
ASSESSMENT OF ANXIETY ON TESTS DISHONESTY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The major aim of this study was to assess the influence of anxiety on tests dishonesty among undergraduate students in University of Calabar, Cross River State in Nigeria. Literature review of both theoretical and empirical studies was done according to the variable under study. The sample for the study was drawn from the population of seven hundred and thirty-five (735) undergraduates' students from year, 2, 3 and 4, comprising three hundred and two (302) females and one hundred and ninety-eight (198) males were used for the study. The data were collected using an eight (8) item research instrument. The data were analyzed with the use of independent t-test. The result of the analysis reviewed that anxiety influences test dishonesty among undergraduate students in university of Calabar, Cross River State in Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that all stakeholders in education should play their parts through educating and forming tests ethics club for students, parents and lecturers among others. The school authority should ensure that lecturers perform their duty effectively and should also pay staff earning as at when due in order to reduce corruption within the educational system.*

KEYWORDS: anxiety, tests, dishonesty, undergraduate, students

INTRODUCTION

In Nigerian educational programmes, the use of test is integral and their proper application can ensure the matching of educational programmes with students' knowledge and their motivation (Offor, 2002). By assessing the degree of success attained, test aids in the modification of instruction as it progresses. Appropriate measures of achievement, ability and attitudes are needed to determine the amount of learning acquired by each student and to decide on the nature of later programmes (Offor, 2002). Test scores, dating from very ancient times have been used as a basis for sharing privileges and allocating responsibilities at the national level as well as to identify deficiencies and thus screening aberrant behaviour at the individual level (Ijeoma, 1997). Tests find their modal use in both education and industry particularly in the area of selection. In the various selection situations, test scores of different testes who differ significantly on the basis of personality, home background and school related variables are compared. For effective comparison, there is need to establish consequence of units. Hence, Anastasi (1968) reiterates the

need and importance of taking test sophistication into account for the various situations in which test scores are applied for decision making purposes.

Traditionally, family and kinship ties advocate the use of connections; as a basis for this selection. On the other hand, democratic demands and practices worldwide advocate the use of merit, (Ijeoma, 1997). When merit is the criterion for selection, test in their variants provide the most impartial judgment (Cronbach, 1984). Advocating the use of superiority of test/merits over connections in this regard, Gardner (1961) comments that ... “the tests couldn’t see whether the young star was in rags or in tweeds, and they couldn’t hear the accents of the slum. The test revealed intellectual gifts of every level of the population” (p. 68). The crucial and important role of tests, including serving the “gate-keepers to educational and occupational opportunities” has given rise to high demand and pressure for valid test scores.

Several approaches to ensure validity in test scores are posited by both test practitioners and test developers. For example, while current approaches consider only the test maker’s view of what the test scores mean and whether they are useful for teachers and learners, Tittle (1989) in Ijeoma (1997) suggests an expanded view that would integrate teacher professionals and students perspectives as necessary. This perspective advocates integrating the meanings and inferences constructed in the classroom from assessment information with the use to which such meaning are put. Nevertheless, both current and recommended approaches to ensure validity in test scores call for more objectivity in both the measurement instrument and test taking process (Ijeoma, 1997). In a national survey of secondary schools in United States of America, Giffords and Fluitts (2001) indicated that as many as one in four public schools, one in three Catholic Schools and one out of two independent schools provide test taking skills programmes. This finding attest to the high premium placed on tests.

Locally, in Nigeria, though there is paucity of data on large scale national assessments aspects of the educational practice, the common sense observation of large incidence of dishonesty in public tests at all levels of the educational system in Nigeria, provide partial support for the importance of test scores. Additionally, the extensive use of test scores in the realm of selection and admission into secondary and tertiary institutions and employment selection, as well as the current aptitude test used in screening candidates into the Nigerian schools have generated a climate for test score pollution. In an effort to improve test scores, students, parents, teachers and even school authorities resort to outright aiding and dishonesty during and after test taking and in internal and external tests.

Test dishonesty refers to any wrong doing committed before, during or after a test which tends to jeopardize the credibility of certificates issued thereafter (Maduabum, 2001; Ogbonna, 2001). Such a wrong doing according to these writers could be committed by students, invigilators/supervisors, examiners, printers, typists, parents or any person who is directly or indirectly involved in the conduct of such a test.

The increasing rate of test dishonesty has assumed a frightening dimension involving individual, syndicates and even institutionally organized behaviour (Maduabum, 2001). Several studies have been carried out on test dishonesty with various findings and recommendations on how to strengthen the test taking process (Nenty, 1955, Nyenti, 1991; Maduabum, 2001; Ogbonna, 2001; Ekoja, Obeya and James, 2006; Chima, 2006; Akpo and Akpo, 2006; Kayode, 2006).

The method employed in order to accomplish test dishonesty have continued to increase in sophistication, types and enormity. Included among the methods are body writing or tattoo, giraffing, super printing impersonation/mercenaries and the use of sophisticated electronic devices such as calculators, mobile phones IPod, etc. (Maduabum, 2001; Ogbonna, 2001; Chima, 2006; Akpo and Akpo, 2006).

Several factors have been identified to enhance the practice of test dishonesty. These factors are either externally or rooted. Maduabum (2001) organized them as society related factors (e.g. undue emphasis on certificates, laxity in prosecuting offenders, inadequate funding, etc); institutionalized related factor (e.g. lack of conducive test environment, laxity in penalizing/punishing offenders, poor invigilation, etc); learner-related factors (e.g. roles of parents/guardians, test officials/supervisors, law enforcement agents, etc). There are other classification (Akpo and Akpo, 2006). Be that as it may, no matter how the classification is done, the reasons for test dishonesty are in-exhaustive.

The consequences of test dishonesty on candidates, their families, educational system, test bodies, Ministry of Education and the larger society are varied and enormous. Presently there is general lack of confidence in the test systems in terms of how such are administered in Nigeria. This has invariably affected the certificates that are issued as part of the educational training outcomes. Thus, it has not only attracted poor attitudes to Nigerian certificates, it has also lowered the value place on those certificates by outside countries. Besides, it is capable of impairing the efficacy of the labour because it promotes mediocrity and results in having individuals who are mentally and morally ineffective in public offices or work positions which they will not competently handle. Furthermore, it enhances institutionalization of corruption and socio-economic underdevelopment (Aliyu, 2006). Test dishonesty increases moral decadence and jeopardizes the credibility of certificates issued by test bodies and institutions of learning.

The government, test bodies, school authorities and institution of higher learning have variously made concerted effort to stem down, control, eliminate or stamp out test dishonesty. Some of these efforts as availed by Kayode (2006:262) included promulgation of the miscellaneous offences Decree 20 of 1984 with its penalty of 21 years imprisonment by the Federal Government, blacklisting of invigilators/supervisors/examiners, schools and centres that are involved and cancellation of the results of a particular candidates, group of candidates, school(s) or centre(s) or withholding their result for a period of time. Additional measures include suspension by not less than one year of the affected school(s) or centre(s) from presenting WAEC or JAMB tests; rustication of the affected student(s) in the form of suspension or probation for one or two semester

or total expulsion; and demotion or termination of appointment on the part of affected staff (Kayode, 2006).

In spite of this concerted effort by the government, test bodies, school authorities and institution of higher learning to stamp out test dishonesty, the trend still continues. Test has always been an anxiety provoking stage in one life, hence any individual will employ any means of passing his or her test.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Any valuable study must be based on theoretical considerations. This is to provide the fundamental basis for the study. Hence, the role of theory in research cannot be over-emphasized. Theory is the road map that guides and opens up the path in research. It is a form of structure on which related invents are examined. Hilgard (1957) describes theory as a cluster of relevant assumptions that are systematically related to each other. Therefore, related theories on which this study is built will be reviewed under the following headings:

- i) Classical test theory
- ii) Item response theory
- iii) Danger signal theory of anxiety by Freud (1936)

Classical Test Theory (CTT)

The classical test theory has been developed over many years ago. The theory states that a test is dependent exclusively upon the abilities of examinees and the characteristics of the test. It is the relative ability of the examinee that determines his success or failure in a test. The basic tools used by classical test theories include the following:

- i) The P-value, which relates to the proportion of testees choosing alternative items (i.e. item difficulty).
- ii) The d-value that is the biserial correlation between item alternatives (i.e. item discrimination).
- iii) The mean of testees scores
- iv) The standard deviation of testees score
- v) The skewness and kurtosis of testees scores
- vi) The reliability of the test (Akpan, 1989).

The analysis of test, which is based on the above statistics, uses classical test theory. The classical test theory has problems in that the statistics used are relative to the characteristics of the test and of the testees. For instance, the P-value (the proportion of the testees selecting the item alternatives) is relative to the ability standing of the testees because of the same test which is taking by the high ability group is given to low ability group, two different P-values will be gotten. Similarly d-value is relative to the homogeneity of the ability levels of the testees. It depends on whether or not the ability levels of the testees taking the test are markedly similar or different. Besides, the items of the test vary in terms of their difficulty. For instance, when items of a test are given to a group of

testees having a similar ability levels and the same items are given to another group of testees having different ability levels, two different d-values will be produced by the two groups. Also, an item put in a test with other items that are homogeneous in content and P-value will produce a d-value different from the d-value it would produce in a heterogeneous test.

The mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis will also differ according to the characteristics of the test and the testees. The reliability is relative to the standard deviation of the items in the test, all of which depend on the particular abilities of the testees and the attributes of the test. Classical test theory statistics are meaningful only in a very limited situation, that is, when the same items is given to the same population as part of strictly parallel tests. A situation like this rarely occurs. Besides the basic principles and definitions of classical test theory are untestable. They are accepted as simply true without any means to empirically determine their relevance to reality. Thus, it is likely that classical test model does not apply to any real test.

The relevance of the classical test theory to this study is that since it is the relative ability of the examinee that determines the success or failure in a test, it then means that if a test is given to low ability students, the test will look difficult to them hence in a bit to see that such students pass or score high in the test will then resort to behaviour that is unethical which might lead them to cheating. In the same way if the same test is given to high ability students, the test may look easy or simple hence those test taking behaviour will not be exhibited by the students or testees.

However, classical test theory has come under severe criticism in the early 1960. This is because it is alleged that the theory and its parameters are closely tied to the group taking the test and not to the inherent ability the test packaged. For instance, group “A” may have higher ability than group “B” that is, the test reacts only to the group taking it and to its strength. Classical test theory makes use of the raw scores. It calls for pilot study, which involves trying and re-trying of items and those items found wanting are dropped. It derives its weakness from P-value (called item difficulty), which cannot hold across different groups taking the same test, and d-value (item discrimination), which does not hold for relatively homogeneous group and heterogeneous group taking the same test. Thus, classical test theory does not provide an appropriate framework in dealing with any of the three tasks demanded of the testees, which include the following:

- i) Predicting individual previous responses, that is, how the individual previous responses, that is, how the individual will respond to different questions, which have not been administered.
- ii) Making effective use of knowledge in picking the questions to be administered next.
- iii) Assigning at the end of the testing a numerical score representing the ability level of performance of the individual tested.

Item Response Theory (IRT)

Conversely, Item Response Theory (IRT) through its various models was developed to address the weaknesses of the classical test theory (CTT) and to offer a more plausible or practical approaches to explaining the true ability of the testees. Realistically, item response theory makes possible

items and test statistics, which are dependent neither on the characteristics of the testees nor on the other items in the test. With the item statistics it becomes possible to describe in precise terms the characteristics of the test before the test is administered. This capability allows one to construct a test that is highly efficient in accomplishing the purpose. It is believed that when examinee enters an examination hall, or any testing situation, he/she goes with his/her ability and it is this ability that will determine his answering the question correctly. If he/she does not possess the ability to choose the answer demanded, he/she will not answer the question correctly. Besides, the assumptions of the item response theory are explicit and have the characteristics of empirical testing.

The four basic assumptions of the Item Response Theory (IRT) are:

- i) The know-correct assumption
- ii) The normal – ogive assumption
- iii) The local independence assumption
- iv) The unidimensionality assumption

Joshua (2007) sees item response theory as the most significant development in psychometric in recent times. He compares it with the Einstein's relativity theory in physics. The primary thrust of item response theory is on consistency of response by the testees. According to Joshua (2007) on the first assumption, know correct assumption, that if a testee knows the correct answer to the item, he/she will answer correctly. In other words if he/she gets the item wrong, then he/she does not know the answer. This assumption can also be treated in terms of a trait. For instance, if a testee possess the trait calls for by an item, he/she will answer the item correctly and if he/she does not possess the trait, then he/she will not. The know-correct assumption does not take into account other factors except trait, which can influence the testee to respond correctly to an item.

The normal-ogive assumption is the graphical transformation of item response curve with the following properties

- i) The lower asymptote
- ii) The upper asymptote
- iii) The middle or rapidly rising of the item response function (Warm, 1978).

There has been a controversy over the normal-ogive assumption. Hoffman (1962) as cited by Warm (1978) has charged that tests may penalize extremely high ability individuals because they know too much. In this case, they consider factors far above the intended scope of the item and therefore get it wrong. If that were the case, then the Item Response Function (IRF) would curve down away from the upper asymptote. This observation has been referred to as Banesh Hoffman effect. This controversy engages Lord (1965) for a number of years to try to investigate the nature of the curves. His findings were as follows:

- i) The lower tail of the IRF did not rise for almost all items. The very few items that did rise did so to a very small extent.
- ii) There was no evidence of Banesh Hoffmann effect

iii) There were good indications that Item Response Function (IRF) is strictly monotonic.

Lord's findings give away to the speculation and confusion that behoved normal-ogive assumption. Then there was a consensus that the item response function takes the form of the normal-ogive and it was bound to be monotonic.

The third assumption is the local independence which means that the probability of a testee getting on item correct is unaffected by the answers given to other items in the test. For instance, in any testing situation, the answer a testee gives to item number one should not influence the answer he/she gives to item number two in a given tests items. Because the ability, which affects responses to any two items in a test, is constant, then the relationship between the two items should not correlate zero with each other. If this happens, the responses to the items are influence by factors other than what the test has been designed to measure. The testees who have the same level but different responses show lack of local independence among the items making up the test. The commonest situation in which local independence assumption does not materialize is in a speed test. The major concern of local independence is to reduce to the barest minimum the interrelatedness of items in the test so as to offer an opportunity to the testee to independently give correct response to the test items. On the other hand, local independence means that items are uncorrelated for individuals with the same ability.

The fourth assumption is unidimensionality, which is the most complex and most restrictive assumptions of the Item Response Theory (ITR). In broad terms unidimensionality implies that the items measure one and only one area of knowledge or ability. This does not mean that the item correlate positively with each other. Indeed, it is conceivable for all items to correlate negatively with each other and still be unidimensional. Test that look unidimensional include typical ability tests such as verbal, numerical, spatial, perception, mechanical, comprehension and tool knowledge. Besides, items that measure bits of knowledge that were learned together are probably unidimensional. Also, items that test bits of knowledge, which are logically and sequentially related may be expected to be unidimensional.

Relating the Item Response Theory (IRT) to test taking behaviour of students in our universities, one takes the presupposition of the item response theory that for an examinee to be able to respond correctly to items on a test consistently, he/she must possess the ability that is called for by the items. But students who are supposed to be reading at school are found engaged in social vices such as cultism, drug and alcohol and keeping late nights which leads to ill-preparedness, hence enters an examination or testing room without the ability that is called for by the items in the test thereby resorting to unethical behaving. Besides, students in the universities ill-preparedness, some teachers are either not qualified or not sufficient in number to contend with the large class size. According to Fagbemi (2001), one is not surprised that poor preparation or absolute lack of preparation by the teachers and students could make a large number of students be predisposed to unethical behaviour during testing taking hence engaged in cheating.

The danger signal theory of anxiety by Freud (1936)

The danger signal theory of anxiety was propounded by Freud Sigmund in the year (1933) and later developed in (1936). The theory states that anxiety is a signal indicating the presence of danger which serves to warn the individual that some form of adjustment is needed. Freud saw anxiety as having some form of adaptive utility in motivating behaviour that enables the individual to avoid danger. Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis proposed several theories that could be used to explain anxiety. He therefore, defined anxiety as something felt, an unpleasant affective emotional state or condition that was characterized by subjective feelings of irritability, chronic apprehension and all that is covered by the word of nervousness and by essentially the psychological and behavioral manifestation that Darwin attributed to fear.

In his early theoretical formulation, Freud initially viewed anxiety as resulting from the discharge of repressed sexual energy called libido. To him, when libidinal energy is blocked from normal expression, it accumulates and is automatically transformed into anxiety. That is, he viewed anxiety as a consequence and direct manifestation of unemployed libido. In other words, when the sexual instincts are not allowed to express themselves directly, their energy is diverted and converted into anxiety. This made him to later modify this view to formulate the Danger Signal Theory of Anxiety. This is in favour of a more general conception of anxiety as a signal indicating the presence of danger which serves to warn the individual that some form of adjustment is needed. That is, in his danger signal theory, Freud saw anxiety as having some form of adaptive utility in motivating behaviour that enables the individual to avoid danger. In a nutshell, Freud warns that the self is relatively fragile and must be protected from excessive danger. Still in the context of his danger signal theory, he differentiated between objective and neurotic anxiety. He states two sources of danger as follows: (i) the external world and (ii) one's own internal impulses. He states that when the source of danger was in the external world, it gives rise to objective anxiety reaction but when the source is from the individuals own repressed impulse or instincts, it generates neurotic anxiety.

To him, objective anxiety is an internal emotional reaction to anticipated real external danger or threat or harm. Thus, whenever a real danger in the external environment is perceived as threatening, this results in objective anxiety reactions. Freud's conception of objective anxiety is that the intensity of the emotional reaction is proportional to the magnitude of the perceived external danger or threat. He states that objective anxiety reactions are experienced by the individual as unpleasant and the emotional reactions initiate mental activities in the form of the thoughts and coping behaviours that attempt to reduce the unpleasantness, by banishing from the awareness of the individual all the thoughts or memories associated with the unpleasant emotional reactions. This reduction or coping behaviour according to him is an act of repression of internal impulses. Consequently, the repression system may break down and this leads to the perception of threat or danger from one's own repressed impulses. Thus, a neurotic anxiety which is objectless because the source of the danger is not recognized now results. Neurotic anxiety is characterized by high intensity of emotional state that would be unwarranted from the real or objective danger that evokes the reaction.

He further proposed that anxiety may be produced by conflicts between the Id, Ego and Superego. According to him, a child in shopping mall for example, whose parents said that they will not buy a much desired toy may suffer anxiety in the struggle between the desire to steal the toy and awareness that it is wrong to take things without paying for them. This is what happens when there is statistics anxiety as it may lead to malpractice. Finally, Freud asserted that any form of an anxiety has two basic components which include physiological and emotional. Physiological symptoms of any anxiety include changes in heart-rate beat, sweating, trembling, restlessness and accelerated breathing. Emotional symptoms include cognitions and expectations about self and others, apprehension, tense and troubled emotional feelings.

Freud's theory has several educational implications especially on this study as regards statistics anxiety. He makes the concept of anxiety clearer by positing that anxiety is an internal emotional reaction that anticipated real external danger or threat in the environment. This is by implication that statistics anxiety could thus be viewed as an internal emotional response or reaction to the threat of statistics stimulus. Therefore, statistics and calculations are real perceivable objects in the external environment and by implication and relation to the current study, this theory would guide the researcher in understanding the factors behind statistics anxiety and deciding the items to use in the designing of the instrument for data collection (questionnaire).

Mandler and Sarason's theory of test anxiety was introduced in (1952) to account for the effects of anxiety on performance in test situations. According to these theorists, anxious students perform more poorly on intelligence test than students who were low in test anxiety, and that decrements in the performance of highly anxious students are more pronounced when test are administered under stressful, ego-involving conditions.

The theory assumes that two kinds of learned drives are evoked in testing situations. The first set of drivers called "learned task drives" is elicited by the demand characteristics of the task. These drives stimulate task relevant responses that lead to the reduction of the drive through task completion. The second type of drive evoked in testing situations according to the theory is called "learned anxiety drive" and it elicit two type's responses, namely:

- i) Task-relevant responses
- ii) Task-irrelevant responses

Task-relevant responses are functionally equivalent to learn task drive and the two of them contribute to the facilitation of effective performance. The task-irrelevant responses evoked by learned anxiety drives interfere with performance in testing situations through feelings of inadequacy, helplessness, heightened somatic reactions, anticipation of punishment or loss of status and esteem and implicit attempts at leaving the test situation. While on the other it might lead the student to exhibit unethical test taking behaviour which might lead him/her into cheating in the test or examination. The theory emphasizes stress and its attributes like success and failure feedbacks and "expected to finish" factor as possible reasons why high test-anxious students perform lower than students who are now in anxiety.

The distinction between anxiety as emotional state and a relatively stable personality trait is also emphasized by many writers (Strongman, 1987; Gray, 1982 and Izard, 1972). In particular, anxiety consists of distress, shame (including shyness and guilt) anger and the positive emotion of the interest and excitement. On the basis of studies reviewed by Ekman, Friesen and Elisworth (1982), it can be inferred that there are five basic emotions of which one is anxiety. Others are happiness, sadness, anger and disgust. A number of theorists when defining anxiety have the tendency to regard it as a unitary phenomenon. This conceptualization of anxiety has also not been without criticisms. Thus, presenting anxiety as a multi-dimensional emotion conceptualized in which the same manner as other emotional states assists to place anxiety within a clearer conceptual framework.

Statement of the problem

Dishonesty during testing is a perennial problem in all level of education. This interest stems from the fact that academic integrity is a desirable characteristic for students and one that our University system strive to model. Thus dishonesty during testing sometimes is preplanned more so when the student did not prepare adequately for the test while on the other hand a student during the test may see others in the act and then resort to the same behaviour.

A high proportion of our university students do not usually perform well during testing. Though most students complete their tests and examinations and pass to the next class, the overall performance of many of them do not always reflect the level expected of them. This situation may be attributed to the influence of anxiety and lack of appropriate study skill to test taking. In consequence, counseling services and academic advisers have been made available in university of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Besides, facilities have been improved upon in university of Calabar. In spite of these however, university of Calabar of students still exhibit dishonesty behaviours during test taking. This study was motivated by the need to empirically determine anxiety which predispose students test taking dishonesty among university of Calabar undergraduate in Cross River State.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to examine anxiety on test dishonesty among undergraduate students in university of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Specifically, the purpose to this study therefore include to determine the influence of anxiety on test taking dishonesty.

Research question

The only research question formulated to guide the study. To examine to what extent does anxiety influence test dishonesty?

Statement of hypotheses

The only hypothesis was generated from the formulated research question will as a guide to this study which state that anxiety does not significantly influence test taking behaviour of students.

Significance of the study

Test dishonesty are all the illegal and unethical behaviour exhibited by students in the process of testing their ability or knowledge by means of questions which distort the noble objectives of the tests (Anyaegbunam, 2005). These behaviours when not strictly checked lead to outright dishonesty by students writing the test or examination. This study maintains that the tendency to dishonesty in a test or examination is rooted in the behaviour exhibited by students taking the test and that if these behaviours are checked or strictly monitored, detected and disallowed to continue, there is every tendency that the behaviour will be minimize or stamped out in Nigerian tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This study will be of great benefit to Undergraduate students, Parents, Lecturers and Government.

To the students, it is expected that through the findings and recommendations of this study the behaviour of students during testing will witness a positive change thereby reducing cases of examination malpractices in the secondary schools. To the parents, the study will make them to be aware of the different roles they can play in awakening desirable behaviour in the students right from home in respect to examination malpractices so as not to drag the name of the family to the mud.

This study will also be significant to teachers employed to supervise or invigilate test or examination in that the different types of test taking behaviour will be highlighted at the end of the study for them to know as to employ any strategy to stop them from taking place immediately the behaviour is noticed. As the saying goes, prevention is better than cure.

To the government through this study will see the need for revitalization of the nation universities as being agitated academic staff Union.

This research will also be useful to academic advisers who will be braise with the psycho-social indices of undergraduate predisposition to examination malpractice. The academic advisers will also assist in educating the students in the danger and implication of examination dishonesty. Finally this study will provide additional literature for subsequent researcher to draw from the course of conducting their own researches, and also reveal problems which could be the basis for further research. Thus contributing to the existing knowledge of anxiety on test dishonesty in Nigeria.

Assumptions of the study

This study is based on the following basic assumptions:

- i) Undergraduate students exhibit different anxiety during test taking.
- ii) The instrument designed for data collection is valid, and reliable and will provide the desired data required for testing the hypotheses.
- iii) That the responses obtained reflected the honest and candid opinions of respondents.
- iv) That the result obtained from the study sample could still be obtained if the entire study population was used.
- v) All the variables are measurable.

Scope of the study

This study was conducted in University of Calabar, Cross River State. The study focused on anxiety on test dishonesty among undergraduate student.

Limitations of the study

The major setback of this study was that some students were reluctant to give vivid account of their test taking behaviour through the questionnaire and this affected the outcome of the study.

Definition of terms

Various terms have been used in this study. It is important at this point to provide a contextual definition of these terms used in this study.

Test: A structured instrument designed to infer behaviour of the individuals in relation to the characteristics required.

Test dishonesty: In the content of this research, is any deliberate act or wrong doing carried out by a candidate, or group of candidates or any person with the intention to cheat or gain an unfair advantage in an examination.

Student: Refers to a person engaged in study; one who is devoted to learning, a learner, a pupil, a scholar especially one who attends a school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Anxiety and test dishonesty among undergraduate students

Anxiety is a fundamental human emotion that was recognized as long as 5000 years ago (Cohen in Ogbu, 2008). Everyone has experienced it and all of us will continue to experience it throughout our lives. Many observers regard anxiety as a basic condition of modern existence. The British poet Auden (2008) for instance called the twentieth century as “the age of anxiety”. Some theorists see anxiety as a response to threatening situations; others explain it as a drive that elicits coping responses. But whatever the mechanism, most agree that “reasonable doses” of anxiety act as a safeguard to keep us from ignoring danger. Although the term “anxiety” takes on different shades of meaning as it appears in the writing and research of psychologists in various fields of specialization, there is general agreement that it refers to a complex and sometimes chronic emotional state generally characterized by fear, apprehension or tension (Smith in Ogbu, 2008). Anxiety, according to Hornby (1975; 32) is an ‘emotional condition in which there is fear and uncertainty about the future’. Regers (1951) described anxiety as the feeling one has when confronted with some sort of threat to the phenomenal self. Anxiety can also be defined as an emotional behaviour that causes an individual to expect or prepare for a response (Bernard 1972) he went further to say that anxiety refers to ‘a painful unrest, uneasiness of mind involving apprehension or foreboding relations to what is impending or anticipated’ (p. 236). Hurlock (1972) sees anxiety as ‘a painful unpleasant state or mind marked by apprehension, uneasiness and foreboding from which the individual turns helpless and unable to find a solution to his problem’ (p. 214). Francis (1981) on the other hand sees anxiety ‘as a consequence of inadequately discharged libidinal energy which alerts the individuals to source of impending danger either to react or to avoid.

Udom (1986) identified test anxiety as one of the numerous psychological factors responsible for students to exhibit test taking and onward dishonesty in a test. According to him, those factors are largely reflective of societal standards and attitudes which have been found wanting in varied aspects. In his study of test anxiety and dishonesty in tests conducted among secondary schools students in Calabar He uses a sample of 739 students out of a population of 1268 whose ages are between 11 and 14 years. He adopted experimental design and make use of the structured questionnaire. The data so generated were analyzed using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the calculated value of f ratio was 1.76 at a significance level of 0.05 with 3 and 632 degrees of freedom. His analysis was not significant (p. 0.05) thus; he accepted the null hypothesis and concluded that students with different level of dishonesty do not differ significantly on test anxiety. Test anxiety according to Sarason (1978) is anxiety over being examined and having one's performance evaluated. It is the tendency to view with alarm the consequences of poor performance in an evaluation situation. Nwajiobi (1988) studying the relationship between tests anxiety level and tests performance of students in mathematics discovered that low-test anxiety results in better performance. This was supported by Wine (1980) who holds that in the test situation, the high test anxious students exhibited self-pre occupying and self-focusing tendencies, which reduces range of test one's utilized in performance. Mandler and Sarason (1952), found that anxious students performed more poorly on intelligence test than students who were not in test anxiety and that decrements in the performance of highly anxious students were most pronounced when test were administered under stressful, ego involving condition in (Ubi, 2002). This can lead the highly anxious students to dishonesty (Idika, 2005).

According to Idika (2005), heightened anxiety through threat is likely to increase in the students the tendency to cheat in tests. On the increased incidence of dishonesty in tests in Nigeria, she fingered test anxiety as one of the psychological factors that influences dishonesty. She also opined that secondary school students in Nigeria look on tests as confrontation with enemy. Sarason (1975) and Wine (1980) on the cognitive theory of test anxiety both discovered that high levels of test anxiety adversely influenced students' self-appraisals as well as appraisals of evaluative situation. They went further to say that anxious students are hypothesized to engage in more negative thought negative internal dialogue including dishonesty) during evaluative tasks. Gelassi, Frierson and Shares (1981) opined that student performance attributions are greatly influenced by high levels of test anxiety. According to Olushola (2004) stress and anxiety experienced by students during tests are conspicuous, thus, have been criticized because students tend to develop undesirable habits, which normally led them to poorly prepare for tests and subsequently exposed them to engaging in tests dishonesty and misconduct. Hill (1969) in his study found that high anxious children were seen to perform poorly at the critical areas of a child's progress in school increases of academic skills, classroom learning and verbal problem solving activity, and that such children are not less capable than their low anxious counterparts. It is the type of evaluation or test-taking setting, which accounts in part for the poor performance of high anxious children. Nenty (1985) study confirmed the speculation that students levels of tests anxiety correlated positively and significantly to their tendency to cheat during testss ($r=0.19$, $p 0.001$) he went further to conclude that the more test related anxiety, a student's shows the more likely he is to cheat in tests. While interpreting this in the light of the observed significant relationship between

tests anxiety and concern about grader (re.09, p 05) and fear of failure (re.12. p.01), he opined that probably it might be argued that tests anxiety infect a result of society related factors acting on the students of that time.

Idika (2005) carried out a study designed to investigate the causal relationship between student's dishonesty tendency in tests and some psychosocial variables in Cross Rivers State of Nigeria. The study examined the composite and relative contributions of socio-economic status, study habit, achievement motivation, test anxiety, self-concept and attribution to hard work to students' tendency to cheat in tests. The sample consisted of 600 senior secondary school students (350 males and 300 females) who responded to a 50-item questionnaire developed for the study. Analysis of the data was done by using two related statistical procedures (multiple regression analysis and path analysis) the result of the finding showed that, of the six psycho-social variables only five contributed significantly to the prediction of dishonesty among students, except study habit, which did not contribute significantly to the prediction. The result also indicated that the same five variables had direct and indirect effects in students' tendency to cheat in tests, while study habit had only indirect effect. And that the relative order of importance of the prediction showed that tests anxiety was the highest.

Udom (1998) held a contrary view, as against the views that level of test anxiety is related positively to their tendency to dishonesty in tests. Her findings show that students with different actual level of dishonesty do not differ significantly on anxiety. Notwithstanding this significant result which showed that the higher the anxiety, the higher the actual level of dishonesty. According to Linus (1999), students trying to satisfy the various demands of parents, the peer pressure groups, societal emphasis on certificate qualification induces anxiety in them thereby leading them to indulge in tests dishonesty. Crimes and Rezek (2005) in a study of 'the determinates of dishonesty by high school economic students' a comparative study of academic dishonesty in transitional economics found out that the most consistency significant determinants of dishonesty were personal beliefs about the ethnics and social acceptability of dishonesty and various attribute of the classroom environment.

Head (1981) also in a study 'the effects of test anxiety level and student use of educational objective on college academic performance found out that students use of educational objectives does not effectively reduce state anxiety or increase college academic performance for any specific trait anxiety group. And that, though females in this study; indicate a high level of anxiety than males, the difference was attributed to chance. In a study of the effects of competency based individualized instruction on anxiety levels of freshmen associate degree nursing students by Boths (1981) whose purpose is to investigate the effects of a competency based individualized instruction curriculum and a traditionally based curriculum on anxiety levels of freshmen associate degree nursing students comes with a control finding that in the transitional curriculum, the anxiety levels were higher and tended to affect the associate degree freshmen nursing student as evidenced by lower end of semester grade averages and lower students retention rate. This might lead students to exhibit test taking behaviour since they cannot recall what they have prepared for the test because of their low retention rate. On the other hand, in the competency based individualized

instruction curriculum, the associate degree nursing student demonstrated a lower anxiety level, higher end semester grade averages and higher end of semester retention rate hence would not exhibit dishonesty tendency.

According to Schuchman (2017) in a study of a comparison of three techniques for reducing scholastic aptitude test there is an inverse relationship between anxiety and performance, while moderate test anxiety results in high-test anxiety may be facilitative for high aptitude individuals, but detrimental to low and average ability persons. Also person with debilitating test-anxiety diverts their attention away from the task-relevant variables and displace in inwardly, resulting in personal-oriented attention. He also said that of all the various approaches to treating debilitating test anxiety, systematic desensitization has been the singly most effective treatment. Conkright (2008) also in study to determine the effects of a personal probability scoring system in test anxiety and achievement discovered that high-test anxious examinees showed a significant improvement in performance, but not a decrease in test anxiety. The results suggested that memory search procedures may cause decreased performance in high-test anxious persons and that high levels of anxiety may not interfere with information processing. here are several reasons that have been postulated for poor performance of students in tests. Educators and researchers such as Inlow (1978) and Ipaye (1982) revealed that students fail in tests because of the emphasis on paper qualification against the backdrop of preparing them for work skills that can be useful for life. Emotionally, candidates who are intrinsically worried and tensed up over a tests will not perform as expected. Mehrens and Lehman (1991) reported that test anxiety depresses the ability to reason cognitively which may in turn affect academic performance. For example, in a test requiring psychomotor performance in addition to cognitive performance, anxiety did cause more errors for anxious examinees.

Several reasons have been given as evidence to why tests candidates would become anxious. The most serious of it was with the state of the teaching profession today. According to Fagbemi (2001) in Kembe and Akem (2006), one is not surprised that poor preparation or absolute lack of preparation by teachers and students could make a large number of candidates be pre-disposed to dishonesty behaviours. Students who are supposed to be reading at schools are found engaged in social vices such as cultism, drug and alcohol addict and keeping late night. Besides students' ill preparedness, some teachers are either not qualified or are not insufficient in number to contend with the large class size. This situation generates anxiety among students and teachers and hence encourages tests dishonesty.

Hill and Wigfield (2004) have traced test anxiety to parental expectations and unrealistic demands. For example when parents react negatively to their children's failure, children may become fearful of test achievement situations. Other factors that could cause test anxiety include frequent and complex evaluation in which candidates may not effectively cope, or unnecessary comparison of their performance with those of other children leading to mental stress. John, Sutton and Cooley (1970) in Kembe et al (2006) listed mental stressors as financial insecurity, poor social contact, un-conducive learning environment, academic failure, unhappy home situation and unfulfilled needs.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted in conducting this study was the survey design. Survey is a research design that employs the study of large and small populations by selecting and studying sample chosen from the population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables (Olaitan, 2000). According to Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004) and Kerlinger, (1986), the essence of a survey design is to make inferences about the population under study using the sample drawn from that population. Denga and Ali (1989) explain that it is economical because it avoids the use of entire population, which will be too expensive to handle. The study adopted the survey design because the researcher only made use of a representative sample of the population from where generalizations of the study results were made. Also this method is preferred because of its descriptive nature, as it involves the collection of data to accurately and objectively describe existing phenomena.

Furthermore, the study made use of survey because; it involved dealing with students' general behaviour during test taking. A cursory look at the variables in this study showed that they interrelate, and of course, survey design is used when determining interrelationship of variables, and so applies in this study. The research area for this study is University of Calabar, Cross River State of Nigeria.

The population of the study is made up of seven hundred and thirty five (735) year 2, 3 and 4 students of Library and information Science of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in University of Calabar for 2020/2021 academic session.

The sampling technique adopted for this study was stratified random sampling technique. Stratified sampling technique is a sampling technique in which the researcher ensure that all the sub units in the population are adequately represented. The stratification was based on gender (male and female). This was to ensure that both male and female were adequately represented in study. Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004) asserts that simple random sampling technique is a means by which researchers give every member of his/her population equal and independent opportunity of being selected. The main purpose for using simple random sampling technique is to compose a sample that will yield research data that can be generalized to larger population. 68% was applied to determine the number of respondents that were used for the study.

The sample of the study is made up of five hundred (500) students randomly selected from hundred and thirty five (735) year 2, 3 and 4 students of Library and information Science of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in University of Calabar for 2020/2021 academic session.

The study required the use of questionnaire. Therefore, an instrument titled Anxiety and Test Dishonesty among Undergraduate Students Questionnaire (ATDUSQ) was used for this study. The instrument sought information on such demographic data as such, sex, age and year of study.

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the appropriateness of the content must be validated and this is done through, content validity. To ensure this, major levels of the variables were considered for comprehensiveness an items constructed and selected. Moreso, serious transforming was carried out by the researcher with expects in measurement and evaluation in which thorough scrutiny of the items side by side with the variable under study was carried out. After the exercise, the instrument was considered to be both construct and content valid to satisfactorily measure the variables of the study.

The reliability scores were correlated using Cronbach alpha. The correlation co-efficient values found ranged between $r = 0.86$ to $r = 0.88$. These ranges were considered as adequate for study in anxiety and test dishonesty among undergraduate students as a result, the instrument was accepted as suitable since it is consistent over time. These findings helped in the acceptability of the usage of the instrument.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the results and discussion of findings. Data were presented on the basis of the research question that guided the study.

Research question one

1. To what extent does anxiety influences test dishonesty among undergraduate students?

To answer this research question, responses to items 1-8 of section B on the questionnaire were analyzed. The result of the analysis is presented in the Table 1 below.

TABLE 7

Independent t-test analysis of the influence of anxiety on test dishonesty among Undergraduate students (N=500)

Anxiety	N	X ⁻	SD	t-value
High	265	64.08	14.81	
Low	235	58.98	14.26	5.53*

*Significance at 0.05 level, critical t-value = 1.96, df =498

Interpretation

The result presented on the Table 7 shows that the calculated t-value is 5.53 and this is higher than the critical t-value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 498 degree of freedom. Based on this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that anxiety significantly influence students' test dishonesty. Again a further observation of the result shows that the mean scores for respondents with high anxiety (X=64.08) were higher than the mean score of respondents with low anxiety (X=58.98). This implies that the respondent with high anxiety during testing will exhibit more dishonesty than their counterparts with low anxiety, during test taking.

This result is in agreement with the findings of several studies on test anxiety. For instance (Nenty, 1985) study confirmed the level of speculation that students level of test anxiety correlate

positively and significantly to their tendency to dishonesty during test. He went further to conclude that the more test related anxiety a student shows the more likely he/she exhibit dishonesty to test. His argument was based on the fact that test anxiety is in effect a result of society related factors acting on the students.

Idika (2005) in her study to investigate the causal relationship between students dishonesty tendency in test and some psychosocial variables also discovered that anxiety contributed significantly to the prediction and that the relative order of importance of the prediction showed that test anxiety was the highest.

Lehman (1991) also reported that test anxiety depresses the ability to reason cognitively which may in turn affect academic performance. And that anxiety causes more errors for anxious examined in a test requiring psychomotor performance in addition to cognitive performance hence the examinee will exhibit unethical behaviour.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of this finding, it was concluded that anxiety significantly influence students test taking dishonesty either positively or negatively.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made

- i) Since anxiety can influence the attitude of students in the area of test taking behaviour it is important that parents should understand carefully the social drives of their wards in the secondary school whether male or female to ensure proper monitoring of their social activities with a view to guiding them appropriately towards indulgence or involvement in those social activities that will promote healthy personality development.
- ii) Test dishonesty is believed to be rooted in the unethical test taking behaviour of students and is a moral evil that has engulfed the entire Nigerian society especially the school system. Both parents and children/wards are involved. It is an evil that threatens the very foundation of society. Parents must therefore rise to the challenge of fighting test dishonesty in schools. This, they should do by creating time to properly supervise, their children activities at home, providing adequate learning materials and enabling environment.
- iii) All stakeholders in education should play their parts through educating and forming examination ethics club for students, parents and teachers among others.
- iv) The school authority should ensure that lecturers perform their duty effectively and should also pay their staff salaries as at when due to reduce corruption within the education system.
- v) Government should assist the universities in building special examination in order to improve the teaching/learning situations.

Suggestions for further studies

- i) Based on the outcomes of the study as summarized, the following suggestions for further research are made.

- ii) The replication of the study with either the same or different population to ascertain the validity and reliability of the present findings.
- iii) Similar study should be done that would cover other variables that can influence students test taking behaviour other than the ones used here.

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