

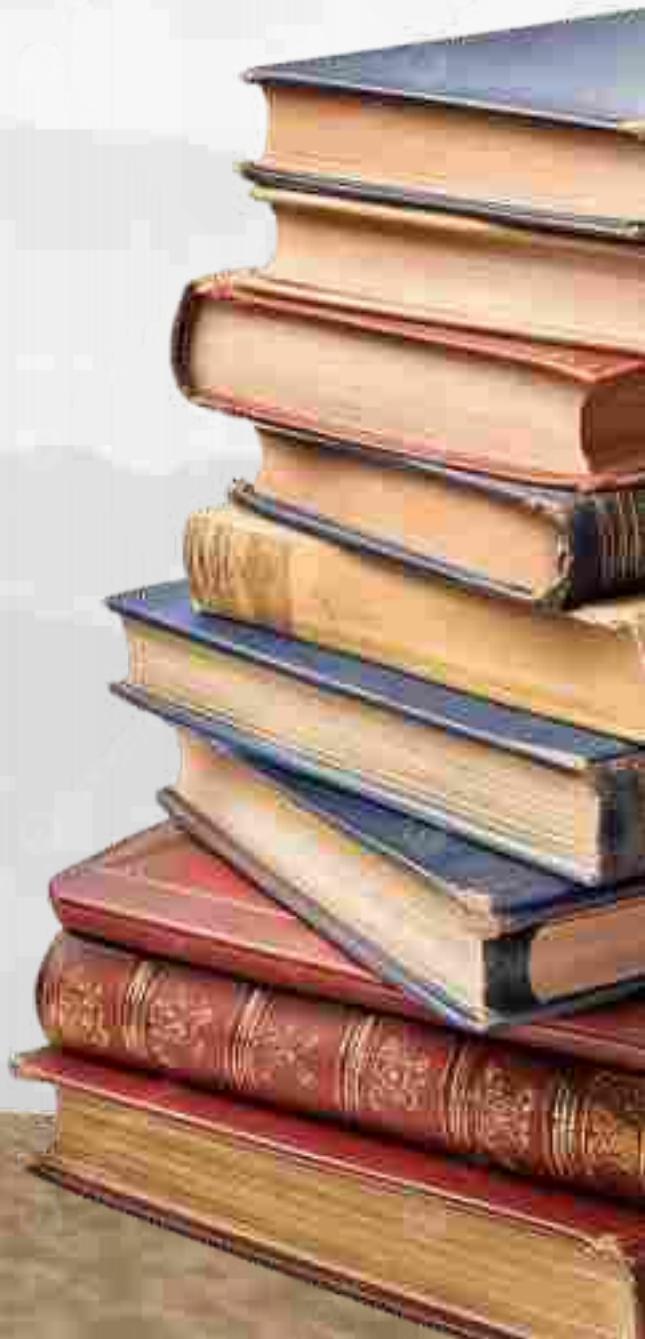


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# PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

VOLUME TWO



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**BOOK CHAPTER**

# **PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

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## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

# DEPLOYMENT OF TECHNOLOGIES IN CURTAINING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES IN NIGERIA TERTIARY EDUCATION

By

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### ABSTRACT

Examination malpractice remains a serious threat to academic integrity in Nigeria's tertiary institutions, undermining the credibility of degrees, diminishing public trust, and devaluing genuine student achievement. As cheating becomes more sophisticated—with the involvement of smartphones, hidden devices, social media, and impersonation—traditional monitoring and punishment methods are increasingly inadequate. This chapter investigates how technology is being deployed to counter examination malpractice in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. Specifically, it reviews technological tools such as biometric verification, computer-based testing, CCTV surveillance, secure digital question management, online proctoring, AI-based analytics and audit trails. Drawing on Nigerian case studies and international best practices, it assesses both the benefits (deterrence; improved security; traceability; reduced human error) and the challenges (cost, infrastructure, privacy, technical know-how). The chapter proposes sustainable strategies: institutional policies to mandate technology use; dedicated funding for secure systems; development of local technical capacity; ensuring ethical/data protection standards; and combining technology with strong human oversight. If properly implemented, these interventions can help restore fairness, trust, and excellence in the examination process across Nigeria's higher education sector.

**Keywords:** examination malpractice; technology; tertiary education; biometrics; proctoring; Nigeria; academic integrity; secure assessment

## 14.1. Introduction

Examination malpractice has become a troubling feature of Nigeria's educational landscape, particularly in tertiary institutions. What was once limited to students sneaking in cheat notes or whispering answers has evolved into a much more complex and technology-driven problem. With smartphones, hidden earpieces, social media platforms, and even AI tools now in the mix, the act of cheating in exams has become more difficult to detect—and even harder to stop. The consequences, however, are clear: a steady erosion of academic integrity, a loss of trust in graduates' competence, and a threat to the credibility of Nigeria's higher education system.

But just as technology has empowered new forms of malpractice, it also holds the key to combating it. Across universities and polytechnics in Nigeria, there is a growing awareness that the old methods of supervision and punishment are no longer enough. Institutions are now turning to innovative technologies—like biometric verification, CCTV surveillance, computer-based testing (CBT), and remote proctoring—to help safeguard the examination process. These tools are not only helping to prevent malpractice but are also changing the way assessments are designed and delivered.

This chapter takes a closer look at how technology is being deployed to tackle examination malpractice in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The chapter is discussed under the following: concept of tertiary education, concept of examination, concept of technology and technological tools that can be deployed to curtain examination malpractices in tertiary institutions in Nigeria

## 14.2. Clarification of concepts

### i. Concept of Tertiary Education

Tertiary institutions is an organized social institution made up with stakeholders like the students, lecturers (academic staff), non-academic staff and researcher whose responsibilities are lecturing, organization of instructional resources, assessment of students, marking of students' scripts and projects supervision (Ogunode, & Adamu, 2021). Tertiary education, also called post-secondary education, is any level of education pursued beyond high school, including undergraduate and graduate credentials. These credentials encompass certificates, diplomas or academic degrees. Tertiary education refers to specialized education in a specific field, taken on after finishing high school. Tertiary education is non-compulsory and provided in a specialist institution, usually a college, polytechnic or university. This form of education may be delivered virtually or at a distance (Top-hat, 2023).

Tertiary education is an organized educational system that is consciously designed for manpower production, in-service training and national development. Tertiary education is an education that advances teaching, research and community services for national development. Tertiary education is an education industry that is meant for the production of manpower and national development via implementation of teaching, research and provision of community services (Ogunode, 2025).

The objectives of tertiary education includes; to provide higher education opportunities via effective teaching, researching and provision community services; to develop produce students with specialized knowledge and skills for solving personal problem and national problem; to prepare student for national workforce and to contribute to societal and community development; to provide academic program of various disciplines; to provide quality instruction in field of studies and to conduct researches to generate new knowledge for national development and to solve complex problems (Ogunode, 2025).

## ii. **Concept of Examination**

Examination malpractice as an illegal act committed by a single student or in collaboration with others like fellow students, parents, teachers, supervisors, invigilators, computer operators or secretarial staff and anybody or group of people before, during, or after examination in order to obtain undeserved marks or grade (Awambor, 2014). Examination malpractice as any act carried out by anybody that defies the rules that guides a student whose knowledge or ability is being tested in a particular knowledge or skill with the aim of distorting the student's true knowledge or ability (Omoyibo, 2015). Examination malpractice is any deliberate act of wrong doing, contrary to the rules of examinations designed to give a candidate an undue advantage (Oko, & Adie, 2016).

Examination malpractice does not only diminish the integrity of examinations but can also lead to deprivation, marginalization and denial. When people are allowed to get away with cheating, it causes the assessors or examiners to award the perpetrators marks, grades, and prizes which they do not deserve. This can frustrate genuine efforts and terminate dreams of those who genuinely work hard to earn such grades and prizes. Examination malpractice lowers academic productivity and endangers the future of education in West Africa and beyond. Many products of this menace are erroneously seen as being excellent based on the classes of certificates in their possession, and this increases their chances of placements compared to those with lower classes of certificates. The devastations created by examination malpractice is colossal and recurrent, hence the need for use of technology to nip it in the bud (Onyema, et al 2019).

## iii. **Concept of Technology**

Technology, at its core, is simply the use of knowledge, tools, and techniques to solve human problems and make life easier. It is not just about machines, computers, or sophisticated gadgets—it is about how humans apply creativity and innovation to improve the way we live, work, and interact with one another. From the invention of the wheel to the rise of artificial intelligence, technology has always been a companion in human progress.

What makes technology interesting is that it grows out of everyday human needs. People wanted to travel faster, so cars and airplanes were created. They wanted to communicate across distances, so the telephone, radio, and eventually the internet came into being. Today, technology continues to respond to our desire for convenience, speed, safety, and connection. On a human level,

technology is deeply personal. It shapes how students learn, how professionals work, how families stay connected, and how societies solve pressing issues like healthcare, security, and climate change. At the same time, it comes with challenges—overreliance on gadgets, digital divides between rich and poor, and ethical questions about

### **14.3. Technological Tools that can be deployed to curtain examination malpractices in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria**

Examination malpractice isn't just a student problem—it's a reflection of deeper issues within the education system. Over the years, it has become more sophisticated, moving from simple cheating with notes to full-blown digital scams involving impersonation, smart devices, and even organized rackets. To fight this, many Nigerian institutions are now turning to technology, not just to catch cheaters, but to restore fairness and credibility to the examination process.

*Below are some of the key technologies being used—or considered—to tackle this issue:*

#### **i. Biometric Verification**

One of the most common forms of cheating is impersonation—someone else taking an exam on a student's behalf. Biometric systems like fingerprint scanners and facial recognition are now being used to stop this. They ensure that the person sitting for the exam is the same one who registered. JAMB has already been using fingerprint verification, and many institutions are following suit. It's a simple but powerful way to confirm identity. Biometric verification is a highly effective method for preventing examination malpractice. By utilizing unique biometric data such as fingerprints, facial recognition, or iris scans, biometric verification ensures that only authorized individuals are able to take exams. This technology helps to eliminate fraud and cheating, as it is nearly impossible for someone to impersonate another individual's biometric data. Additionally, biometric verification can also be used for attendance tracking during exams, further ensuring the integrity of the examination process. Overall, the use of biometric verification in preventing examination malpractice is a critical tool for maintaining fairness and honesty in academic settings.

#### **ii. Computer-Based Testing (CBT):**

Computer-Based Testing (CBT) has been widely used in educational institutions to prevent examination malpractice. This technology has revolutionized the traditional methods of conducting exams and has significantly reduced the occurrence of cheating during examinations. In this abstract, we will discuss how the use of CBT helps to prevent examination malpractice.

#### **iii. Advantages of CBT**

Computer-Based Testing has various advantages that help to prevent examination malpractice. One of the main advantages is the high level of security that it provides. Unlike traditional paper-based tests, CBT uses digital means to deliver and evaluate exams. This eliminates the possibility of

question paper leaks, which is one of the most common forms of examination malpractice. Another advantage of CBT is the randomization of questions. With traditional exams, students sitting in close proximity to each other have a higher chance of sharing answers. However, CBT randomly selects questions from a question bank, reducing the chances of students copying from one another. CBT reduces the human factor in the assessment process. The possibility of examiners being bribed to change grades or favor certain students is eliminated with CBT. This ensures fair evaluation and prevents any form of malpractice. To further prevent examination malpractice, CBT has specific features that are designed to secure the assessment process. These features include biometric identification, time limits, and strict monitoring. Biometric identification verifies the identity of the student before taking the exam, ensuring that the registered student is the one taking the test. Moreover, CBT has a strict time limit for each question, which prevents students from spending too much time on a particular question and seeking help from others. Additionally, the exams are strictly monitored through video surveillance and remote invigilation, reducing the possibility of any malpractice.

#### iv. **CCTV Surveillance:**

Installing **CCTV cameras** in exam halls might sound extreme, but it works. Students—and even some invigilators—think twice when they know they’re being recorded. Some schools now also use **control rooms** to monitor exams live and respond immediately if anything looks suspicious. In some polytechnics, CCTV footage has been used to investigate and prove cases of cheating after exams. The use of CCTV surveillance has been proven to be an effective method in preventing examination malpractice. This surveillance system provides real-time monitoring of exam rooms, ensuring that students are following the rules and regulations set by the examination board. It works by capturing high-quality footage of the exam room, providing evidence of any suspicious behavior or activities. This can include students trying to cheat by using unauthorized materials or communicating with each other during the exam. CCTV surveillance also acts as a deterrent for potential cheaters. Knowing that they are being monitored and recorded, students are less likely to attempt any malpractice, reducing the overall number of cheating incidents. This tool can also be used for post-exam analysis. The recorded footage can be reviewed to identify any irregularities or patterns of cheating, helping examination boards to improve their security measures and prevent future incidents. The use of CCTV surveillance for examination malpractice has been proven to be an effective and efficient solution. It not only helps in preventing cheating but also promotes a fair and equal environment for all students to take their exams.

#### v. **Use of the National Identification Number (NIN)**

Linking exam registration to the National Identity Number (NIN) adds another layer of security. It ensures that each student has a unique, verifiable identity. It’s particularly useful for large-scale national exams, but tertiary institutions can benefit too. This makes it harder for students to use multiple identities or impersonate someone else. The use of the National Identification Number

(NIN) has been proposed as a method to prevent examination malpractice. By using the NIN, education institutions can verify the identity of students taking exams and ensure that they are the same individuals who registered for the exams. This would greatly reduce the chances of impersonation and cheating during exams. Additionally, the NIN can be linked to a student's academic record, allowing for a more thorough evaluation of their academic performance. This system would also deter individuals from attempting to register under false identities, as their true academic history would be accessible through their NIN. The use of NIN in the educational sector can help prevent examination malpractice and promote integrity in the examination process.

#### **vi. Electronic Device Detection**

The use of electronic device detection has been a prevalent method used in preventing examination malpractice. This technique involves the use of advanced technology to scan students' devices for any unauthorized materials or communication during exams. By analyzing the data from these devices, educators can identify potential cheating behaviors and take appropriate action. One of the key advantages of using electronic device detection is its ability to detect cheating attempts in real-time. This allows educators to quickly intervene and prevent any further cheating from occurring. Additionally, this method is non-intrusive and does not require physical searching of the students' belongings, which can be time-consuming and may infringe on their privacy. The use of electronic device detection has shown to be an effective deterrent against cheating. Students are less likely to attempt cheating when they know they will be caught through this advanced technology. This not only promotes academic integrity but also creates a fair and level playing field for all students. This method provides solid evidence in cases of academic misconduct. With the data collected from the devices, educators can provide concrete proof of cheating and appropriately address the issue. This can also serve as a valuable tool for academic institutions in identifying patterns of cheating and implementing preventative measures. The use of electronic device detection has proven to be a powerful tool in preventing examination malpractice. Its ability to detect cheating in real-time, act as a deterrent, and provide solid evidence make it an indispensable tool in maintaining academic integrity and fairness in exams. Through the use of this technology, educators can ensure that students are evaluated based on their own knowledge and skills, rather than unfair advantages gained through cheating. Phones, smartwatches, wireless earpieces—students have gotten creative with gadgets. To counter this, schools are using: Handheld scanners to check students before they enter the exam hall. **Metal detectors** at entry points. Locked-down CBT software to prevent browsing or connecting external devices. By cutting off digital access, these tools significantly reduce tech-assisted cheating.

#### **vii. Online Proctoring & AI Tools:**

The use of online proctoring and AI tools is becoming increasingly popular in academia as a means to prevent examination malpractice. By utilizing advanced technologies such as facial recognition, eye-tracking, and keystroke analysis, these tools are able to detect and deter academic dishonesty

during online exams. Furthermore, AI tools can also analyze patterns and anomalies in student behavior to identify potential instances of cheating. The combination of online proctoring and AI tools provides a powerful solution to maintain academic integrity and ensure fair evaluation of student performance in examinations. With the rise of remote learning, **online proctoring tools** are becoming more common. These systems can monitor students through their webcams. Use **AI** to flag suspicious behavior, like looking off-screen or talking aloud. Record the entire session for later review. This helps keep exams fair even when students are writing them from home or in distant centers.

#### **viii. Secure Question Management:**

The use of secure question management has been proven to be an effective measure in preventing examination malpractice. In today's fast-paced digital world, traditional methods of administering exams have become less secure and susceptible to cheating. However, with the help of secure question management, academic institutions can ensure the integrity and fairness of their examinations. By implementing this tool, institutions can create unique and randomized question sets for each individual student. This eliminates the possibility of students sharing questions or receiving answers from others. Moreover, the tool also allows for the easy creation and customization of questions, ensuring that each exam is tailored to the specific subject and level of difficulty. In addition to preventing cheating, secure question management also helps in reducing the workload for both teachers and students. With the tool, teachers no longer have to manually create question sets and grade them, saving them time and effort. On the other hand, students can focus on studying and preparing for the exam rather than worrying about potential cheating methods. Another significant benefit of using secure question management is the data it provides for academic institutions. By analyzing the performance of students on different question types and levels of difficulty, educators can gain insights into the strengths and weaknesses of their students. This data can then be used to improve teaching methods and curriculum, leading to better educational outcomes. Technology is also used **behind the scenes**—especially when it comes to protecting question papers. Systems now allow: **Digital encryption** of exam files. **Timed access** for printing or uploading questions. **Limited administrator rights** so only authorized people can handle exam content. This greatly reduces the risk of question leaks, which are often at the root of large-scale malpractice.

#### **ix. Data Analytics & Audit Trails:**

The use of data analytics and audit trail is a crucial approach to prevent examination malpractice. By implementing these tools, educational institutions can effectively identify and monitor any suspicious behavior or activity during exams. This not only helps to prevent cheating and fraud, but also ensures the integrity and fairness of the examination process. Data analytics can be used to analyze large amounts of data collected during exams, such as student responses and time spent on each question. By identifying any abnormal patterns or discrepancies, it can alert examiners to

potential instances of malpractice. Additionally, data analytics can also be used to track and monitor the use of electronic devices during exams, to ensure students are not accessing unauthorized materials. Along with data analytics, the use of an audit trail can further strengthen the prevention of examination malpractice. An audit trail is a record of all actions and changes made during an exam, including any attempts to access unauthorized materials or tamper with exam materials. By keeping a detailed audit trail, examiners can easily track any suspicious activity and take necessary actions to prevent malpractice. Tech doesn't just help during the exam—it can also help after. Systems that track: **Login/logout times, IP addresses and answer patterns** can flag irregularities. For instance, if several students have identical answers, or someone finishes the exam in suspiciously little time, the system can alert administrators for follow-up.

## Conclusion

The deployment of technologies in curtailing examination malpractices in Nigerian tertiary institutions represents a crucial step toward restoring integrity, fairness, and credibility in the education system. Malpractice has long undermined the value of academic qualifications and weakened trust in graduates' competence, but technology offers innovative solutions to these challenges. Tools such as biometric verification, computer-based testing (CBT), CCTV surveillance, plagiarism detection software, and secure digital exam platforms create transparent systems that make it increasingly difficult for malpractice to thrive.

Beyond deterrence, these technologies also promote efficiency, accountability, and confidence in academic processes. However, their effectiveness depends on proper implementation, consistent maintenance, adequate funding, staff training, and the commitment of all stakeholders—including management, lecturers, students, and policymakers.

Ultimately, embracing technology in examination processes is not just about preventing malpractice; it is about safeguarding the integrity of Nigerian tertiary education, producing graduates who are competent and trustworthy, and aligning the system with global standards. By doing so, institutions can foster a culture of honesty, merit, and excellence that will contribute significantly to national development.

## Revise Questions References

- 1) What is tertiary institutions?
- 2) Define examination
- 3) Define technology
- 3) Discuss five technological Tools that can be deployed to curtain examination malpractices in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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