system that happens in Ghana at all levels of education, from basic to secondary to university. A special kind of "corrupt practice" in the educational system is examination malpractice. Regardless of the

many participants in the educational system's connections, this practice is becoming a real "monster" in our system and is growing (Joshua, 2009). Joshua claims that this behaviour is referred to as a “real monster” since the present generation's learners' culture of hard work, academic success, honesty, and decency is fast deteriorating in various educational institutions.

In conclusion, cheating on a test tends to damage the validity of any test and make the test findings useless and unreliable. Examiner bias causes "error scores," or marks or scores that are above or below a learner's aptitude. This leads to improper school placement and the hiring of unskilled workers in many sectors of the economy.

Concept of Self-Efficacy

The term "self-efficacy," which Bandura first used in 1977 and which was based on a well-known and influential concept in social cognition, is now supported by a substantial body of research from several specialists. According to Kear (2000), Bandura is the "proponent" of the idea since he "dominates the literature on self-efficacy" and "was the first to discuss the phrase in his psychological theories of motivation in the 1950s." Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to prepare for and carry out the essential steps to deal with impending events (Bandura as cited in Bray-Clark & Bates, 2003). In the framework of social-cognitive theory, Bandura (2001) describes self-efficacy as a motivational orientation that provides grit when faced with challenges, motivates deliberate behaviour, fosters long-term vision, develops self-regulation, and permits self-correction when necessary.

Numerous research studies have shown that self-efficacy is a reliable predictor of motivation and performance that is unaffected by time, place, or community (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007; Farsides & Woodfield, 2003). According to the literature, the motivational module of self-efficacy is also assumed to produce academic success (Ashwin, 2006; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003; Ridgell & Lounsbury, 2004). High academic performance, according to Miller and Brickman (2004), is associated with an increase in self-assurance in one's abilities, which encourages learners to assume more responsibility for completing assignments and projects on time. Effectiveness is crucial while teaching learners to develop their abilities and produce better outcomes. High levels of self-efficacy affect a person's ability to make the best work decision (Abdul, 2010). According to Sugahara, Suzuki, and Boland (2010), accounting courses or programs are more likely to improve academic performance and self-efficacy.

Job experience and the use of English as a native language are two other factors that influence learners' strong self-efficacy in enhancing their overall abilities. According to the self-efficacy paradigm, which backs predicted self-goals, self-efficacy does influence accomplishment when carefully considered (Betz, 2004). Efficacy may also have an impact on the outcome. Self-efficacy is a reliable predictor of motivation and performance when it comes to finishing activities. Due to its importance in fields including education, human resource management, organisational behaviour, athletics, and health, the idea of performance efficacy has acquired wide recognition. Hines and Kritsonis discovered that learners who

studied under instructors with high levels of self-efficacy outperformed those who studied under lecturers with low levels of efficacy on examinations (2010). The higher a learner's CGPA, the more circumspect and conservative they are throughout examinations. Learners who lack confidence in their skills to achieve will put less effort into their studies (Tho, 2006).

Heidari, Izadi, and Ahmadian (2012) found that learners with high self-efficacy displayed a positive and significant link between vocabulary acquisition and memorisation technique when compared to learners with low self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a crucial factor in determining whether someone is a high achiever, an intermediate achiever, or a poor achiever (Usher & Pajares, 2006; Yip, 2012). According to Bembenutty's (2011) research, homework given by the instructor and learners' confidence and sense of responsibility are correlated. He thinks that assignments and the capacity for self-regulated learning, sometimes referred to as self-regulated learning, may assist learners in enhancing their academic performance by assisting them in efficiently managing their time and learning environment and in maintaining their focus on learning. As a result, learners might be better able to concentrate on applying the teaching strategy, leading to higher-quality instruction and academic performance.

Empirical research supports the link between self-efficacy, test anxiety, and academic success in several different areas. Strong math self-efficacy is positively correlated with math performance, whereas significant examination anxiety is negatively correlated with math performance, according to Yildirim (2012). Using data from 297 undergraduate engineering learners using structural equation

modeling, Hsieh, Sullivan, Sass, and Guerra (2012) found that both self-efficacy and test anxiety predicted learners' final grades in a math subject. Learners in Science and Technology courses performed better than those who were taught only using conventional teaching methods when self-efficacy tools and test anxiety management were used (Bostock & Boon, 2012; Gencosman & Dogru, 2012). Learners who doubt their abilities lose enthusiasm for completing difficult activities and instead concentrate on the drawbacks of their behaviour.

According to Nelson and Knight (2010), learners might avoid negative test anxiety outcomes by remembering past accomplishments, which boosts boldness and endurance and, in turn, self-efficacy. Focusing on one's strengths makes one more stress-resistant and robust. People who concentrate on their strengths are more prosperous and worry less. It is possible to apply positive thinking techniques in the classroom to assist learners in achieving academic success. Learners who are confident in their abilities are more inclined to attempt to get better at difficult tasks like examinations. Due to their self-confidence and capacity to picture a successful outcome, those who had high self-efficacy experienced less test anxiety. By giving test anxiety and self-efficacy measures and comparing the results to overall GPA and overall grades, current research (Abdi et al., 2012; Adewuyi, Taiwo, & Olley, 2012) has examined how long-term test anxiety and self-efficacy affect overall GPA and standardised tests in various disciplines, but it has not examined the effects of short-term test anxiety.

According to the study, those who have low self-efficacy and high test anxiety would do worse on a single test than people who have high self-efficacy

and low test anxiety. According to a lengthy review of the evidence, anxiety and low self-efficacy have negative effects on academic performance. Many of the modern motivation theories incorporate self-efficacy beliefs (Graham & Weiner, as cited in Bray-Clark and Bates, 2003). Mensah and Asamani (2013) define self-efficacy as a person's confidence in their ability to carry out a task or endeavour. They went on to say that the more one's self-efficacy, the greater their confidence in their capacity to do the task. Mensah and Asamani (2013) noted that people with high self-efficacy are more likely to overcome a hurdle or complete a task, whereas people with low self-efficacy are more likely to quit or put out less effort under trying circumstances. The self-efficacy idea influences each person's involvement in examination misconduct. The concept of self-efficacy has a wide range of applications, and people routinely use the phrase "self-efficacy" without considering its original meaning. Self-efficacy is the conviction that one can perform at a certain level and have an influence on their life. one of the academic institutions that has an impact on people's lives. Examination results generated by questionable means will suddenly be used to criticise those who lead honorable lives. This indicates the need for a high degree of self-efficacy as it identifies the behaviours and attitudes that encourage people to refrain from cheating on examinations.

The capacity of a person to influence their degree of motivation and achievement is one definition of self-efficacy (Balls, Eury, & King, 2011). As a result, it is uncommon to see someone who is driven and has a high sense of self-efficacy commit examination fraud. Numerous types of research on self-efficacy

and cheating on examinations have been done. Barrows, Dunn, and Lloyd found a relationship between test anxiety and examination grades as well as a relationship between examination grades and self-efficacy (2013). In a similar vein, Ofodile et al. (2019) discovered a substantial inverse association between examination misbehaviour and self-efficacy. They did discover a combined impact of self-efficacy, test anxiety, gender, and age on examination cheating in high school learners, though. According to studies, there is a connection between examination misbehaviour and self-efficacy.

Concept of Study Habits

A habit is a behaviour that is repeated until it is automatic, according to Bhat and Khandai (2016). A habit is something that a person does on a regular, scheduled, and planned basis and that is not just a supplemental or optional activity in their life. Reservations, justifications, or exceptions will not be allowed. Our study habits influence how we learn. We have had these tendencies since we were in elementary school. Study habits may be "good" if they are effective and help us gain high scores, or they can be "bad" if they are unsuccessful and do not assist in improving our grades. Good study habits include planning, taking thorough notes, reading the textbook, paying attention in class, and working every day. Bad study habits include skipping class, not finishing assignments, spending too much time watching TV or playing video games rather than studying, and losing assignments. Learners who do not have good study habits will find it difficult to succeed. Learners must be able to properly absorb course information, summarise it, reflect on it, and communicate it in writing and/or discussion to succeed.

Studying is purchasing time and dedicating oneself to the application, to engage in a process of self-education through learning, practice, and presentation. As a result of the above, study habits may be characterised as purchasing a committed, scheduled, and consistent amount of time to spend on the activity of learning. Without it, it is difficult to develop and become self-sufficient in life. We are just as successful in life as our study habits (learning/education) allow us to be. How we study affects our aspirations for the future, including how far we want to go, how much money we want to make, and how physically taxing the work we do (Bhat & Khandai, 2016). A healthy study habit is crucial for academic performance, and every parent and educator wants their kids to be avid readers. As a result, providing an engaging, alluring, and comfortable setting is essential to assisting learners in developing excellent study habits. More than any other location, the library offers learners a welcoming environment and important information resources so they may establish and maintain the productive study habits necessary for academic success. As a result, to attain good academic performance, learners must establish strong study habits through the use of a school library.

A habit is an established or recurring behaviour or practice, especially one that is difficult to break. Something has been done on a regular, scheduled, and planned basis that is not relegated to a secondary or optional purpose in one's life, says Alex (2011). It was also maintained that a habit is something that is done without thought, reason, or exception. As a result, constant repetition might strengthen the newly formed habit, and it is extremely tough to break a habit once it is formed. “Buying out time and committing oneself to the application and task

of study, and being involved in a process of self-learning, practice, presentation, and education," (Alex, 2011). As a consequence, making a determined strategy and setting aside consistent time to study might be considered a study habit. A study habit is a behaviour that learners participate in regularly to learning goals, such as reading, taking notes, or joining study groups. Depending on whether or not they help learners, study habits can be classified as effective or unsuccessful. Many of the difficulties that come with academic performance are reliant on the development of good study habits. A reading habit is a behaviour that demonstrates the similarity of individual types of reading and reading preferences (Sangkaeo as cited in Busayo, 2011).

Sangkaeo went on to say that it is a reading pattern that people use to organise their reading to deal with innovative knowledge in an ever-changing environment. This is because oral communication is the predominant means of communication in Africa, especially in Nigeria, and Africans and Nigerians are not accustomed to reading. Africans are a talking society rather than a reading society; because of their cultural heritage of learning via culture, they prefer to listen and converse rather than read (Sangkaeo as cited in Busayo, 2011). As a result, effective study habits are critical to African children's and learners' academic performance. Parents are recommended to designate a dedicated study room in their house for their children's homework, adhere to a strict timetable, and do one assignment at a time (Stephens, 2010). Society expects a learner to achieve regardless of the metrics utilised. Another motivator for cheating was the fierce competition for better grades (13.81%) that would allow one to progress to the next level of school (Abuga,

2015). Regardless of the measures used, Abuga revealed that society expects a learner to succeed henceforth cheating was the intense rivalry for higher marks that would allow one to advance to the next level of education (Abuga, 2015).

The following learner-based practices, mentioned by Opiyo (2015), are considered examples of examination malpractice during examination. Examination question leaking, falsifying and manipulating medical papers to delay tests, lobbying for good scores, assaulting examination agents, and unauthorised activity both inside and outside the examination hall are only a few instances. The alarming growth in examination malpractice is causing worry among many governments, testing agencies, school administrators, teachers, and parents throughout the world.

As a result, Abdulmumin, Abdullahi, and Ibrahim (2020) researched at the National Open University of Nigeria to look at study habits and computer anxiety as predictors of examination malpractice among undergraduate learners. A simple random selection strategy was employed to choose 600 learners in a cross-sectional survey design research. To acquire data, researchers used a pre-standardised self-report questionnaire. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. At a 0.05 level of significance, three hypotheses were investigated using correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. It was concluded in the study that there is no statistically significant relationship between study habits and examination misbehaviour. Furthermore, there was a substantial negative correlation between examination misbehaviour and computer anxiety.

Examination misconduct, on the other hand, has been connected to study habits and computer anxiety. The studies also showed that computer anxiety had a

significant independent influence on examination malpractice resistance, but study habits had none. As a result, it can be stated that study habits will only impact examination malpractices if an exogenous variable is present. This is strange because the same study found that study habits as a single variable do not affect examination malpractices. As a result, I have wanted to either validate or refute the findings of my research.

Kinuthia (2009) claims that parents have a substantial impact on their children's behaviour and academic success at school. Most parents fail to provide their children with the necessary tools to enable them to study, and when their children do not perform as expected, the parents respond by pressing the learners, blaming the teachers, or using fraudulent ways to help their children pass the exam. According to research by Lafer (2014), the majority of stakeholders provide money in exchange for learners' help passing internal assessments. Some parents even go so far as to buy their children live question papers to instill in them the attitude that the end justifies the means. Berliner (2008) said that the pressure to do well on a single examination is so intense that it encourages unethical behaviour such as test cheating. The bulk of them are forced to repeat or are ejected from school due to low performance on internal tests.

Kinds of Study Habits

Muscato (2017) postulated that studying is a crucial aspect of learning, but there are several methods to it. In this session, we'll look at the differences between distributed and massed practices and how they affect your capacity to learn. While studying may appear to be a normal idea, many psychologists have dedicated their

lives to investigating how we learn and remember knowledge. In the present study, study habits would be operationally defined as distributed learning, massed learning, cramming, cooperative learning, and semantic processing.

Distributed Learning

Distributed learning, cited by Muscato (2017), is a more spaced-out technique in which you study in intervals throughout time. Rather than studying all of the material for hours the night before a test, distributed learners aim to study for one hour each day. Learners who use distributed learning are far more likely to remember material even after the examination has ended, which can assist them in future classes and professions. Overall, distributed learning is linked to a greater probability of academic success.

Similarly, Green (2021), defined distributed learning as a regular interval of learning separated by rest periods, such as piano lessons every few days for a year. Spaced learning is another term for distributed learning. Green also uses the word "distributed learning" to denote the notion that practicing at regular intervals rather than all at once is more beneficial. For instance, practicing riding a bike for ten minutes every day for ten days (a total of 100 minutes) is more beneficial than practicing for 100 minutes nonstop. There are numerous motivations for adopting distributed learning, emphasised by Green (2021):

1. The theorem of encoding variability - learning over time is more likely to include a wider range of situations (such as weather, wave height, locations, and observations).

2. Study-phase retrieval hypothesis – owing to the frequent retrieval of memories from long-term memory, memory pathways strengthen with each new learning opportunity.
3. Consolidation theory states that the more learning (technically known as rehearsals) that occurs, the more likely the learning will be committed to long-term memory.

To summarise, the most significant takeaway is that spaced learning is a successful teaching approach. Teachers can use spaced learning to their advantage by scheduling numerous review points throughout a curriculum. For example, learners in a scientific subject should study past material often, especially in the weeks leading up to a test. Another example is learners in a scientific class should study previous concepts often, especially in the weeks preceding the examination. Similarly, reading and writing teachers can review high-frequency words (common terms) weekly. Teachers use spaced learning to guarantee that prior information is remembered and committed to long-term memory. Teachers can use spaced learning to their advantage by scheduling numerous review points throughout a curriculum. It is, therefore, imperative to note that distributed learning is also a good study habit that equips learners with appropriate knowledge and understanding to engage in examination with any difficulties and hence desist from examination malpractices.

Massed Learning

Muscato (2017) defines ‘massed’ learning as studying done rarely yet for large periods. While mass education may appear to be effective in supporting

learners in passing examinations, it is not a long-term solution. Once the examination is done, this approach of memorising knowledge is quite likely to be forgotten. He also claimed that 'massed' learning is not a good study approach if you intend to use this content in the future, such as in your work. "Distributed learning" is the polar opposite of 'massed' learning. Green (2021) defined 'massed' learning as repeating an activity with little or no pauses and cramming is an example of 'massed' learning. Mass learning helps learners to desist from engaging in examination malpractices since learners would be fully equipped with knowledge and understanding to answer test items. The following are some of the benefits of mass learning cited by Green:

1. For jobs with well-defined goals and no need to learn beyond that goal, 'massed' learning may be successful.
2. In other cases, mass education is the only choice. For example, if you decide to take up woodworking as a new pastime and enrol in a three-day course, you will be able to complete four pieces of furniture. While it may be preferable to complete these items over time, you may only have three days off.
3. When you do not intend to utilise the skill or information again in the future and do not mind if it is forgotten, you can employ 'massed' learning. For instance, if you need to understand as much as possible about a medical condition before undergoing surgery.

Cramming

Cramming (also known as mugging or swotting, which means "to study with determination") is a method or practice of working intensely to acquire huge

quantities of knowledge in a short amount of time, as stated on Wikipedia (2021). Learners frequently do it in preparation for forthcoming examinations, particularly right before they are due. Rather than internalising the deep structure of the subject matter, the learner's aim is usually to achieve shallow recall suitable for a superficial testing process. Cramming is frequently discouraged by educators because the rushed covering of content leads to poor long-term memory, a phenomenon known as the spacing effect. Despite this, many teachers continue to utilise shallow examination procedures because they are easier to write, faster to grade (and hence less expensive for the institution), and objective in their criteria. When cramming, one tries to concentrate solely on academics while avoiding extraneous activities or habits.

Cramming, which is typically considered a poor study approach, is becoming increasingly popular among secondary and post-secondary learners. Cramming is a common study approach adopted as a result of the pressure to perform well in class and participate in extracurricular activities while simultaneously managing other responsibilities. Cramming is a popular study method for preparing for an examination or other performance-based assessment. According to Wikipedia, cramming is particularly popular among high school and college learners as a means of remembering large amounts of information in a short time. Learners are usually forced to cram as a result of poor time management or a desire to retain information before a test. Last-minute cramming sessions are generally the result of poor time management, and numerous study strategies have been created to assist learners in succeeding instead of cramming. The form of

study habit facilitates examination malpractices since it does not help learners prepare well for examinations.

Semantic Processing

According to Wikipedia (2020), semantic processing is the action that takes place when we hear a word and encode its meaning. We associate the word we just heard with other words that have related meanings thanks to semantic processing. When a word is discovered, it is inserted into a cognitive structure that enables more thorough processing. Because of this, semantic processing generates memory traces that endure longer than shallow processing, which generates transitory memory traces. The most sophisticated stage of processing, semantic processing, requires the listener to judge the cue's meaning (Wikipedia, 2020). According to brain imaging studies, semantic processing induces an increase in brain activity in the left prefrontal lobes of the brain, which does not occur during other processing forms.

Semantic processing has two components: Convergent semantic processing happens when a small number of replies are required (Wikipedia, 2020). Subjects must suppress other possibilities throughout these assignments to choose the best option from a plethora of options. Because of the fine-grained, limited window of temporal integration, the left hemisphere of the brain is thought to dominate convergent semantic processing. In terms of spatial structure, neurons in the left hemispheres occupy mutually exclusive zones, allowing for the finer-tuned responses seen in convergent semantic processing. Divergent semantic processing, on the other hand, happens when people are given language tasks that might evoke

a wide range of responses (Wikipedia, 2020). Listeners generate several alternative interpretations and make a list of all additional words that come to mind throughout these activities. The right hemisphere of the brain is thought to control divergent semantic processing via coarse-grained, broad temporal integration windows. The right hemisphere's neurons inhabit overlapping spatial areas, allowing the network to activate ideas required for divergent processing. Semantic learning prevents examination malpractices, therefore, learners are encouraged to practise it.

Empirical Review

Influence of Study Habits and Self-Efficacy on Examination Malpractices

Attitudes of Learners Toward Examination Malpractices

First, Anakwe (2011) performed research in plateau Nigeria, focusing on the role of parents and teachers in test misconduct. In his study, 400 high school learners were selected at random using a 15-item questionnaire called the “Learners Attitude towards Examination Malpractice (SATEMQ)” and tested three null hypotheses. The data were analysed using the Chi-Square test statistic.

The study showed that learners' perceptions of examination malpractice were unaffected by parental tactics. It was also revealed that there was no discernible difference in attitude or motivation for engaging in examination malpractice between junior high school learners and senior high school learners. The results sound a little unclear, and the present study would make a clear finding relating to this finding. As a result, it raises issues about learners' obvious attitudes regarding examination malpractices, as well as how Anakwe determined the

difference between JHS and SHS learners. The literature and research techniques, on the other hand, serve as a guide for the present study.

Musyoka (2012) claimed that national tests are used in selection and placement because they are genuine and trustworthy; nonetheless, test misconduct remains a severe concern for all assessment organisations across the world. Her research aimed at determining teachers' and learners' views regarding cheating in national examinations to determine the various methods that may be utilised to combat malpractices. There were 362 learners in the study, with 178 (49.2%) males and 184 (50.2%) females.

Thirty teachers were interviewed as part of the study, including 23 (76.7%) males and 7 (23.3%) females. According to the study, 219 (60.5%) of learners would not mind cheating on national examinations if given the chance, while 17 (56.7%) of teachers would not mind cheating on national examinations. A learner at a municipality or provincial school was shown to be two and three times more likely to cheat than a learner in a national school. To reduce cheating, 50 per cent of respondents stated learners should work hard, 69 per cent said they should seek peer counselling, and 38 per cent said that finishing the curriculum on time will help them avoid cheating.

One of the most commonly recommended approaches was taking strong penalties against persons detected cheating, which was started by 41 per cent of learners and 13 per cent of teachers, respectively. Integrity was advocated as a way to prevent and abolish cheating in national examinations by 23 per cent of learners and 25 per cent of teachers, respectively. It is reasonable to believe that the majority

of learners and teachers wish to cheat in examinations. As a result, more study into the related variables is required to develop strategies for stopping or reducing their urge. The current study attempts to concentrate on important variables in teaching and learning, such as study habits and self-efficacy.

Oloyede (2012) conducted a study on test misconduct among high school learners in Lagos State's Oshodi/Isolo Local Government Area. The study looked at learners' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of examination misconduct in high schools. A total of 100 respondents were drawn from four high schools in the Oshodi/Isolo Local Government using purposeful sampling approaches. Experts reviewed teachers' and learners' perception questionnaires, which were used as the study's research instrument (supervisors). The data collected from respondents were analysed using frequencies and simple percentages.

Conferring to the findings, there are key causes of examination malpractice, including parental pressure for high grades, peer pressure, insufficient preparation, and so on. This research also suggests that good compensation, as well as teacher and parent reorientation, be emphasised. Learners' opinions about examination malpractices are confirmed by a critical analysis of the data. To assist in minimise the motivation of learners to engage in examination malpractices, it is critical to avoid the causes mentioned.

Asante-Kyei and Nduro (2014) set out to investigate Polytechnic learners in Takoradi's perceptions of the variables that lead to testing misconduct. The descriptive survey design was used in this investigation. As a sample, they used 200 learners from the School of Applied Arts. The researchers used a tailored

questionnaire to collect data on the factors that contribute to test misconduct (IFTEMQ). Three research questions led to the investigation. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages) were used to analyse the data.

Learners, together with teachers, were shown to be the primary causative components in the occurrence of sharp practices during examinations, conferring to the study. Examination cheating was shown to be associated with gender and age. The data clearly show how learners participate in examination malpractices. As a result, it must be used to support the current study's topic. Remarkably, concise tables were not presented to show the analysis of the study which defaces its quantitative nature. However, the report would provide prudent stats and literature to support my discussions.

Levels of Self-Efficacy of Learners

Sawari and Mansor (2013) focused their research on three main objectives. The initial objective was to evaluate the general self-efficacy of secondary learners. Second, it looks to see if there is a statistically significant difference in overall self-efficacy between male and female high school learners. The final goal was to see if there was any relationship between general self-efficacy and gender. A total of 489 learners from four universities took part in the survey. In this study, a 10-item questionnaire was used to assess general self-efficacy (GSE). Before being given to the responders, the supplies were put through a trial run. Researchers used descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, and Pearson's product-moment correlation tests to analyse the data.

The findings revealed that the majority of learners had a low level of total self-efficacy. The findings of this study further revealed that there were no significant differences in total self-efficacy between male and female participants. Furthermore, the study revealed that general self-efficacy and gender had a significantly weak relationship. The last study was comprehensive and informative, and it served as a guide for this one. For example, the statistical techniques utilised were identical to those I employed. The first goal is likewise identical to the second goal of this research. As a result, the findings should be included in the main discussion section of the present study.

Goulao (2014) looked at the relationship between an adult learners' group's academic self-efficacy and their actual performance in an online learning environment in a study released in 2014. The study's purpose is to see if there is still a relationship between a group of learners' self-concept and their academic performance in an online environment. The data was collected from 63 learners; both male and female, in their first year of undergraduate study, with an average age of 42 years. The performance of learners in certain academic courses was investigated. Data were collected using a modified questionnaire with an r =.908 that assesses self-efficacy. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis. The relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance was investigated using the Pearson correlation coefficient.

From the statistics, learners had a high degree of self-efficacy, with an average of 45, and there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic success (r=0.286, at the 0.05 level). The first conclusion runs counter to

Sawari and Mansor's (2013) findings, which claim that self-efficacy is low. The goal of this research is to see if learners in the study area have low, moderate, or high self-efficacy.

Wilde and Hsu (2019) examined the influence of six distinct forms of vicarious experience information on online workshop participants' self-efficacy to finish a task to bridge a knowledge gap in a similar study during the analysis of the data, the general self-efficacy of each participant was considered. When compared to those with strong general self-efficacy, learners with low general self-efficacy felt vicarious experience knowledge was much less useful for their self-efficacy in completing a task. Those with low overall self-efficacy were more likely to use vicarious experience data to generate unfavourable self-comparisons, limiting the data's ability to help them enhance their self-efficacy. Participants with a high level of general self-efficacy, on the other hand, indicated that the majority of the vicarious experience information they got increased their self-efficacy to complete the task because they were less inclined to overlook any negative information. More research into how vicarious experience information may be generated and presented in a way that boosts all learners' task-specific self-efficacy, independent of their overall self-efficacy, is needed, conferring to the findings of this study. Although the study was not quantitatively sufficient, the literature presented in it was significant in the construction of our current inquiry. Even though it was not quantitatively sufficient, the literature presented in the study was critical in the development of the investigation.

Influence of Self-Efficacy on Examination Malpractices

Anxiety, self-efficacy, and college examination performance were studied by Barrows, Dunn, and Lloyd (2013). They discovered that a learner's test anxiety and self-efficacy were linked to their academic success (Abdi, Bageri, Shoghi, Goodarzi, & Hosseinzadeh, 2012; Hassanzadeh, Ebrahimi, & Mahdinejad, 2012). Bandura (1993) suggested that when learners doubt themselves and their ability to test well, their primary concentrations become preoccupied with low test scores, and they are unable to concentrate on academics. However, Barrows et *al* cautioned that little is known about how examination anxiety and self-efficacy affect short-term classroom performance. To learn more about how learners cope with anxiety and self-efficacy, 110 college learners completed pre- and post-questionnaires assessing anxiety and self-efficacy before and after a single college examination, with the teacher providing examination results. To understand more about how test anxiety and self-efficacy levels affect examination scores in the days leading up to the exam, 110 college learners completed pre-and postquestionnaires assessing anxiety and self-efficacy before and after a single college examination, and the teacher-provided examination results. The results from the Barrows et *al* study showed that "there is a strong relationship between both test anxiety and examination grades, and self-efficacy and examination grades. It was further revealed in multiple linear regression analyses that examination grade could be predicted by test anxiety and self-efficacy level, and that self-efficacy moderated the effects of anxiety" (p. 204).

Cornelius-Ukpepi, Ndifon, and Obinna (2012) looked at the factors that influence test cheating and academic success in primary school learners in Cross River State, Nigeria. This inquiry was based on a post-mortem examination. Data was collected using an examination malpractice questionnaire (EMQ) and a 50-item primary science achievement test. In their study, they used a sample size of 26.7 per cent of the total population, which is a good number for generalisation. A proportionate stratified random sampling strategy was used for the sampling. The data was analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) statistical tool at a significance threshold of 0.05.

"There was a relationship between both teachers' and parents' involvement in examination malpractices and learner's academic performance in elementary science, conferring to the findings of the study" (p. 59). Although the sample was good for generalisation, the study delimitation to only one subject out of about nine subjects studied at the primary level in Nigeria prompted urgent replication in a broader and standardised examination in Ghana (BECE) which would also consider all the subjects in general.

Okorodudu (2012) investigated the relationship between parental motivation, self-efficacy, and learner examination cheating. The results of a survey of 1,000 people revealed that parental motivation and self-efficacy were significant predictors of their children's examination cheating. The data showed that learners' self-efficacy influenced examination cheating. The current study would ensure the appropriate use of methodology which was weak in the previous study.

Last but not least, Ofodile et al. (2019) examined examination fraud, anxiety testing, and self-efficacy among high school learners in Nigeria's Ogun State. The Examination Malpractice Questionnaire (EMQ), the General Self-Efficacy (GSE) scale and the Test Anxiety Inventory were used to gather data (TAI). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions 1 and 2, the independent sample t-test was used to answer research questions 3 and 4, and the regression estimation method was used to answer research question 5. Their outcome presented that "there was a significant negative strong relationship between self-efficacy ($r = -0.824$, $p<0.05$) and examination malpractice. It was also evident that there was no significant relationship between the test of anxiety ($r = 0.074$, $p>0.05$) and examination malpractice. It was further established that the level of examination malpractice among high school learners differs significantly across genders ($Df=198$, $N=200$, $t=2.477$, $p<0.05$). The result also showed that the level of examination malpractice among high school learners differs significantly across an age group ($Df=197$, $N=200$, $t=-11.445$, $P<0.05$). Finally, a joint effect of self-efficacy, test anxiety gender, and age ($r=0.834$, R-square=0.690) on examination malpractice was found among high school learners" (p. 134). One can see that there is a level of inconsistency in the study's findings. Henceforth, it is an obvious call for further study to resolve the inconsistencies.

Study Habits of Learners

First, Ogbodo (2010) looked at how learners frequently struggle with bad study habits, which negatively impact their performance on tests and examinations. To get excellent outcomes, the learner has to establish good study habits. A learner

who wants to succeed in school must pick a nice place to study. Knowing where to study is just as important as understanding what to study and how to study. Learners must create a customised timetable for themselves, assigning a certain amount of time for each topic, based on the level of difficulty of each subject. In the research, Ogbodo discussed three main study methods: hobby, recreational, and concentration. It was also disclosed that learners should study using the SQ3Rs, which are a set of five procedures.

Study habits have a crucial influence on the acquisition of information and perceptual abilities, as cited by Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat, and Nasir (2017). How a person studies reflects how much he wishes to learn, how far he wishes to travel, and how much money he wishes to earn. Throughout one's life, one's study habits may have an impact on all of these aspects. As a result, it is considered that study habits are linked to academic or scholastic achievement.

The research looks at the relationship between learners' study habits and their academic performance. Each of Sialkot's two government colleges, Allama Iqbal College for Women and Government Technical College for Boys has 270 learners. The relationship between study habits and academic success was investigated using the chi-square test. The study found that there is a relationship between learners' study habits and their academic performance. The sample size was large enough for the findings to be generalised. As a result, it is vital to look at the relationship between examination malpractices and study habits, as the former is linked to academic performance.

Study habits are defined as “the way one studies” by Ebele and Olofu (2017). This is the kind of attitude that learners adopt during their academic careers. A learner cannot achieve this without appropriate study habits. Ebele and Olofu investigated the influence of study habits on high school learners' academic performance in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Their research was guided by a single null hypothesis. The study's purpose was to collect data using a descriptive survey research approach. A total of 1050 senior high school learners from Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, took part in the study. A questionnaire was used to gather information. The Chi-square technique was used to analyse the data. There is a link between learners' study habits and their academic performance, according to the research's findings. Teachers and school guidance counsellors should collaborate to assist learners in creating healthy study habits that will improve their academic performance. The study habit was an independent variable in the current study and provided literature for the study's development, although the study was not on examination malpractices. Furthermore, the finding appears to be relevant to the consideration of one of the objectives since examination malpractices might jeopardise academic performance as a variable.

Relationship Between Learners’ Study Habits and Examination Malpractices

Study habits were studied as a predictor of learners' examination behaviour, in a study by Ossai (2011). The sample included 1290 first-year learners from Delta State's higher institutions. Data from study habits and examination behaviour questionnaires were analysed using Multiple Regression. Study habit was found to

be a strong predictor of examination behaviour, while gender did not affect the study habit is the ability to predict examination behaviour.

As a result, educational practitioners, particularly counsellors, were advised to utilise measurements of learners' study habits as indications of their proclivity for indulging in examination malpractices and to provide proactive counselling to them before they sit for the examination. Because the number of examination malpractices may be substantially decreased, this might advance the eminence of college counselling in African schools. In reality, given the small sample size, the study was thorough. The study report was thorough and helpful in the creation of this piece. It is also crucial to see if study habits, which are a strong predictor of examination malpractices, have a substantial relationship with the research's dependent variable.

On the other hand, study habits and computer anxiety on examination malpractices are investigated by Abdulmumin, Abdullahi, and Ibrahim (2020). The study was conducted using a cross-sectional survey approach. 600 learners at the National Open University in Abuja Model Study Centre were chosen using a simple random selection approach. The data was collected using a standardised self-report questionnaire, and the findings were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. At the 0.05 level of significance, three hypotheses were investigated using correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis.

There was no statistically significant positive relationship between study habits and examination misbehaviour ($r = .08$, $p > .05$), according to the study. Furthermore, there was a substantial negative relationship between computer

anxiety and examination misbehaviour (r = -0.29, p =.01). Examination misconduct is influenced by both study habits and computer anxiety (R^2= 0.08, F (2,597) = 26.99, p > .05). The study appears to be comprehensive, which is beneficial for generalisation. The findings of the study, however, contradict those of Ossai (2011). As a result, the goal of this research is to compare and contrast the findings of Abdulmumin, Abdullahi, and Ibrahim (2020) and Ossai (2011).

Finally, Santos (2021) investigated the relationship between high school learners' study habits and their views on examination cheating. The study used a descriptive survey research approach and was done ex-post factor. 300 learners from Lagos State, Nigeria, were chosen using a stratified random selection approach. Learners' perceptions toward examination misconduct and study techniques were collected using two research instruments devised by the researcher. The instruments are the Learners' Study Habit Questionnaires (SSHQ) and Learners' Attitudes regarding Examination Malpractices Questionnaires (SATEMQ). They have 0.68 and 0.72 reliability coefficients, respectively. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient and alpha-level t-test statistics were used to analyse the study's three hypotheses.

There was no significant relationship between learners' study habits and their views about examination misconduct, conferring to the data. Male and female learners had substantially different opinions of examination misbehaviour, although their practices were not that dissimilar. School counsellors should use guidance services and counselling approaches to promote excellent study habits and reduce instances, conferring to the findings.

Levels of Self-Efficacy Among Male and Female Learners and Examination Malpractice

Musyoka (2012) posited that national examinations are deployed for placement and selection because they are legal and trustworthy, yet examination malpractice remains a significant concern for all assessment organisations across the world. Her study intended to find out what teachers and learners thought about cheating on national examinations to figure out what strategies may be used to counteract the malpractices. There were 362 learners in the study, with 178 boys (49.2%) and 184 girls (50.8%).

Thirty teachers were interviewed as part of the study, with 23 (76.7%) males and 7 (23.3%) females participating. The study revealed that 219 learners (60.5 %) would not mind cheating on a nationwide test if given the chance. It was also revealed that female learners are 48 per cent more likely than male learners to cheat on a national exam. A learner at a municipality or provincial school is 2.154 and 2.890 times more likely to cheat than a learner in a national school, respectively. To avoid cheating, 50 per cent of respondents said learners should work hard, 69 per cent said they should use peer counselling, and 38 per cent said staying on track with the curriculum will assist. As a result, I was curious to find out who had low self-efficacy and who had strong self-efficacy. The goal of this study was to see how much self-efficacy male and female BECE applicants had, as well as how much they were involved in examination cheating.

The influence of computer self-efficacy and gender on computer-based test (CBT) anxiety among Nigerian learners was investigated by Balogun and

Olanrewajub (2016). The survey was carried out in a cross-sectional manner. A selective sample strategy was utilised to choose 241 undergraduates from a public university in Ondo State, Nigeria (110 males and 131 females). Using standardised questionnaires, data was gathered. Two hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression and an independent t-test.

The findings revealed that learners who had a higher level of self-efficacy were less likely to have CBT anxiety. CBT anxiety was also shown to be greater in females than in males. Due to their poorer self-efficacy on average, females were also shown to experience a higher level of CBT anxiety than their male counterparts. It was proposed that university administrations conduct psychological training to assist learners (especially females) in improving their self-efficacy and lowering examination anxiety. Because test anxiety increases learners' engagement in examination malpractices, it is possible to deduce that female learners are more prone to examination malpractices than their male counterparts. Cognitive test anxiety, mentioned by Eremie and Ikpa (2020), has a substantial and effective impact on their participation in examination malpractice, which inevitably leads to poor academic performance. As a result, the study takes precedence in the debate of this particular study.

Baji (2020), on the other hand, looked into gender differences in academic self-efficacy and performance among Nigerian public senior high school learners. A descriptive survey approach, two research questions, and hypotheses were used in the study. A proportional stratified random selection procedure was used to pick 435 learners (294 males, and 141 females). Data was gathered using the Academic

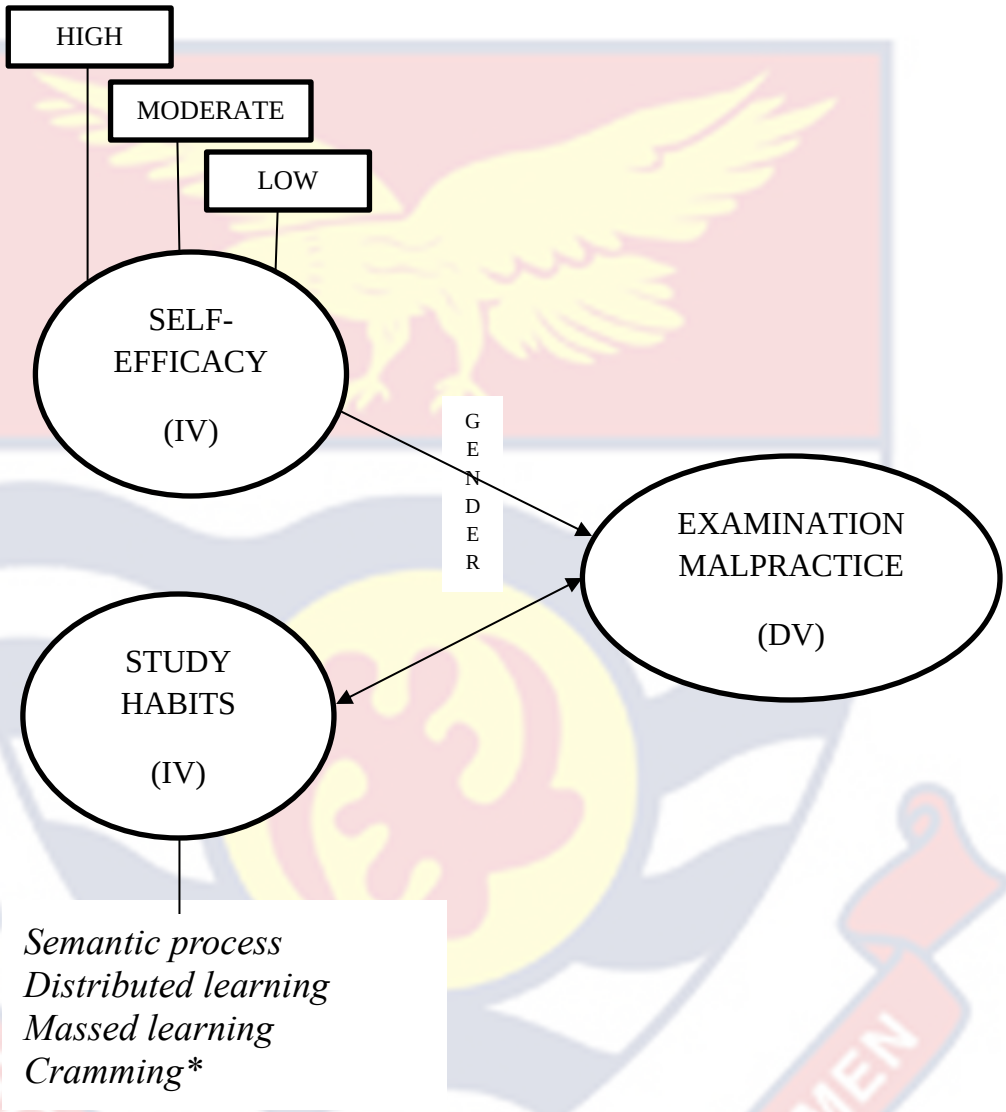
Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES) and Academic Performance Tests in English Language and Mathematics. Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess content and construct validity as well as dependability, obtaining an alpha coefficient of .829. In the data analysis, the mean standard deviation and the t-test were utilised as independent statistical techniques. Conferring to the study's findings, male and female learners exhibited equivalent levels of academic self-efficacy. A large academic gap between male and female learners was also discovered in the survey. The mean difference between male and female learners' academic performance revealed that male learners outperformed female learners. The first and second discoveries are in direct opposition to one another. The findings of Balogun and Olanrewajub (2016) contradict the previous study's conclusions.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework, cited by Young (2009), is a model presentation in which a researcher conceptualises or expresses the relationship between variables in a study by diagramming the relationship. The framework explains how the independent factors (self-efficacy and learners' study habits) interact with the dependent variable (examination malpractices). Figure 1 depicts the framework.

Figure 1

Conceptual framework on perceived factors influencing examination malpractices



Source: Constructed by Arhin (2021)

Figure 1 depicts that the independent variables (IV) which originate from the extensive literature studies are reliably correlated to learners' involvement in examination malpractices (DV). Specifically, Self-efficacy (IV) had three levels while Study habits (IV) were defined as a *semantic process, distributed learning,*

*massed learning, and cramming***.** However, the influence of self-efficacy on examination malpractice was intervened by gender (male and female). I, therefore, suggest that any attempt to secure solutions for learners' involvement in examination malpractices should be based on tackling learners' study habits and self-efficacy. This would ascertain credible results with construct validity evidence and guarantee zero involvement in examination malpractices. It would also play a critical role in attaining learning objectives to foster societal growth and development as a long-term effect.

Summary of Literature Review

The ranking system for schools, study habits, self-efficacy, learners' preparation, mobile phones, and pressure from society to perform well on examinations, among other things, have all been identified in a review of related literature on various scholars' works on the perceived factors influencing the recurrence of examination malpractice in schools. The literature study clearly shows that examination malpractices are common and that major participants, forms, causes, consequences, and solutions to prevent the alarming "examination malpractices" were discovered and analysed in the many research given. According to researchers such as Arhin (2020), Kinuthia (2009), Muchai (2014), and Nyamwange et *al.*(2013), rating individual learners and schools creates intense competitiveness, and as a result, can lead to moving away from teaching to prepare for examination and cheating. There are good schools and bad schools, which has been widely believed in Ghana before the data were published.

No matter the criteria used, society expects learners to succeed. Examinee-based malpractice includes impersonation, copying from other learners' scripts, using unapproved resources like teaching notes, handouts, and textbooks, leaking examination questions, fabricating and altering medical records to postpone examinations, lobbying for high grades, attacking examiners, and unapproved actions by learners both inside and outside the examination hall (Abuga, 2015; Eromosele, 2008). It was asserted that the introduction of cell phones and social media had also made examination malpractices more prevalent since these devices have capabilities that allow learners to instantly share photos of completed examination papers with their classmates.

Moreover, Arhin (2020) explored two factors and assessed the impact factor or the influential factor on examination malpractices. This is the only study that explored two independent variables against examination malpractices. The performance of learners in public tests determines the standing of teachers and schools (BECE). Another study examined the impact of self-efficacy on cheating on examinations. It is known that people who have high levels of self-efficacy are less inclined to cheat on examinations, and the opposite is also true (Cornelius-Ukpepi et al., 2012; Ofodile et al., 2019). These facts have compelled the present study to examine the influence of two distinct perceived independent variables (self-efficacy, and study habits by learners) on the examination malpractices that occur in and year out despite key stakeholders' efforts to curb them.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Overview

This chapter contains the research paradigm, research design, study region, population, sample and sampling technique, data-collecting tool and data processing and analysis procedures. It also explains how the instrument was tested and validated, as well as how the instrument's dependability was determined.

Research Paradigm

The positivist research paradigm was used in this study. The positivist believes that there is a single reality that can be used to assess and comprehend research concerns, and hence prefers a scientific nature with findings that can be generalised to the entire population (Wilson, 2014). Wilson went on to say that because positivists adopt an objective approach to research and are detached from participants, quantitative approaches are more likely to be used in analyses. In light of this, the current purpose of the study was to determine the likelihood of a particular level of objectivity and approximate truth (real) rather than certainty and absolute truth. As a result, it was necessary to adopt a quantitative approach and, more specifically, a descriptive survey design.

Research Design

This present study sought to examine the influence of study habits and self-efficacy of learners on examination malpractices in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the Asante Akim North Municipality where learners'

responses were elicited. As a result, a descriptive survey approach was used for the study. The survey design was chosen because the study explained and interpreted what already exists as a typical scenario. Creswell (2012) asserted that the descriptive survey approach is perfect for a study that explains and interprets what already exists as a typical scenario. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) defined descriptive survey design as a sort of design that involves obtaining data to response to the research questions or test hypotheses about the phenomenon's current state of condition. Kulbir (2009) also stated that descriptive design is a research method that aims to identify elements connected to certain proceedings, results, conditions, or forms of behaviour.

A descriptive survey is diverse and useful, especially for researchers because it highlights current requirements (Osula, 2001). Osula went on to say that descriptive design is necessary for all sorts of studies to appraise the condition and draw conclusions and generalisations. The major element of this design, according to Best and Kahn (2007), is that it depicts the current condition of phenomena, feelings, and continuous tendencies. A descriptive design entails the gathering of data to respond to research questions or test hypotheses about the present condition of the issue under investigation. A descriptive survey's major goal is to perceive, designate and document the characteristics of a condition as it unfolds logically. Pre-testing, questionnaires, observation, interviews, and document review are some of the data-collecting approaches used in this design (Asamoah-Gyimah & Amedahe, 2017). This form of study is significant because it uses graphic aids like graphs and charts to help the audience comprehend the information distribution

(Jacobs, 2011). In the current study, data were collected using a questionnaire. This questionnaire was pre-tested and the suggested statistical tools were duly applied in data analysis and presentation.

On the other hand, if stringent controls are not implemented, data in a descriptive survey design study may be prone to falsification due to bias introduced into the design of the study (Asamoah-Gyimah & Amedahe, 2017). An additional drawback of a descriptive design is that while data is collected by direct observation, it must be structured and offered logically before reliable inferences can be formed. If caution is not used, the research may not be able to draw appropriate conclusions from the data collected (Jacobs, 2011). It is a systematic instrument that lets the researcher identify the relationship between variables, ask follow-up questions, and clarify ambiguous themes, and it also allows the investigator to draw generalisations grounded on the archetypal sample size selected since the population is so large. Not only a descriptive survey is unbiased, but it also perceives, characterises, and permits a facet of a condition in its natural surroundings.

When population features are inferred from sample observation, randomisation is utilised in the descriptive design to estimate errors (Wallen, 2000). This method improves data collection by questioning respondents about the concept under study. Demand features, which emerge when respondents strive to create responses that meet their ideas of what a researcher wants from them, are the design's main flaw. Despite the drawback, it was decided that this was the optimal design for this inquiry. Furthermore, steps were taken to verify the flaws to ensure

reliable results. This study is descriptive since it was done to evaluate the influence of study habits and self-efficacy on examination malpractices. It simply stated the nature of the phenomenon in question, along with a description of the situation based on a certain demographic. A field study survey was conducted to determine the impact of learners' study habits and self-efficacy on examination malpractices in BECE in the Asante Akim North Municipality.

Study Area

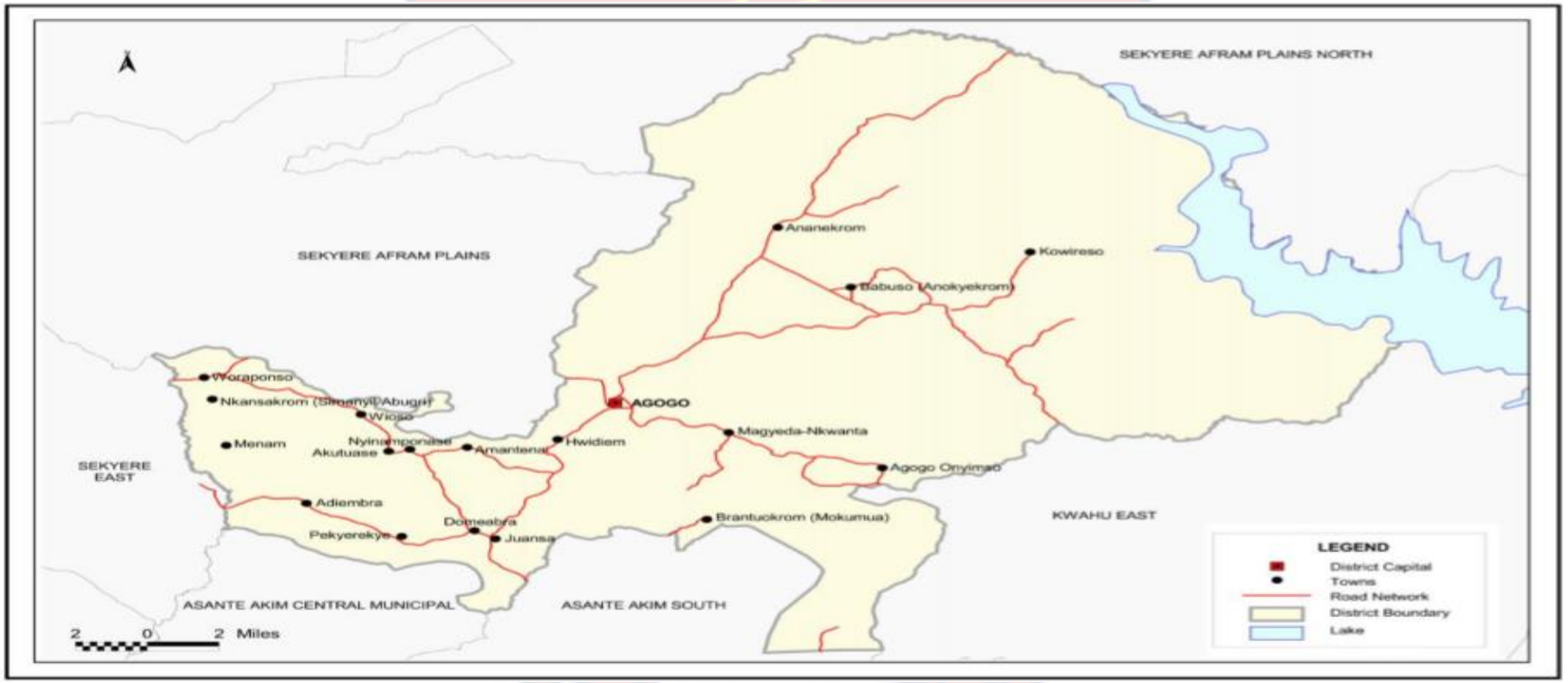
"The Asante Akim North Municipality is located at the eastern part of the Ashanti Region and lies between latitudes 60 30 inches and 70 30 inches North and longitudes 00 15 inches and 10 20 inches West. The capital town of the municipality is Agogo. It shares boundaries with the Sekyere Kumawu Municipality in the north, Kwahu East in the east, Asante Akim South Municipality in the south, and the Sekyere East Municipality in the west. It covers a land area of 1,126 square kilometres constituting 4.6 per cent of the region's land area (24,389 square kilometres). The total population of the municipality was 69,186 in 2010. The municipality has a more populated rural sector (53.5%) than the urban sector (46.5%) representing 1.4 per cent of the region's total population. Males constitute 48.8 per cent and females represent 51.2 per cent" (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014, p. ix).

"The municipality is endowed with educational facilities providing education up to the tertiary level. Education in the municipality is headed by the Municipality Directorate of Education whose responsibility is to ensure the overall administration, monitoring, and supervision of teaching and learning. There are

three tertiary institutions in the municipality namely, Presbyterian University College, Presbyterian College of Education, and Presbyterian Nursing Training School. The municipality can also boast three public senior high schools. It has 35 junior high schools, 56 primary schools, and 56 pre-schools. There are, however, four Health institutions in the municipality" (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014, p. 5). Apart from the provided comprehension descriptions of the municipality, a pictorial map of the municipality has been submitted in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Municipality map of Asante Akim North



Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2014, p. 3)

Population

The population was junior high school learners in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The target population was 2,500 learners from Asante Akim North Municipality's public junior high schools. However, the accessible population consisted of all the learners from 10 public junior high schools in Owerriman North and South circuits of Asante Akim North Municipality. There are 866 learners (A Field Survey on Headteachers, 2021).

Sample and Sampling Procedure

With the accessible population in mind, 274 learners were sampled using Miller and Brewer's (2003) mathematical formula for computing sample size (n): $n = \frac{N}{1+N(\alpha)^2}$ where N-population, α- estimated error case of which I used .05 (5%).

Computation of learners: $\boldsymbol{n = \frac{866}{1+866(0.05)^2} = \frac{866}{3.165} = 274.}$

I used a multi-stage sampling procedure for the sampling. The summary is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Sampling Procedure

Stage	Variable	Sampling Technique	Reason
1	Circuits	Convenience	Readily Available
2	Schools	Purposive	Homogenous Population
3	Learners	Proportionate Stratified	Enrolment number
4	Gender	Proportionate Stratified	Enrolment number

Source: Constructed by Arhin, 2021

Stage 1

The two circuits were sampled using a convenience sampling procedure. This means that the two circuits were readily available to me. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2010) define convenience sampling as a non-probability sampling that requires the researcher to use a readily available population.

Stage 2

In the two selected circuits in stage one, the schools were purposively sampled for the study. In all, there were 10 public JHSs in both circuits. That is six public JHSs in the Owerriman North circuit and four public JHSs in the Owerriman South circuit. These schools would offer the required data for the study since they were found to be associated with the dependent variable. Purposive sampling is when a researcher employs his or her judgement to pick a sample that, based on past information, he or she feels will yield the desired data (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hynn, 2012).

Stage 3

A proportional stratified selection procedure was employed to choose the learner responders in the third stage. To begin, I used the 10 schools as strata. Second, I got each stratum's sample frame to determine how many learners would be chosen from each school. Third, a basic random number generator was used to choose the required number of respondents from each stratum after establishing the proportion of respondents required to represent each stratum. Since each stratum signifies a homogenous collection of learners, that is, a collection with comparable physical characteristics, the study employed a list

of random integers for simple random sampling (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2010).

The learners' list was compiled and encrypted. The encryptions were printed on small cutouts of paper and placed in an ampule. The codes were drawn and replaced in the container to acquire the requisite number of learners for each stratum. To maintain neutrality, the selection was done with replacement. As previously stated, the sample units are not only equally likely to be chosen, but they are also independent of one another when using simple random sampling (Creswell, 2012). Simple random selection is also suitable when the study population is parallel in terms of the traits of awareness. Finally, the chosen number of learner responders from each stratum was combined to generate the study's unit sample size (n=274).

Stage 4

In the end, a proportional stratified sampling procedure was used to ensure gender balance among the selected respondents. I started by using gender as a stratum in each school. Second, I got each stratum's sample frame (gender) to determine how many learners would be taken from the school depending on gender. Third, after determining the proportion of respondents required to represent each stratum, the simple random approach was employed to choose the requisite number of respondents from each stratum.

The list of learners was made and coded with the aid of the attendance register based on gender. The number codes were written on small paper cut-outs and placed in a container. The numbers were drawn in turns from the container until the number of learners required from each stratum was obtained. The assortment was complete with replacements to warrant fairness. Lastly, the

selected number of learners from each stratum was merged to form a component sample size for the study (Boys: n=143; Girls: n=131). A summary of the sample size is provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Sample Distribution of Learners

SN	JHS	Circuit	Sample Size		Total
			Boys	Girls	
1	Domeabra Methodist	Owerriman North	4	6	10
2	Domeabra Presbyterian		19	14	33
3	Domeabra St Patrick R/C		6	5	11
4	Juansa Methodist		22	21	43
5	Juansa Presbyterian		21	13	34
6	Juansa R/C		14	18	32
7	Adiamra D/A	Owerriman South	7	11	18
8	Domeabra SDA		22	19	41
9	Pekyerekye D/A		13	11	24
10	Pekyerekye Presbyterian		15	13	28
Total		**2**	**143**	**131**	**274**

Source: Constructed by Arhin (2021)

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using an instrument called Learner-Examination Malpractice Questionnaires (L-EMQ), which were adapted and close-ended in nature. The study relied on closed-ended questionnaires since they permitted the investigator to select the views of a broader group of people (Glasow, 2005). Questionnaires were especially useful because respondents were allowed to direct their sentiments without fear of being refereed. However, people's

opinions and attitudes can change daily, and a poor experience on the day of the survey could distort the respondents' responses. Even though questionnaires are widely used in finding answers to research questions, the use of the questionnaire in this study might not have given a deeper insight into issues. That is, it is feasible that a combination of procedures (such as a questionnaire plus an interview or observation) might yield a better result than the questionnaire used in this study. L-EMQ was split into four sections (A, B, C, and D). The demographic information of respondents (gender and age range) is included in Section A, whereas self-efficacy is covered in Section B. Section B is made up of 24 items and five-Likert scale responses ranging from not at all (1) to very well (5), (r = .88) adapted from Muris (2002).

Section C elicited data on study habits which consisted of 19 items on a four Likert-scale with responses ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) as adapted from SHQ by Hall, Martin, and Osborne (2020), (r=.72). Section D elicited data on examination malpractices, which Alutu and Aluede modified from the EMQ (2006). The 24-item questionnaire uses a four-Likert scale with an r=.84, with Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) being the responses (SD). The Likert scale was used to weigh the item selections, with SA = 4, A = 3, D = 2, and SD = 1. Respondents were ensured secrecy and anonymity throughout the study.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The validity of the L-EMQ was confirmed by experts to secure content and face validity. This was done based on a recommendation of Gay, Mill, and Airasian (2009), who advocated that content validity and face validity can be

established by expert judgment. The construct validity of the questionnaire was also ensured. This was achieved because the indicators and measurements in the last three sections on the three main variables (Self-Efficacy, Study Habits and Examination Malpractices) were carefully developed based on relevant existing knowledge as recommended by Asamoah-Gyimah and Anane (2019). The questionnaire included only the relevant items that measure known indicators of the three main variables mentioned above.

The L-EMQ was pre-tested with 40 learners (5.13%) from two schools in the Agogo North and South circuits which are in the same municipality but not in the accessible population. The pre-test schools were conveniently sampled. For most descriptive studies utilising questionnaires, Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2010) concede that a sample size of five to ten per cent (5% - 10%) of the available population is sufficient for the pre-testing of research instruments. The pre-test activity allowed me to explain any confusing questions on the instrument, identify potential issues that could arise during the real exercise, and stop or resolve them ahead of time. It also contained information that may be used to calculate the dependability coefficient. To regulate the internal reliability (consistency) of the items on the L-EMQ, I employed Cronbach alpha coefficients. The reliability coefficient was r =.727, which was within the acceptable reliability range of $r \geq .60$. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hynn (2012) suggested that $r \geq .60$ is a good indicator of strong internal consistency.

Ethical Issues that Were Considered

Confidentiality, anonymity, the right to secrecy, intentional involvement, and no damage to respondents were among the ethical problems

addressed in the study. As a result, I requested an Introduction Letter from my department, the Department of Education and Psychology, to conduct the study. I then attained an Ethical Clearance from the Institutional Review Board, as well as a completed consent form from the respondents, from the University of Cape Coast (learners).

In gathering data for this study, participants were required to provide their perceived description of a phenomenon. For instance, respondents perhaps were compelled to give information from a confidential perspective (Creswell, 2012). This method necessitates a high level of participant transparency and a sufficient amount of confidence. This subject raises certain ethical concerns that should be considered. For example, establish some ethical guidelines and then go over key issues like informing participants about the study's purpose, avoiding misleading practices, distribution of evidence with partakers, respecting the study site, mutuality, using principled arrangement practices, upholding confidentiality and anonymity, and cooperating with partakers. Patton (2002) postulated that general ethical concerns should include mutuality, hazard valuation, informed consent, confidentiality, information admittance, and possession.

Data Collection Procedure

With the introduction and ethical clearance letters, I then visited the 10 schools in turn and defined my intentions to the authorities, and upon the permission and cooperation of the teachers; I engaged the respondents in an orientation service on the need of the study.

Respondents were given ethical assurance such as confidentiality, secrecy and freedom upon their involvement in the study. I then proceeded to

administer the L-EMQ to learners for data collection purposes with the assistance of the two research assistants and one respective teacher from each of the 10 JHSs I have oriented. I considered 10 per cent attritions for L-EMQ to ascertain 95 per cent to 100 per cent returns of instruments from respondents. With that, I administered 301 questionnaires but used 274 questionnaires for the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

I double-checked the responses to the questionnaires that were obtained from respondents. For analysis, I coded and typed it into a spreadsheet (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS version 26.0). Data on respondents' demographics were analysed using frequencies and percentages, as well as a bar graph and a pie chart. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data to answer the first research question (Mean, standard deviation, and their respective averages). The analysis was done on a baseline of 2.50 thus $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$ since the four-point Likert scales that were used were coded as SA =4, A =3, D =2, and SD =1. With that, a mean ≥ 2.50 was interpreted as the majority of respondents agreeing on a statement while a mean of < 2.50 means the majority of respondents disagree with a statement.

Data were analysed using frequencies and percentages on a four-level scale to address the second research question. The four-level scales were 1-missing (0 to 24), 2-low (25 to 59), 3-intermediate (60 to 83), and 4-high (84 to 120). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, R^2, and descriptive statistics (Mean, and standard deviation) were used to analyse the data to answer research question 3. To address the fourth research question, data on four types of study habits were analysed using frequencies and percentages. The measure

was done under a scale as follows: 1-cramming (19 to 28), 2-massed learning (29 to 47), 3-distributed learning (48 to 66), and 4-semantic process (67 to 76). The responses to the study habits items were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and their respective averages) to support the answer to research question 4. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test research hypothesis 1, and an independent sample t-test at the 0.05 level of significance was used to test research hypothesis 2.

In summary, each of these statistical measures serves a specific purpose in quantitative studies. Frequencies and percentages summarise the categorical data and identify distribution patterns. Means and standard deviations summarise the numerical data, assessing central tendency, and measuring variability. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient quantified the relationships between two continuous variables and explored associations. The variables were measured with close-ended items and a four-Likert scale that was quantified with 1, 2, 3, and 4. Finally, the independent sample t-test Compared means between two independent groups to assess significant differences. Using these statistical tools, the rigor, accuracy and interpretability of quantitative studies were enhanced and allowed the drawing of meaningful conclusions, informed decisions and recommendations that would contribute to the improvement of familiarity in the examination grounds.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

The chapter is divided into four sections: background information for respondents (learners), analysis of research questions, testing of research hypotheses, and discussion. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r), R^2, independent sample t-test) were used in the analyses. The data was analysed using frequencies and percentages aided with a bar graph and a pie chart, and the results were presented in tables (Tables 4 to 20).

Background Information of Respondents (Learners)

Table 4

Gender Distribution of Learners

Gender		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Male	143	52.2
	Female	131	47.8
	Total	**274**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 4 shows that males were the majority of the sample size (n=143, 52.2%) while their female counterparts were the minority (n=131, 47.8%). This indicates a gender balance in the sample size. A clear comparison of the gender is shown in Figure 3. Table 5 follows Figure 3 and it presents the distribution of the age range of learners.

Figure 3

A Bar Graph Depicting Gender Distribution

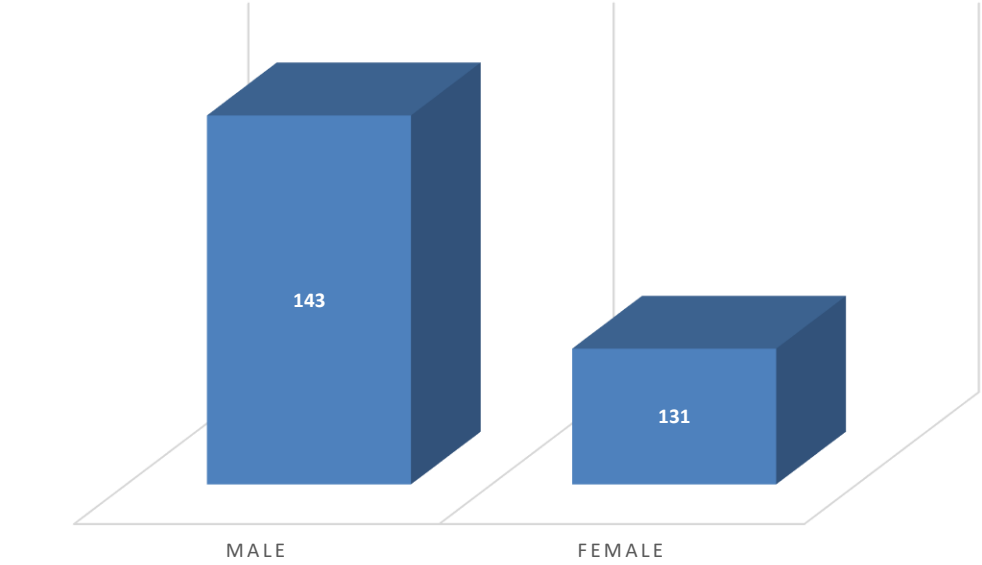


Table 5

Distribution of Age Range of Learners

Age Range		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	10-12	13	4.7
	13-15	161	58.8
	Above 15	100	36.5
	Total	**274**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

From Table 5, the majority of learners (n=161, 58.8%) were aged between 13 years and 15 years. This was followed by (n=100, 36.5%) aged above 15 years with a few (n=13, 4.7%) aged between 10 years and 12 years. This shows that most of the learners sampled for the study were aged above 12 years. A clear pictorial of the distribution is shown in Figure 4. The next table,

Table 6 presents crosstabulation analyses of the gender and age range distributions.

Figure 4

A Pie Chart Depicting the Distribution of the Age Range of Learners

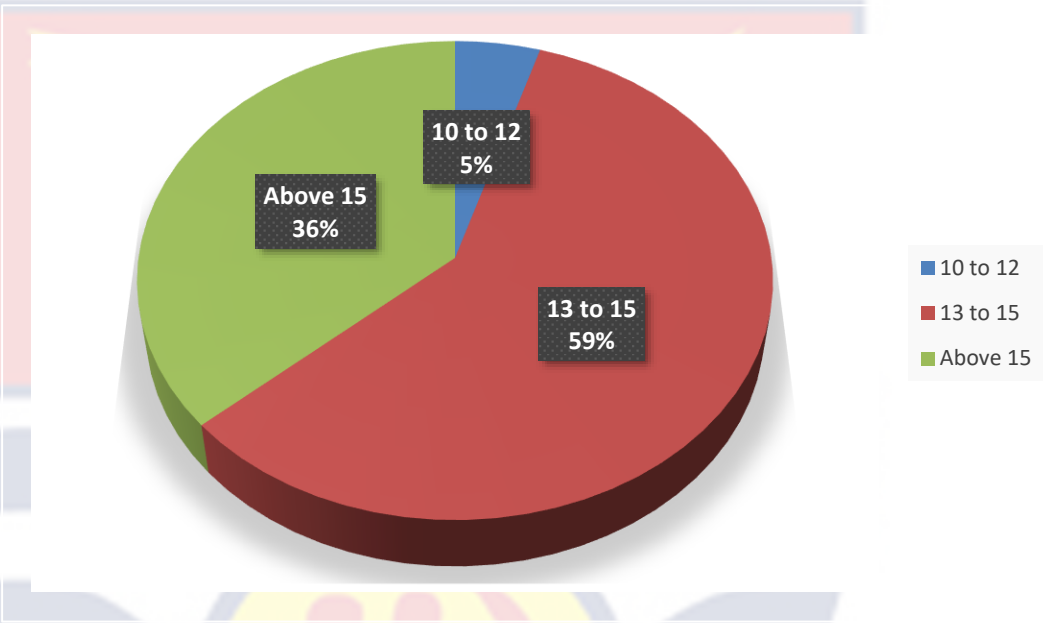


Table 6

Crosstabulation of Gender and Age Range

		Age Range			
		10-12	13-15	Above 15	Total
Gender	Male	4	83	56	143
	Female	9	78	44	131
Total		**13**	**161**	**100**	**274**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 6 shows that out of the 161 learners who were aged between 13 years and 15 years, 83 were males and 78 were females. Of the 100 learners aged above 15 years, 56 were males and 44 were females. While four males and nine females were aged between 10 years and 12 years.

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question 1: *What are the attitudes of learners towards examination malpractices in the Asante Akim North Municipality?*

The research question sought to find out the attitudes of learners towards examination malpractices in the Asante Akim North Municipality. Data collected to answer this research question was analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation and their respective averages). The analysis was done on a baseline of 2.50 thus $\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$ since the four-point Likert scales that were used were coded as SA =4, A =3, D =2, and SD =1. In the analyses, a mean ≥ 2.50 was interpreted as the majority of respondents agreeing on a statement while a mean of < 2.50 means the majority disagrees with a statement. The summary is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Learners' Attitudes Towards Examination Malpractices

SN	Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
18	Examination cheating is caused by insufficient Examination preparation.	3.17	0.957
17	Examination malpractice is encouraged by learners' poor attendance at lessons.	3.14	0.974
9	Teachers who do not show up for class encourage learners to cheat on tests.	3.04	1.001
21	Examination malpractice is encouraged by laziness.	3.04	1.075
3	Examination timetables that are not properly structured can encourage Examination cheating.	3.02	1.038

4	Inadequate Examination facilities may encourage learners to cheat on Examinations.	2.98	1.014
2	Examination malpractice might result from a lack of proper notice of concerns.	2.97	0.901
23	Examination malpractice is caused by negative peer influence.	2.97	1.072
20	Examination misconduct is encouraged by a lack of confidence.	2.95	0.980
12	Inadequate teacher-learner connection in the classroom encourages misconduct.	2.95	0.998
14	Examination misconduct is encouraged when learners are used to marking examination scripts.	2.93	1.005
13	Examination cheating might be encouraged by sexual harassment from teachers.	2.90	1.105
7	Examination misconduct can be caused by insufficient monitoring of teachers' actions.	2.89	1.035
22	Examination cheating is encouraged by the mad demand for certifications.	2.87	1.036
8	Inadequate concern for the welfare of learners encourages cheating.	2.86	1.014
10	Examination misconduct is facilitated by the use of improper lesson techniques/methods.	2.84	1.005
19	Examination malpractice is facilitated by the inability to obtain reading materials.	2.84	0.973

24	Examination malpractice is encouraged by excessive participation in social activities.	2.82	1.063
15	Extortion of learners by teachers encourages examination cheating.	2.78	1.008
16	Some teachers' harshness has an impact on learners' participation in Examination cheating.	2.76	1.069
1	Examination malpractice can be caused by an unstable school calendar.	2.74	1.088
6	Examination misconduct is caused by a focus on cognitive (memory) assessment.	2.68	0.872
11	Examination malpractice is encouraged by frequent strike activities.	2.68	1.027
5	Examination misconduct is caused by collaboration between professionals and learners.	2.65	0.962
Mean of Means/Std Dev. of Std Devs.		**2.89**	**1.011**

Source: Field Survey (2021) N = 274

In Table 7, the majority of the learners agree with the statement "Examination cheating is caused by insufficient Examination preparation" (Mean=3.17, Std. Dev.=.957). It was followed by "Examination malpractice is encouraged by learners' poor attendance at lessons" (Mean=3.14, Std. Dev.=.974). Again, most of the learners (Mean=3.04, Std. Dev.=1.001) agreed with the statement "Teachers who do not show up for class encourage learners to cheat on tests". For the statement "Examination malpractice is encouraged by laziness", the majority of the learners agreed with it (Mean=3.04, Std. Dev.=1.075).

Moreover, the majority of the learners agreed with the statement "Examination timetables that are not properly structured can encourage Examination cheating" (Mean=3.02, Std. Dev.=1.038). Following this was "Inadequate Examination facilities may encourage learners to cheat on Examinations" which was agreed by most learners (Mean=2.98, Std. Dev.=1.014). "Examination malpractice might result from a lack of proper notice of concerns" was next (Mean=2.97, Std. Dev.=.901). Most learners with (Mean=2.97, Std. Dev.=1.072) agreed with "Examination malpractice is caused by negative peer influence". "Inadequate teacher-learner connection in the classroom encourages misconduct" was agreed by most learners (Mean=2.95, Std. Dev.=.998). Finally, most learners agreed with the statement "Examination misconduct is caused through collaboration between professionals and learners" (Mean=2.65, Std. Dev.=.962). Analyses of the research question two follow.

Research Question 2: *What are the levels of self-efficacy of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality?*

The research question sought to find out the levels of self-efficacy of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality. The scale used to measure the self-efficacy variable was a five-Likert type. The sum of scales for each learner was computed and frequencies and percentages were computed. Learners were grouped into four-level self-efficacy 1-missing (0 to 24), 2-low (25 to 59), 3-intermediate (60 to 83), and 4-high (84 to 120). Table 8 presents the summary of learners' levels of self-efficacy.

Table 8

Learners' Levels of Self-Efficacy

	Levels of self-efficacy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Missing	0	0.0
	Low	10	3.7
	Intermediate	114	41.6
	High	150	54.7
	Total	**274**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 8 shows that the majority of learners (n=150, 54.7%) have high self-efficacy. Following this is intermediate or moderate self-efficacy (n=114, 41.6%). Few (n=10, 3.7%) of the learners have low self-efficacy. None of the learners was reported to be having missing self-efficacy. Table 9 presents a crosstabulation of the levels of self-efficacy and gender.

Table 9

Crosstabulation of the Levels of Self-Efficacy and Gender

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Levels of self-efficacy	Low	4	6	10
	Intermediate	66	48	114
	High	73	77	150
Total		**143**	**131**	**274**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

From Table 9, the majority of learners (n=77) who have high self-efficacy are females with their male counterparts in the minority (n=73). For

those who have intermediate or moderate self-efficacy, males were in the majority (n=66) with their female counterparts in the minority (n=48). Table 10 is next and presents the crosstabulation of the levels of self-efficacy and age range.

Table 10

Crosstabulation of the Levels of Self-Efficacy and Age Range

		Age Range			
		10-12	13-15	Above 15	Total
Levels of self-efficacy	Low	1	0	2	10
	Intermediate	7	59	48	114
	High	5	95	50	150
Total		**13**	**161**	**100**	**274**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

From Table 10, it can be realised that the majority of learners (n=95) who have high self-efficacy are aged between 13 years and 15 years, followed by (n=50) aged above 15 years and those aged between 10 years and 12 years in the minority (n=05). For those who have intermediate or moderate self-efficacy, those in the age range (13-15) years were in majority (n=59), (above 15) years followed by (n=48), with (10-12) years in minority (n=07).

Research Question 3: *How does learners' self-efficacy influence examination malpractices in BECE?*

The research question sought to find out how learners' self-efficacy influences examination malpractices in BECE. Data to answer this research question was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient,

R^2, and descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). Tables 11 and 12 present the summary of the analyses.

Table 11

Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Examination Malpractices

		Self-Efficacy	Examination malpractices
Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.178
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	274	274
Examination malpractices	Pearson Correlation	.178	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	274	274

Source: Field Survey (2021) R^2 = 0.032

In Table 11, it can be observed that sig=.003, ρ<.05. This specifies that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and examination malpractices with r=.178. The relationship is positive but increases at a low pace. It can be inferred that self-efficacy slightly influences examination malpractices with r=.178, R^2=0.032. The descriptive statistics of the relationship are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Examination Malpractices

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Self-Efficacy	3.51	.594	274
Examination malpractices	2.92	.429	274

Source: Field Survey (2021)

From Table 12, self-efficacy has (Mean=3.51, Std. Dev.=.594) while examination malpractices have (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.429). It can be seen that self-efficacy with (Mean=3.51, Std. Dev.=.594) influences examination malpractices with (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.429) at r=.178, R^2=0.032. Research question four has been analysed as follows.

Research question 4: *What are the study habits of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality?*

The goal of this research question aims at finding the kinds of study habits exhibited by learners in the Asante Akim North. The study operationally defined and categorised study habits into cramming, massed learning, distributed learning, and learning through the semantic process. Data to answer this research question was analysed using frequencies and percentages as the four kinds of study habits were classified into 1-cramming (19 to 28), 2-massed learning (29 to 47), and 3-distributed learning (48 to 66), and 4-semantic process (67 to 76). Moreover, the responses to items on study habits were analysed to support the answer to the research question using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation and their respective averages). The summary is presented in Tables 13 to 16.

Table 13

Kinds of Study Habits Exhibited by Learners

	Kind of Study Habit	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Valid	Cramming	0	0.0
	Massed learning	13	4.7
	Distributed learning	251	91.6
	Semantic process	10	3.6
	Total	**274**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 13 shows that the majority of learners (n=251, 91.6%) study using distributed learning. This was followed by (n=13, 4.7%) and (n=10, 3.6%) of learners studied through massed learning and semantic process respectively. The table further indicated that no learner studies through cramming. The next table, Table 14 presents the crosstabulation of kinds of study habits exhibited by males and females.

Table 14

Crosstabulation of Kind of Study Habit and Gender

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Kind of Study Habit	Massed learning	9	4	13
	Distributed learning	129	122	251
	Semantic process	5	5	10
Total		**143**	**131**	**274**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 14 shows that 129 males and 122 females adopt distributed learning, and nine males and four females adopt massed learning. Also, five males and five females were studied through the semantic process. The next table, Table 15 presents the crosstabulation of kinds of study habits exhibited by learners relating to age range.

Table 15

Crosstabulation of Kind of Study Habit and Age Range

		Age Range			
		10-12	13-15	Above 15	Total
Kind of Study Habit	Massed learning	0	6	7	13
	Distributed learning	13	148	90	251
	Semantic process	0	7	3	10
Total		**13**	**161**	**100**	**274**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

In Table 15, it can be realised that for those who adopted distributed learning, the majority of the learners (n=148) were aged between 13 years and 15 years, (n=90) were aged above 15 years, with a few (n=13) aged between 10 years and 12 years. For massed learning learners, the majority (n=7) were aged above 15 years, and (n=6) were aged between 13 years and 15 years. For the semantic process, the majority (n=7) were aged between 13 years and 15 years, and (n=3) were aged above 15 years. The next table, Table 16 presents the responses to items on the study habits scale.

Table 16

Distribution of Learners' Response to Study Habits Scale

SN	Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
2	I study in a room with a comfortable temperature.	3.28	0.872
18	When I am learning something new, I ask myself questions and study until I can answer them without consulting the text or my notes on two or three occasions.	3.21	0.875
16	When studying word-based material, I try to predict the kind of questions that will be asked on examination and then read the text to find answers to those questions.	3.16	0.849
7	I review the subjects I will be studying at each study session, and I prepare all of the resources I will need ahead of time (papers, pencils, books).	3.16	1.119
17	When I am studying a theory or definition, I attempt to come up with at least two applications or uses for it.	3.06	0.885
3	Excluding the resources for the theme I am now studying, the counter or tabletop area where I study is always clear.	2.95	0.969

10	I set a goal for myself to pause each study session, depending on a certain amount of time, such as reading and writing, rather than a specific length of time, such as studying for one-half hour.	2.93	0.962
15	When I am working on a big project, like a term paper, I break it down into small chunks that take no more than an hour or two to complete.	2.92	0.896
1	I prefer to study in a room with decent indirect brightness.	2.92	0.969
8	I spend most of my time studying.	2.90	0.878
14	I accurately organise my study routine for the week at the start of each week.	2.89	0.937
6	I only study at the location or locations where I study, and I do not spend time on Facebook, reading magazines, or doing other things.	2.89	1.035
19	I survey, question, read, recite, and review while studying a text with an outline or a structured sequence.	2.88	0.993
13	When I am most aware, I study a difficult subject.	2.86	0.985
11	I never take more than an hour to finish any objective I set before taking a break.	2.82	0.960
12	I take breaks to make progress, not to rest or daydream.	2.72	0.996

5	To reduce distractions, I study against a wall or a corner.	2.71	0.992
4	To lessen disrupting sounds, I study in a quiet environment or wear earplugs or a fan to make a masking noise.	2.66	1.054
9	My class notes are reviewed within one day of the class in which they were taken.	2.50	0.895
Mean of Means/Std Dev. of Std Devs		**2.92**	**0.954**

Source: Field Survey (2021) N = 274

It can be noticed from Table 16 that the majority of learners agreed with the statement "I study in a room with a comfortable temperature" (Mean=3.28, Std. Dev.=.872). Following this is, "When I am learning something new, I ask myself questions and study until I can answer them without consulting the text or my notes on two or three occasions" agreed by most learners (Mean=3.21, Std. Dev.=.875). The majority of learners also agreed with the statement "When studying textual material, I try to predict the kind of questions that will be asked on examination and then read the text to find answers to those questions" (Mean=3.16, Std. Dev.=.849). Again, most learners (Mean=3.16, Std. Dev.=1.119) agreed with the statement "I review the subjects I will be studying at each study session, and I prepare all of the resources I will need ahead of time (papers, pencils, books)". For the statement "When I am studying a theory or definition, I attempt to come up with at least two applications or uses for it" the majority (Mean=3.06, Std. Dev.=.885) agreed with it.

Table 16 further shows that most learners agreed with the statement "When I am working on a big project, like a term paper, I break it down into

small chunks that take no more than an hour or two to complete" (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.896). Moreover, "I prefer to study in a room with decent indirect brightness" is agreed by most learners with (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.969) while most learners also agreed to "I accurately organise my study routine for the week at the start of each week" with (Mean=2.89, Std. Dev.=.937). The majority of the learners agreed with the statement "I survey, question, read, recite, and review while studying a text with an outline or a structured sequence" (Mean=2.88, Std. Dev.=.993). Finally, most learners (Mean=2.50, Std. Dev.=.895) agreed with the statement "My class notes are reviewed within one day of the class in which they were taken". The final section presents the results of testing the two research hypotheses.

Testing of Research Hypotheses

Research hypothesis 1- *H_0: There is no statistical relationship between learners' study habit and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE).*

H_1: There is a statistical relationship between learners' study habit and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE).

The goal of this hypothesis is to find out if there is no statistical relationship between learners' study habit and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE). However, it alternatively finds out the statistical relationship between learners' study habit and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE). Data on the study habit scale and examination malpractices scale were used for the analysis. The hypothesis was tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Tables 17 and 18 present the summaries of the analyses.

Table 17

Relationship Between Learners' Study Habits and Examination Malpractices

		Study Habits	Examination malpractices
Study Habits	Pearson Correlation	1	.130*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.031
	N	274	274
Examination malpractices	Pearson Correlation	.130*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	
	N	274	274

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 17 shows that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the study habits of learners and examination malpractices with r =.130, sig=.031, ρ<.05. There is a low relationship in a positive direction. It can be inferred that study habits slightly influence examination malpractices with r =.130. The descriptive statistics of the relationship are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics of the Relationship Between Learners' Study Habits and Examination Malpractices

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Study Habits	2.98	.302	274
Examination malpractices	2.92	.429	274

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 18 shows that there is a positive and low relationship between study habits with (Mean=2.98, Std. Dev.=.302) and examination malpractices with (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.429) at r=.130, sig=.031, ρ<.05.

Research hypothesis 2- *H_0: There is no significant difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractice.*

H_1: There is a significant difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractice.

The goal of this hypothesis is to find out if there is no statistical difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent to engage in examination malpractice. However, it alternatively finds out the statistical difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent to engage in examination malpractice. Data on gender, self-efficacy scale, and examination malpractices scale were used for the analysis. The hypothesis was tested using an independent sample t-test at a 0.05 level of significance. Tables 19 and 20 present the summaries of the analyses.

Table 19

Independent Samples t-Test on Gender Difference Relating to Self-Efficacy and Examination Malpractices

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Efficacy	Equal variances assumed	.012	.912	-.944	272	.346
	Equal variances not assumed			-.944	269.413	.346
Exam Malpractices	Equal variances assumed	.060	.806	-.146	272	.884
	Equal variances not assumed			-.146	267.003	.884

Source: Field Survey (2021) N = 274

In Table 19, Levene's test for equality of variances on level self-efficacy and gender shows that equality variance of homogeneity assumption was met with F=.012, sig=.912 greater than ρ=.05. With that Table 19 further indicates that t (272) = -.944, sig=.346 greater than ρ=.05. This establishes that there is no statistical difference between male and female learners based on their levels of self-efficacy.

Moreover, Table 19 on Levene's test for equality of variances on examination malpractices and gender shows that equality variance of homogeneity assumption was met with F=.060, sig=.806 greater than ρ=.05. With that, it is obvious from Table 19 that t (272) = -.146, sig =.884 greater than ρ =.05. This indicates that there is no statistical difference between male and female learners relating to their intent engagement in examination malpractices. The group statistics on the independent sample t-test are presented in Table 20.

Table 20

Group Statistics on Gender Difference Relating to Self-Efficacy and Examination Malpractices

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Self-Efficacy	Male	143	3.48	.579
	Female	131	3.54	.585
Examination	Male	143	2.92	.420
malpractices	Female	131	2.92	.441

Source: Field Survey (2021) N = 274

Table 20 indicates that there is no significant difference between males with (n=143, Mean=3.48, Std. Dev.=.579) and females with (n=131, Mean=3.54, Std. Dev.=.585) based on learners' levels of self-efficacy. Table 20 further revealed that there is no significant difference between males with (n=143, Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.420) and females with (n=131, Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.441) based on the learners' intent involvement in examination malpractices.

Discussions

Attitudes of Learners Towards Examination Malpractices

It can be seen from Table 7 that the majority of the learners agreed with the items used to measure their attitudes towards examination malpractices with the Mean of Means=2.89, Std Dev. of Std Devs. =1.011. The study, therefore, found that learners engage in examination malpractices when these factors (insufficient examination preparation, learners' poor attendance at lessons, laziness on the part of teachers and learners, unstructured examination timetables, and negative peer influence) exist. The findings agree with Musyoka's (2012) findings, which revealed that 219 (60.5%) learners would not mind cheating on a nationwide test if given the chance. Similarly, the findings support Oloyede's (2012) assertion that there are multiple fundamental reasons for examination malpractice, including parental pressure for high grades, peer pressure, insufficient preparation, and so on.

Again, it agrees with Asante-Kyei and Nduro (2014) who asserted that learners, together with teachers, were shown to be the primary causative components in the occurrence of sharp practices during examinations. One can infer from the analyses that, some of the factors relate to parents and the approaches directly or indirectly. Such factors include inadequate concern for the welfare of learners, learners' poor attendance at lessons, mad demand for certifications, and excessive participation in social activities. For instance, a parent is responsible for adequately ensuring the welfare of his or her ward (learner). However, the finding disagrees with Anakwe's (2011) finding which revealed that parenting methods did not influence learners' attitudes regarding examination malpractice. The difference may be because the current study

considered school-related factors whereas the previous study looked at parenting factors. The findings advocate that there is a strong desire for examination malpractice if the aforementioned factors exist. It could be suggested that the perpetrators of examination malpractices have a strong desire to achieve success at all costs as revealed in the Achievement Goal Theory (Ames et *al.*, 1977). Tackling examination malpractices, therefore, requires a multi-faceted approach involving policy changes, instructional improvements, character education, and a positive learning environment. By addressing the identified factors comprehensively, educational institutions can foster a culture of academic integrity and ethical behaviour among learners.

Levels of Self-Efficacy of Learners

Table 8 shows that the majority of Asante Akim North Municipality learners (n=264, or 96.3%) had either high or moderate self-efficacy. The findings are consistent with the findings of Sawari and Mansor (2013), who discovered that the majority of learners exhibited a modest (intermediate) level of general self-efficacy. Similarly, the findings support Goulao's (2014) findings that learners had a high level of self-efficacy. The findings imply that learners from Asante Akim North Municipality are less likely to engage in examination malpractices which is in line with self-efficacy theory (Feltz et al., 2008). The self-efficacy theory reveals that learners who have the "can-do" spirit without considering any foul means are less likely to engage in examination malpractices.

Learners' Self-Efficacy Influences Examination Malpractices in BECE

It is revealed in Tables 11 and 12 that self-efficacy with (Mean=3.51, Std. Dev.=.594) influences examination malpractices with (Mean=2.92, Std.

Dev.=.429) at r=.178, R^2=0.032. Barrows, Dunn, and Lloyd (2013) found that self-efficacy plays an important role in examinations and hence has the potential to influence examination malpractices. The findings agree with the findings of Barrows et *al.* study. Similarly, it conforms with Okorodudu (2012) who discovered that learners' examination malpractices are influenced by their self-efficacy. Moreover, Ofodile et *al.* (2019) found that self-efficacy ($r = -0.824$, $p < .05$) and examination malpractice had a substantial negative strong relationship and this tells more about how the relationship found will behave. This could be a result of different methodologies and different directions of this particular objective. The previous study explains the impact of self-efficacy on examination malpractice while the current study tells or describes the existence of the impact.

Kinds of Study Habit Exhibited by Learners

Table 16 shows that the majority of the learners had good study habits, with a Mean of Means=2.92 and Std Dev. of Std Devs.=.954. According to Tables 13 and 16, learners in Asante Akim North have strong study habits because they use distributed learning. Distributed learners use a more spaced-out technique in which you study in intervals throughout time. Learners who use distributed learning are far more likely to remember material even after the examination has ended, which can assist them in future classes and professions. The finding agrees with Ogbodo (2010) who found that learners should study using the SQ3Rs, which are a set of five procedures. In Table 16, it was reported that the majority of learners (Mean=2.88, Std. Dev.=.993) agreed that they adopted survey, question, read, recite, and review while studying a text with an outline or a structured sequence.

Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat, and Nasir (2017) revealed that there is a relationship between learners' study habits and academic accomplishment. Ebele and Olofu (2017) also said that there is a relationship between learners' study habits and their academic success. Ebele and Olofu continued to say that the finding is significant to one of the objectives since test abuses might jeopardise academic performance as a variable. Positive study habits, such as distributed learning and semantic processes, are critical. The finding implies that the presence of good study habits among the majority of learners suggests a positive correlation with academic success. Learners who adopt effective study habits are more likely to comprehend and retain the material, leading to improved performance in assessments and examinations.

Relationship Between Learners' Study Habit and Their Intent Participation in Examination Malpractices (BECE)

It can be revealed from Tables 17 and 18 that there is a positive low relationship (r=.130, sig=.031) between study habits with (Mean=2.98, Std. Dev.=.302) and examination malpractices with (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.429) $\rho<.05$. This can be attributed to the good study habits (distributed learning and semantic process) shown by the learners in the municipality. The findings support those of Ossai (2011), who discovered a substantial relationship between study habits and examination malpractices. Even though the two findings are significant, the current finding is low, whereas Ossai's study's finding is strong. The positive correlation suggests that as study habits improve, there is a tendency for examination malpractices to decrease. This provides an opportunity for educators and institutions to focus on enhancing learners' study habits as a potential strategy for reducing malpractices. This implication is

supported by the ethical theory called Utilitarianism recommended by Mackinnon (2012) which asserts that learners act to do right is caused by positive outcome. Desisting from examination malpractice is an act of doing right which is influenced by good study habits as a positive outcome.

Yet, Abdulmumin, Abdullahi, and Ibrahim (2020) discovered no statistically significant positive relationship between study habits and examination misbehaviour ($r = .08$, $p > .05$). The variations in the findings could be due to the unique settings and levels of respondents. The current study was among high school learners while the previous study considered university learners.

Difference Between Male and Female Learners' Levels of Self-Efficacy and Their Intent Engagement in Examination Malpractice

Tables 19 and 20 show that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female learners' self-efficacy and their willingness to engage in examination malpractice. The findings back with Baji's (2020) study, which found no significant difference in academic self-efficacy between male and female learners. Nonetheless, it contradicts Musyoka's (2012) findings, which found that female learners are 48 per cent more likely than male learners to participate in test misconduct. The absence of a significant difference between male and female learners suggests that self-efficacy and the inclination toward examination malpractice are not influenced by gender. This implies that both genders might face similar challenges and motivations related to academic integrity.

Balogun and Olanrewajub (2016), on the other hand, contradict the current findings by validating Musyoka's finding that females have a higher

degree of test anxiety and are more likely to participate in malpractices than men, due to their poorer self-efficacy on average. The dissimilarities might have happened because, in the two previous studies, the female respondents outnumbered their male counterparts. The current study has more males than females as respondents.

Chapter Summary

The chapter presents concise tables and charts that show the results of the data analyses with discussion. The descriptive statistics and inferential statistics presented were discussed precisely to help readers make meaning out of the findings from the study. From the analyses, JHS learners from Asante Akim North Municipality were reported to have exhibited a positive level of self-efficacy and good study habits. Furthermore, no significant difference was found between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their willingness to be involved in examination malpractice. The final part of the study's report is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This chapter contains the study's summary, key findings, conclusions, recommendations, contribution to knowledge and implications based on the important findings. It also makes suggestions for future research.

Summary

The study examined the influence of self-efficacy, and study habits by learners on examination malpractices in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the Asante Akim North Municipality. The study was a descriptive survey design with a quantitative approach. The accessible population was made up of 866 learners selected from 10 Junior High Schools in two circuits (Owerriman North and South). Through a multi-stage sampling approach, a sample size of 274 learners (143 boys and 131 girls) was chosen for the study and determined using Miller and Brewer's (2003) sample size mathematical model.

Data was collected using an adapted questionnaire called L-EMQ with an r = .727. Data on respondents' demographic characteristics were analysed with frequencies and percentages. Data that were used to answer the four research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations). While the data that were used to test the two research hypotheses were analysed using inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment correlation, r, and independent-sample t-test). A bar

graph and a pie chart were also used to enhance the analyses of demographic studies.

The study answered the following four research questions and tested two research hypotheses:

1. What are the attitudes of learners towards examination malpractices in the Asante Akim North Municipality?
2. What are the levels of self-efficacy of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality?
3. How does learners' self-efficacy influence examination malpractices in BECE?
4. What are the study habits of learners in the Asante Akim North Municipality?
5. H_0: There is no statistical relationship between learners' study habits and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE).

   H_1: There is a statistical relationship between learners' study habits and their intent participation in examination malpractices (BECE).
6. H_0: There is no significant difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractices.

   H_1: There is a significant difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractices.

Key Findings

1. The study found that the majority of learners engage in examination malpractices when these factors (insufficient examination preparation,

learners' poor attendance at lessons, laziness on the part of teachers and learners, unstructured examination timetables and negative peer influence) with (Mean of Means = 2.89, Std Dev. of Std Devs. = 1.011).

2. It was also found that most of the learners (n=264, 96.3%) in Asante Akim North Municipality have high self-efficacy.
3. The study found that self-efficacy with (Mean=3.51, Std. Dev.=.594) influences examination malpractices with (Mean=2.92, Std. Dev.=.429) at r =.178, R^2= 0.032, sig =.003, $\rho<.05$.
4. The study again found that most Asante Akim North Municipality learners exhibit good study habits by adopting distributed learning (Mean of Means =2.92, Std Dev. of Std Devs.=.954).
5. It was revealed that there is a positive low relationship between study habits with (Mean=2.98, Std. Dev.=.302) and examination malpractices with (Mean = 2.92, Std. Dev.=.429) at r =.130, sig =.031, $\rho<.05$.
6. Finally, the study found that there is no statistical difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractice.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study comes to the ensuing conclusions. To begin, this study offers a comprehensive view into the intricate dynamics surrounding examination malpractices among learners. The findings reveal a concerning trend where a significant majority of learners are drawn into engaging in such malpractices. This phenomenon appears to be intricately linked to a multitude of contributing factors, namely insufficient examination preparation, poor attendance at lessons, indifference from both educators and

learners, unstructured examination timetables, and the powerful sway of negative peer influence. These results indicate not only the presence of these factors but also the diversity in their influence on different learners. This reinforces the need for a multifaceted approach to address these challenges in educational settings. In essence, this study not only highlights the challenges posed by examination malpractices but also offers a roadmap for a more ethical and effective educational framework. It calls for a collective commitment to rectify the identified issues, ultimately leading to a more equitable and credible educational system that empowers learners to succeed through their own dedication and genuine efforts.

The outcomes of this study offer valuable acumens into the self-efficacy levels of learners within the Asante Akim North Municipality. This finding underscores the positive psychological orientation and confidence that these learners possess in their ability to navigate challenges and achieve their academic goals. The prevalence of high self-efficacy among the learners suggests the presence of a conducive learning environment, effective pedagogical strategies, and supportive educational stakeholders within the municipality. This high self-efficacy not only signifies individual learners' beliefs in their capabilities but also hints at the potential for improved academic performance, increased motivation, and enhanced resilience in the face of academic difficulties.

The study provides valuable insights into the intricate relationship between self-efficacy and examination malpractices. The findings indicate that self-efficacy plays a notable role in influencing the occurrence of these malpractices among learners. The findings suggest a moderate level of self-

efficacy within the studied population. These findings underline the reputation of self-efficacy in shaping learners' behaviour and choices related to examination integrity. Learners with higher levels of self-efficacy are very capable of approaching examinations with confidence, motivation, and a belief in their ability to perform well without resorting to malpractices. Conversely, those with lower self-efficacy might succumb to the temptation of malpractices as a means to cope with perceived challenges or lack of confidence. This implies that the study underscores the need to address not only the external factors influencing examination malpractices but also the internal psychological factors, such as self-efficacy, that contribute to these behaviours.

The study illuminates a positive aspect of the academic landscape within the Asante Akim North Municipality. The findings highlight that a substantial number of learners in the region have embraced effective study habits, primarily through the adoption of distributed learning techniques. This finding signifies the proactive and strategic approach that learners in the municipality are taking toward their education. The application of distributed learning, characterised by spacing out study sessions over time, indicates a commitment to long-term retention and a profound thoughtful of the material. By consistently revisiting and reinforcing ideas, these learners are likely to experience improved learning outcomes and enhanced performance in their academic pursuits. In essence, the study's discovery of the widespread adoption of distributed learning underscores the potential for enhancing the quality of education in the Asante Akim North Municipality.

The study uncovers a noteworthy relationship between study habits and examination malpractices among the participants. The findings reveal a

positive, albeit low, correlation between these two variables. This suggests that learners who demonstrate better study habits are, on average, somewhat less likely to engage in malpractice during examinations. These findings highlight the importance of cultivating effective study habits as a potential strategy to mitigate examination malpractices. Learners who adopt disciplined and structured study approaches are likely to be more prepared and confident when facing examinations. This increased preparation can lead to reduced temptation to resort to unethical practices, as learners are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed through legitimate means. The study's revelation of the connection between study habits and examination malpractices underscores the potential for proactive intervention.

Finally, it can be observed that the study provides appreciated intuitions into the gender-related aspects of self-efficacy and engagement in examination malpractice among learners. The findings indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female learners in terms of their levels of self-efficacy and their inclination to participate in examination malpractices. These outcomes underscore the importance of recognising learners as individuals with diverse motivations and experiences, regardless of their gender. While gender differences might not be a decisive factor, other individual and contextual variables could play a more substantial role in shaping self-efficacy beliefs and behaviours related to examination integrity. The study challenges the notion of a significant gender-based distinction in self-efficacy and examination malpractice tendencies.

Recommendations

1. The study found that the majority of learners engage in examination malpractices (EM) when these factors (insufficient examination preparation, learners' poor attendance at lessons, laziness on the part of teachers and learners, unstructured examination timetables, and negative peer influence). Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service should, therefore, ensure effective teaching and learning, as well as monitoring and supervision by the school leadership. Teachers must complete course syllabuses on time, and learners must be motivated, encouraged, and assisted to solve and practise enough problems in preparation for both internal and external examinations. This will go a great way toward lowering EM, as poor examination preparation has been proven to be the leading cause of EM.
2. It was found that most of the learners in Asante Akim North Municipality have high self-efficacy. It is recommended that stakeholders (GES, teachers and parents) should support initiatives on self-efficacy development to be a major component in child design and development and a measurable consequence of in-service teacher training to enhance learners' self-efficacy. Moreover, self-efficacy, we believe, may deliver a good hypothetical background for understanding the why's and how's of learners' growth when employed as a pivot point in the design of teaching and learning developmental activities. It also highlights the potential utility of a set of practical techniques that may be utilised to build positive efficacy beliefs, improve learners' competency, and improve learner outcomes, such as

feedback, different instructional design features, and integrated support systems.

3. The study found that self-efficacy influences examination malpractices. In light of this, it is recommended that the school administrators make sure that learners receive appropriate advice and counselling from teachers and Guidance and Counselling Coordinators so that they may overcome their worries, build and uphold their self-efficacy and gain the confidence they need to write and pass their examination. Guidance and counselling services are critical in calming learners' fears, educating learners on the effects of EM, guiding learners in making decisions about repetitions and promotions, and educating learners on the importance of acquiring knowledge rather than merely obtaining certificates in their education.
4. The study again found that most Asante Akim North Municipality learners exhibit good study habits by adopting distributed learning. Educational institutions should ensure that learners with poor study habits and significant levels of examination anxiety should be reoriented before taking their examination. In preventive strategies against examination malpractice, equal attention should be paid to male and female learners. The Ministry of Education should ensure records of uniform study patterns should be made available to all study facilities. Again, counsellors, teachers, and other educational practitioners might use measures of learners' study habits to predict whether or not they are likely to engage in examination malpractice.
5. It was discovered that there is a positive low relationship between study habits and examination malpractices. It is recommended that instructional supervisors should be in place, with teaching and learning resources readily

available to advance successful teaching and learning in the school. This will also guarantee that the curriculum is completed and that learners are well-prepared for the next examination.

6. Finally, the study found that there is no statistical difference between male and female learners' levels of self-efficacy and their intent engagement in examination malpractice. It is, therefore, recommended that from the beginning of education until the finish, the school administrators and teachers, in collaboration with the school guidance and counselling unit, should implement programmes that develop moral values and attributes in learners such as integrity, discipline, hard effort, and honesty. Learners must be encouraged and challenged to follow this way of life to reap its many benefits, although it is extremely difficult to do so at this time.

Contribution to Knowledge

It is worth emphasising that providing an original addition to knowledge is crucial in educational research. Silverman (2007) claims that any research's potential to contribute to knowledge may be demonstrated in four critical areas: formulating a hypothesis, discerning through the technique, expanding on a previous study, and the ability to shift guidelines. This work may be viewed in this light as expanding on previous research to add to the body of knowledge regarding preventing examination malpractices. Different degrees of self-efficacy and different types of study habits are more likely to increase test misbehaviour, according to the findings.

Although the survey discovered that learners had a high level of self-efficacy and good study habits, there was purposeful examination malpractice due to some justifiable reasons. The study has raised awareness of the urgency

with which the aforementioned challenges must be addressed. The data analysis methodology and intricacy of the approach will be extremely beneficial to future researchers.

Implications

The consequences of this study have an extensive array of implications for Ghana's educational system's counselling practice. Learners' self-efficacy was high or moderate, with a modest correlation between self-efficacy and examination malpractices. Using the notion of self-efficacy, school counsellors in our educational system might prevent examination malpractice in a variety of ways. For example, from time to time, organising training programmes, workshops, and seminars for learners. Learners can be tangled in the formation of educational policy, curriculum development, and implementation directly or indirectly. By establishing an orientation programme, counsellors can assist learners in improving their self-efficacy, examination ethics, and examination dishonesty. Second, the present research found a relationship between learners' study habits and cheating on examinations. School counsellors, in collaboration with educational stakeholders, have a lot of work to do to confront this terrible behaviour. They should assist learners in developing healthy study habits and embrace the SQ3R learning style by guiding and orienting them.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. A replicate of this study should be carried out at the senior high school level and also in different municipalities and regions to finetune the findings to yield a great generalisation stance.
2. As we are not giving up, extra studies should be conducted as researchers deploy further independent variables like self-concept, self-regulation, use

of cell phones, invigilators' actions, school ranking, personality types, etc., especially at the senior high school level.

3. Future researchers should employ qualitative design or mixed-method to explore diverse purposes for examination malpractices. The two approaches use interviews and observation as data collection instruments which have limited limitations as compared to the questionnaire.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire aims to collect data that will help the researcher to answer questions regarding, **"influence self-efficacy, and study habit on examination malpractices in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in the Asante Akim North Municipality"** which is a selected zone of study. The workout is for academic purposes only. Any data you provide will be kept private. The questionnaire assesses your understanding of the study's concepts. At the beginning of each section, there are instructions for filling out the questionnaire. Thank you for your assistance.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND DATA OF RESPONDENT

Please respond with a tick (√) for a suitable response.

Gender

Male [ ] Female [ ]

1. Age range

10 – 12 [ ] 13 - 15 [ ] Above 15 [ ]

SECTION B

SELF-EFFICACY OF LEARNERS

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements by ticking (√). 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are the numbers that range from not at all (1) to well (5).

SN	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
1	I can persuade a teacher to assist me when I have trouble with schoolwork.					
2	When my peers disagree with me, I can articulate myself well.					
3	I successfully cheer myself up after a traumatic experience.					
4	I can study effectively when I have so many other things to do.					
5	I do manage myself well to regain my composure when I am terrified.					
6	I am good at making friends with other peers.					
7	I can prepare well for an examination by studying a chapter.					
8	I can effectively strike up a conversation with someone I have never met before.					
9	I can effectively keep myself from being nervous.					
10	I successfully do all of your schoolwork each day.					
11	I can effectively work together with my peers.					

12	I manage my emotions effectively.					
13	I do concentrate well in each class.					
14	I can tell other peers to stop doing something I do not like.					
15	I can effectively give myself a pep talk when I am feeling down.					
16	I do comprehend all school subjects well.					
17	I can successfully tell a group of peers about a humorous event.					
18	I can successfully communicate my illness to a friend.					
19	I am successful at pleasing my parents with my schoolwork.					
20	I manage to maintain friendships with other peers successfully.					
21	I effectively manage to keep unfavourable ideas at bay.					
22	I am successful at passing a test.					
23	I can prevent fights among children.					
24	I effectively manage not to be concerned about what could happen.					

SECTION C

LEARNERS' STUDY HABIT

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements by ticking (√). Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) are the four levels of agreement (SD).

SN	STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
1	I prefer to study in a room with decent indirect brightness.				
2	I study in a room with a comfortable temperature.				
3	Excluding the resources for the theme I am now studying, the desk or tabletop area where I study is always clear.				
4	To lessen disrupting sounds, I study in a quiet environment or wear earplugs or a fan to make a masking noise.				
5	To reduce distractions, I study against a wall or a corner.				
6	I only study at the location or locations where I study, and I do not spend time on Facebook, reading magazines, or doing other things.				
7	I review the subjects I will be studying at each study session, and I prepare all of the resources I will need ahead of time (papers, pencils, books).				
8	I spend most of my time studying.				

9	My class notes are reviewed within one day of the class in which they were taken.				
10	I set a goal for myself to take a break after each study session, depending on a certain amount of time, such as reading and writing, rather than a specific length of time, such as studying for one-half hour.				
11	I never take more than an hour to finish any objective I set before taking a break.				
12	I take breaks to make progress, not to rest or daydream.				
13	When I am most aware, I study a difficult subject.				
14	I accurately organise my study routine for the week at the start of each week.				
15	When I am working on a big project, like a term paper, I break it down into small chunks that take no more than an hour or two to complete.				
16	When studying word-based material, I try to predict the kind of questions that will be asked on examination and then read the text to find answers to those questions.				
17	When I am studying a theory or definition, I attempt to come up with at least two applications or uses for it.				

18	When I am learning something new, I ask myself questions and study until I can answer them without consulting the text or my notes on two or three occasions.				
19	I survey, question, read, recite, and review while studying a text with an outline or a structured sequence.				

SECTION D

EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE OF LEARNERS

Use the following scale to specify your level of agreement with each of the statements by ticking (√). Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) are the four levels of agreement (SD).

SN	STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD
1	Examination malpractice can be caused by an unstable school calendar.				
2	Examination malpractice might result from a lack of proper notice of concerns.				
3	Examination timetables that are not properly structured can encourage Examination cheating.				
4	Inadequate Examination facilities may encourage learners to cheat on Examinations.				
5	Examination misconduct is caused by collaboration between professionals and learners.				

6	Examination misconduct is caused by a focus on cognitive (memory) assessment.				
7	Examination misconduct can be caused by insufficient monitoring of teachers' actions.				
8	Inadequate concern for the welfare of learners encourages cheating.				
9	Teachers who do not show up for class encourage learners to cheat on tests.				
10	Examination misconduct is facilitated by the use of improper lesson techniques/methods.				
11	Examination malpractice is encouraged by frequent strike activities.				
12	Inadequate teacher-learner connection in the classroom encourages misconduct.				
13	Examination cheating might be encouraged by sexual harassment from teachers.				
14	Examination misconduct is encouraged when learners are used to marking examination scripts.				
15	Extortion of learners by teachers encourages examination cheating.				
16	Some teachers' harshness has an impact on learners' participation in Examination cheating.				
17	Examination malpractice is encouraged by learners' poor attendance at lessons.				

18	Examination cheating is caused by insufficient Examination preparation.				
19	Examination malpractice is facilitated by the inability to obtain reading materials.				
20	Examination misconduct is encouraged by a lack of confidence.				
21	Examination malpractice is encouraged by laziness.				
22	Examination cheating is encouraged by the mad demand for certifications.				
23	Examination malpractice is caused by negative peer influence.				
24	Examination malpractice is encouraged by excessive participation in social activities.				

APPENDIX B

Letter of Introduction

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

Telephone: 0332091697
Email: dep@ucc.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: DEP/26/Vol. 6

22nd September, 2021

Your Ref:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir,

THESIS WORK
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
MR. DAVID ARHIN – EF/MNT/20/0007

We introduce to you Mr. David Arhin a student with registration number EF/MNT/20/0007 from the University of Cape Coast, Department of Education and Psychology. He is pursuing a Master of Philosophy degree in Measurement and Evaluation and he is currently at the thesis stage.

Mr. Arhin is researching on the topic: **"INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND STUDY HABITS ON EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES IN BASIC EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION (BECE) IN THE ASANTE AKIM NORTH DISTRICT."**

He has opted to collect or gather data at your institution/establishment for his Thesis work. We would be most grateful if you could provide him the opportunity and assistance for the study. Any information provided would be treated strictly as confidential.

We sincerely appreciate your co-operation and assistance in this direction.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Ama A/ Ocran
Principal Administrative Assistant
For: **HEAD**

APPENDIX C

Sample of Permission Letter for Data Collection

JUANSA PRESBY JHS
P.O. BOX 10
JUANSA-ASANTE AKIM NORTH

20TH OCTOBER 2021

THE HEADTEACHER

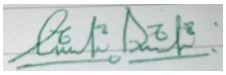
Dear Sir,

PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FOR THESIS WORK
RE: DAVID ARHIN
REGISTRATION NUMBER: EF/MNT/20/0007

I am writing to ask for authorisation to gather data at your school for my thesis project. Your school is one of the study's ten convenient sampled public schools. The purpose of this study is to see how study habits and self-efficacy influence examination malpractices. The information being gathered is only for academic reasons, and safeguards have been put in place to ensure that research ethics are carefully followed: confidentiality and anonymity. For example, a respondent will not be required to provide his or her name on the instrument. Furthermore, because the respondents' average mental age spans between 12 and 14 years, I should obtain the respondents' consent from the staff as academic parents of the respondents.

I will also ask that Mr. Johnson Ababio Boadu, a teacher from your school, be assigned as a research assistant to help the respondents reply to the items completely. The items will be answered by a total of 11 learners from JHS 1, 2, and 3. For your perusal, I have attached a copy of my department's introduction letter from UCC. I am depending on you to cooperate as always. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

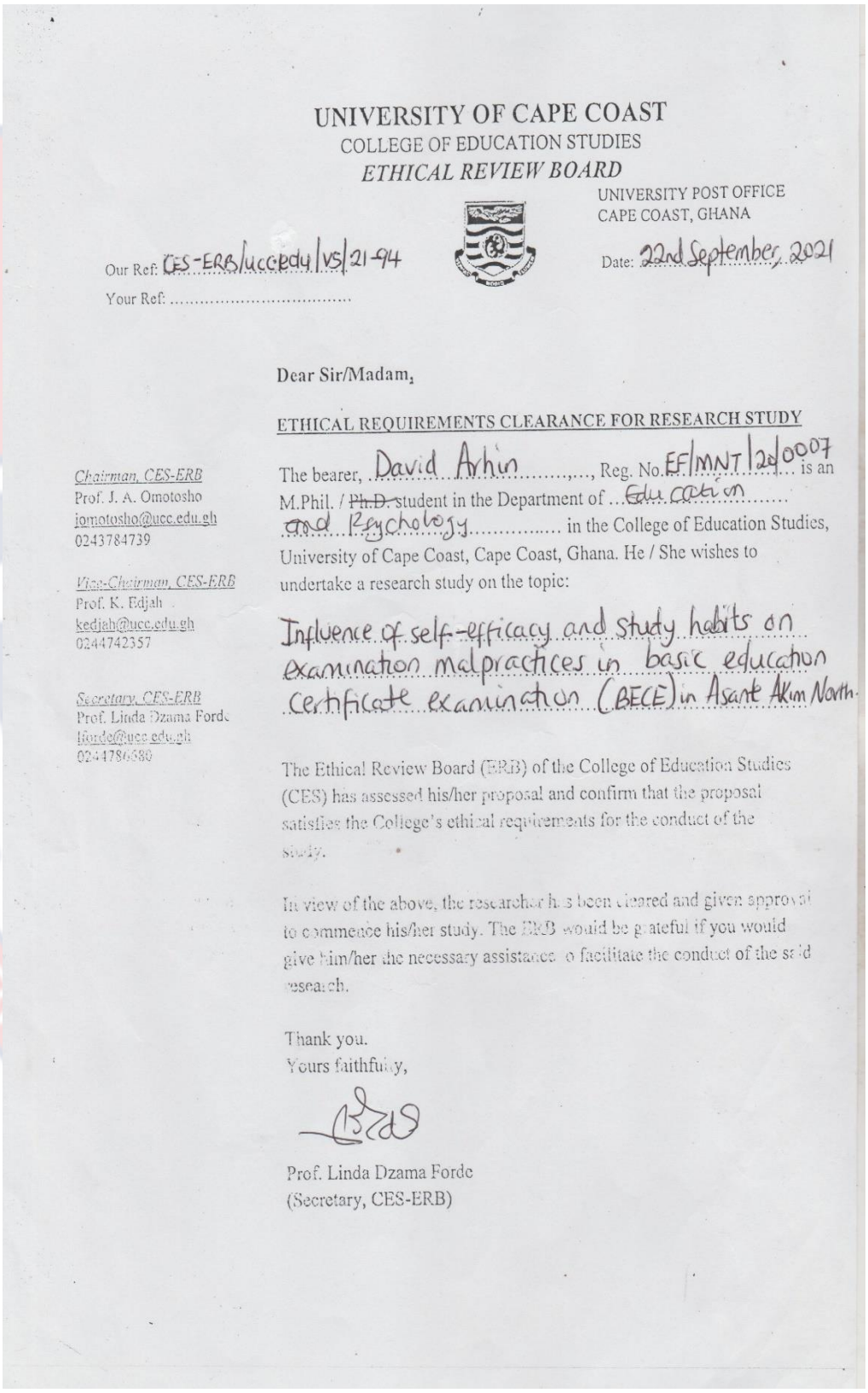


David Arhin

Tel: 0247758110
Email: david.arhin@stu.ucc.edu.gh

APPENDIX D

Ethical Clearance



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES-ERB/ucced4/vs/21-94
Your Ref: .....
Date: 22nd September, 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

The bearer, David Arhin ....., Reg. No. EF/MNT/20/0007 is an M.Phil. / ~~Ph.D.~~ student in the Department of ...Education and Psychology..... in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. He / She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic:

Influence of self-efficacy and study habits on examination malpractices in basic education certificate examination (BECE) in Asante Akim North.

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed his/her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence his/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give him/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
jomotosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
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0244742357

Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786580

APPENDIX E

Analysis of Post-Reliability

Summary of Event Processing

		N	Per cent
Cases	Valid	40	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	**40**	**100.0**
Listwise			

Statistics of Consistency Computation

Coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items on the Questionnaire
r = 0.727	69