

**TEST ANXIETY AND ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AS CORRELATES OF
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS EXAMINATION
DISHONESTY IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY IN ANAMBRA STATE**

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Abstract

Examination dishonesty is a cancer which has etched deeply into the fabrics of education system especially in the tertiary level of education. The debilitating impact of examination dishonesty on the students, school involved, and the image of the nation calls for study into students' factors that sustain the menace. The study, therefore, sought to unravel the relationship that the predictor variables (test anxiety and achievement motivation) have on the outcome variable (university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty) in Anambra State. Three research questions and three hypotheses were posed to guide the study. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all the undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka for the 2024/2025 academic session from which a sample size of 648 was drawn through the convenient sampling technique. Three sets of instruments namely: Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ), Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (AMQ), and Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty Questionnaire (AEDQ) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts in the field of Education. The internal consistency of the instruments was obtained using the Cronbach Alpha method which yielded alpha coefficients of 0.71 for TAQ, 0.69 for AMQ and 0.74 for AEDQ, implying that the instruments were reliable for use. Data were analysed with simple correlation analysis while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level using multiple regression analysis. The findings showed that test anxiety and achievement

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motivation separately and jointly have a significant relationship with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others, that students should be exposed to seminars and other enlightenment programme that would educate them on how to manage anxieties especially during tests and to embrace academic integrity.

Keywords: Test Anxiety, Achievement Motivation, Students' Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty, University Students

Introduction

Examination dishonesty, also commonly referred to as academic dishonesty, cheating, or examination malpractice, is a persistent threat to educational integrity across all academic levels. According to Ugobueze (2024), examination malpractice includes behaviours that compromise academic integrity, diminish the value of degrees, and result in graduates who are not adequately prepared, all of which impede innovation and public confidence in the educational system. It encompasses a range of unethical behaviours, including but not limited to impersonation, collaborative cheating, plagiarism, copying, and the unauthorised exchange or smuggling of answer scripts (Alhassan & Anya, 2017). As noted by Oguzie, Obi, Nnamdi, Mokwelu, Etele, and Okpara (2022), examination malpractice is not just an academic issue but a social menace that distorts fairness, breeds incompetence, and can erode national productivity. Zulfiqar and Abbasi (2022) found that test anxiety significantly mediated the relationship between perfectionism and academic dishonesty, suggesting that psychological distress plays a central role in unethical academic behaviours. For example, Abuh and Okpanachi (2021) revealed that 65% of students with high test anxiety admitted to engaging in examination malpractice. Nnaji (2022) reported that 12.6% variation in cheating behaviour of undergraduate students in Enugu, Nigeria was accounted for by their examination anxiety. The growing prevalence of this phenomenon in educational institutions has attracted significant scholarly attention due to its adverse effects on the credibility of academic credentials

and the moral fabric of society. With a clear understanding of what examination dishonesty entails, it becomes necessary to examine the negative consequences it poses to individual learners, institutions, and the credibility of the educational system.

Despite numerous government policies, sanctions, and educational reforms aimed at curbing examination malpractice, the problem remains deeply entrenched in Nigerian universities. Baijnath and Singh (2019) argue that examination dishonesty undermines the credibility of higher education by eroding meritocracy and encouraging a culture of shortcuts, which negatively impacts institutional reputation and global academic standing. Exam misconduct results in graduates who lack the skills and knowledge required for their degrees, which lowers the standard of human capital overall and impedes national growth, claim Eze and Eze (2016). Owan, Owan, and Ogabor (2023) found that widespread academic dishonesty fosters a culture of corruption, leading to lower teacher morale, decreased student motivation, and increased administrative fraud in schools. Esuabana (2017) emphasized the enduring nature of this challenge, noting that despite efforts by stakeholders, examination malpractice persists due to deep-rooted societal and psychological factors. Recognizing the serious consequences of examination dishonesty, it becomes imperative to explore the measures put in place to curb this growing menace and restore integrity in the educational system.

Several preventive and corrective procedures have been implemented throughout educational institutions in response to the increasing number of examination dishonesty incidents. The enactment of Decree 33 of 1999, which prescribes a 21-year jail term for culprits, as well as punitive measures like result cancellation, school deregistration, and expulsion of students, has yielded limited success (Nwovike & Ibara, 2021). Practical measures, including the use of surveillance technology like CCTV, AI-powered proctoring, and biometric identification, have been used more frequently to discourage

examination malpractice (Chala & Agago 2022). Okunlola (2024), stresses the importance of reinforcing ethical orientation through counselling and incorporating quality assurance practices to rebuild public trust in examination systems. Supporting this, Oko and Adie (2016), suggest measures such as public enlightenment campaigns, proper candidate screening, and consistent enforcement of sanctions to discourage dishonest behaviours. Despite these measures, academic dishonesty practices persisted among students, especially in higher institutions, which could be attributed to some factors, such as test anxiety and achievement motivation.

Test anxiety is an emotional condition in which students experience extreme stress, worry, and discomfort before or during tests. It encompasses emotional, physiological, and cognitive responses to evaluative situations and can significantly impair academic performance and overall well-being (Gotter, 2017). Understanding the definition of test anxiety is essential for identifying the various symptoms students may exhibit in response to this condition. Test anxiety often manifests through a range of symptoms that vary among individuals. These symptoms are typically categorised into three groups: physical (e.g., headaches, nausea, rapid heartbeat), emotional (e.g., anger, fear, confusion), and cognitive or behavioural (e.g., inability to concentrate, restlessness, fidgeting) (Amalu & Bekomson, 2020). In the context of universities in Anambra State, the competitive nature of academic assessments tends to heighten the intensity of these symptoms. Students may also experience negative self-talk, avoidance behaviours, low self-esteem, and even depressive feelings (Amalu *et al.*, 2020). Although test anxiety may not directly cause academic dishonesty, it can create psychological pressure that fosters dishonest behaviours. For instance, symptoms such as panic, insecurity, and a fear of failure may drive students to resort to cheating during examinations. This is a pointer that anxiety emanating from lack of preparedness, fear of failure could force a student to consider

cheating in an examination to scale through. Again, the finding of this study agrees with Ozochi (2022) high academic stress arising from test anxiety is a factor contributing to cheating during examinations. These behaviours are often rooted in broader causes of test anxiety, including strict disciplinary environments, harsh criticism, and fear of negative evaluation.

Causes of test anxiety include factors such as strict discipline at home, negative teacher criticism, and the fear of evaluation. Nnorom, Anyawu, and Stephen (2020) reported that test anxiety results from poor study habits, irrational exam thinking, inadequate rest, insufficient physical activity, poor class attendance, low self-efficacy, and lack of academic resilience. Amalu *et al* (2020) identified causes of test anxiety as strict parental discipline, authoritarian education, negative criticism, punishment, low grades, and fear of negative evaluation, leading to fear, inadequacy, and distress during tests. Empirical studies have further highlighted the link between test anxiety and examination dishonesty. For instance, Oguezie *et al* (2022) reported that test anxiety has a high and positive relationship while Obi and Okpoebo (2024) observed a low and positive relationship with students' attitude towards examination malpractice. Eremie and Ikpa (2020) equally linked test anxiety with examination malpractice among students among secondary school students. This calls for attention and identifying the causes of test anxiety becomes essential in developing effective methods to overcome it. Sharing similar perspective, Nnaji (2022) showed that examination anxiety correlated positively with cheating behaviour among undergraduate students.

Overcoming test anxiety begins with understanding its underlying causes and developing effective coping strategies. In overcoming test anxiety, one must be well-prepared for the test by spacing out your studying, maintaining a positive attitude, getting exercise and sleep, arriving early, managing anxiety with deep breaths, reading

instructions carefully, writing down key information, starting with simple questions, avoiding distractions, and not cramming, (Amalu *et al*, 2020). Additionally, Elliott and Smith (2011) provided general anxiety-relief tips that apply well to test settings, such as substituting rational thought for negative thoughts and incorporating relaxation into daily routines. Cherry (2023) also highlighted coping strategies such as calming breathing exercises, healthy test-day routines, and confronting irrational fears. Another factor that can play a role in students' involvement in examination dishonesty is achievement motivation.

Achievement motivation is defined as the drive to succeed, achieve excellence, and accomplish tasks to a standard of excellence. According to Grund, Galla, and Fries (2022), achievement motivation refers to the desire to accomplish goals, excel, and attain a high standard of performance. Mirzaei-Alavijeh *et al.* (2021) describe it as the growth of a person's desire to succeed and engage in activities where success depends on one's talent and effort. Liu and Cheng (2018) investigated the psychological foundations of achievement motivation and discovered a strong correlation between it and adolescents' self-efficacy. Their research showed that hope acts as a moderator in the relationship between self-efficacy and success motivation, while self-identity mediates it. Oladele (2023) found that self-motivated students with strong study ethics were more likely to achieve better academic results and were less likely to engage in academic dishonesty. Only 30% of self-motivated students admitted to cheating, compared to 60% of those with lower motivation. Similarly, Heriyati and Ekasari (2020) highlighted that students with higher ethical standards and motivation were less likely to engage in academic dishonesty, demonstrating the influence of motivation on academic behaviour.

To understand achievement motivation, it is essential to examine its key components. These include intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-concepts, and task

values. Achievement motivation is a key determinant of academic success, influencing students' goals, perseverance, and approach to learning. Students with high achievement motivation are more likely to engage in goal-setting behaviours, adopt effective learning strategies, and remain persistent when confronted with challenges (Steinmayr, Weidinger, Schwinger, & Spinath, 2019). This motivation helps direct student behaviour toward legitimate academic success, reducing the temptation to engage in dishonest practices during exams. In contrast, students with lower levels of motivation may struggle to meet academic expectations, leading to a higher likelihood of resorting to unethical behaviours, such as examination dishonesty, to attain desirable results (Ghimire, Baral, & Bhattarai, 2022). For example, Köfünelyi (2022) indicated that academic motivation plays a significant role in predicting academic dishonesty among undergraduate students. The study found that higher levels of academic motivation were associated with lower instances of academic misconduct. Similarly, Ghimire, Baral, and Bhattarai (2022) emphasised that motivated students are more likely to adopt effective learning strategies, reducing the need for dishonest practices. Specifically, Nwankwo and Nwankwo (2020) observed that achievement motivation correlates positively with students' attitude towards examination malpractice.

Theoretically, this study is anchored on the Expectancy-Value Theory which postulates that students' motivation and engagement in academic tasks are shaped by their expectations for success and the value they place on the outcomes. Students who doubt their ability to perform well (low expectancy) but attach high importance to outcomes (high value) may experience cognitive dissonance, often leading to increased anxiety and a higher tendency to engage in dishonest practices. On the other hand, students with a balanced expectancy-value alignment are more likely to approach tasks with integrity and resilience. Hence, this study seeks to ascertain the relationship between test anxiety and

achievement motivation concerning undergraduate students' attitudes towards examination dishonesty in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the implementation of strict penalties and continuous sensitisation campaigns by government and academic authorities, examination dishonesty remains a formidable challenge in Nigerian universities, particularly in Anambra State. The increasing incidence of cheating, impersonation, plagiarism, and other forms of academic fraud calls into question the efficacy of existing deterrents and reflects a deeper psychological and motivational crisis among students.

Literature has shown that examination dishonesty is prevalent among students especially at tertiary level of education with its attendant negative ripple impact on the student, school and the society at large. For instance, academic dishonesty breeds loss of trust in the educational system making certificates emanating from most Nigerian schools to loose value. This is most times orchestrated by inability of some graduates to defend their certificates. It is no longer shocking to read or hear about houses collapsing, cancellation of results and delisting of some schools from serving as centres for external examinations, poorly constructed roads and wrong diagnosis and prescription of medications. These are pointers that something is seemingly amiss with the education system that enabled quacks through academic dishonesty.

One of the psychological variables contributing to this trend is test anxiety. Students with high levels of test anxiety often feel inadequate and fear academic failure, leading them to seek shortcuts during assessments. While a few studies have linked test anxiety to poor academic performance, relatively few have examined its influence on examination dishonesty. Furthermore, achievement motivation, a critical driver of academic resilience, is not often explored with dishonest behaviours. Low achievement

motivation can reduce students' engagement in academic tasks and increase susceptibility to unethical practices. Although previous studies by scholars addressed test anxiety and academic dishonesty in isolation, there remains a paucity of empirical research that investigates the combined effect of test anxiety and achievement motivation on students' attitudes toward examination dishonesty in Nigerian universities.

This study thus addresses an important gap in academic literature by examining how these two psychological factors namely: test anxiety and achievement motivation individually and jointly influence students' willingness to engage in examination malpractice. Given the implications for student development, academic integrity, and national productivity, understanding the complex interaction of anxiety and motivation is essential for developing effective interventions to promote ethical academic conduct.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between test anxiety and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between achievement motivation and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State?
3. Test anxiety and achievement motivation have with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between test anxiety and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State.
2. Achievement motivation does not have a significant relationship with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State.

3. Test anxiety and achievement motivation jointly do not have a significant relationship with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State.

Methods

This study adopted a correlational research design, which is appropriate for examining the statistical relationships between two or more variables without manipulating them. Specifically, the design was used to investigate the relationships between test anxiety, achievement motivation, and attitudes towards examination dishonesty among undergraduates. The study was conducted at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, located in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The institution is a leading federal university in Nigeria, known for its diverse student population and academic rigor. The study focused on students in Science-based and Arts-based fields in the university. The target population comprised all the undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, during the 2024/2025 academic session. A total of 648 undergraduate students (male: 234, 36.1%), and female: 414, 63.9%) from 100level to 400levels were drawn using the convenience sampling technique. The students in both Science-based and Arts-based fields were part of the study. This approach was chosen due to the ease of accessibility and willingness of respondents to participate in the study. The demographics about the participants were as tabulated hereunder:

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Class Level		
100	80	12.3
200	110	17.0
300	172	26.5
400	286	44.1

Field		
Science-Based	300	46.3
Arts-Based	348	53.7
Gender		
Male	234	36.1
Female	414	63.9
Total	648	100.0

Three research instruments were used for data collection, namely:

- 1. Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ):** This instrument was adapted from Lowe (2021). It is a 10-item instrument developed to assess students' emotional, cognitive, and physiological responses in testing situations. The instrument includes subscales such as worry, emotionality, and avoidance behaviours with a 4-point response pattern of strongly agree (4), agree (A), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).
- 2. Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (AMQ):** This instrument was adapted from Komarraju and Nadler (2013). It is a 10-item instrument with a 4-point response pattern of strongly agree (4), agree (A), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1), developed to evaluate students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, goal orientation, and self-efficacy in academic context. It helps to identify motivational factors like fear of failure and personal goals.
- 3. Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty Questionnaire (AEDQ):** This instrument was adapted from Anderman and Koenka (2017). It is a 10-item instrument with a 4-point response pattern of strongly agree (4), agree (A), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1), developed to measure students' attitudes and engagement in dishonest academic behaviours. The scale examines frequency, contextual factors, and psychological triggers such as fear of failure and perceived academic pressure.

To ensure content and face validity, the instruments were reviewed by three experts in educational psychology and research from the Department of Educational Foundations,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Their suggestions on clarity, relevance, and coverage were incorporated into the final versions of the instruments. Reliability was established through a pilot test involving 50 undergraduate students from the same institution. The internal consistency was measured using Cronbach Alpha, yielding the coefficients of 0.71 for TAQ, 0.69 for AMQ and 0.74 for AEDQ. These values showed that the instruments have acceptable levels of reliability for use in educational research. Data were collected using a Google Form, which allowed for broad and efficient distribution of the questionnaire. The form was disseminated via course representatives who assisted in reaching the respondents. A total of 300 valid responses were retrieved and used for analysis. The data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics. Specifically, simple correlation analysis was used to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significance level. The decision rule for determining the acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses was that any data at < 0.05 is not significant, while any at > 0.50 is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis will be rejected if $p < 0.05$ and will be accepted if $p > 0.50$.

Results

Table 1: Simple Correlation for The Relationship Between Test Anxiety and University Students' Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty in Anambra State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized t Coefficients		Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	24.486	.345	70.990	.000	
	Test Anxiety	.041	.013	.124	3.163	.002
	R	.124 ^a			.002	
	R ²	.015			.002	
	F	10.007			.002 ^b	

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty

Data analysis in Table 1 showed that the relationship between test anxiety and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty was ascertained at $r = 0.124$,

$p < .05$ ($n = 648$). This shows a weak relationship between test anxiety and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty. Again, the p-value ($p \leq .002$) is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis was not accepted. Therefore, test anxiety has a significant relationship with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State.

Table 2: Simple Correlation for the Relationship between Achievement Motivation and University Students' Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty in Anambra State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized t Coefficients	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	18.144	1.007		18.085 .000
1 Achievement Motivation	.297	.040	.279	7.380 .000
R	.279 ^a			.000
R ²	.078			.000
F	1.565			.000 ^b

b. Dependent Variable: Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty

Data analysis in Table 2 showed that the relationship between achievement motivation and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty was ascertained at $r = 0.279$, $p < .05$ ($n = 648$). This shows a weak relationship between achievement motivation and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty. Again, the p-value ($p \leq .000$) is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis was not accepted. Thus, achievement motivation has a significant relationship with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State.

Table 3: Model Summary for Joint Correlation of Test Anxiety and Achievement Motivation on University Students' Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty in Anambra State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1					
	(Constant)	17.797	1.010	17.792	.000
	Test Anxiety	.022	.013	.065	.093
	Achievement Motivation	.281	.041	.264	6.801
	R	.286 ^a			.000
	R ²	.082			.000
	F	28.722			.000

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude towards Examination Dishonesty

Data in Table 3 revealed a weak joint relationship ($r = .286$) between the independent variables and the outcome variable. Moreover, the p-value ($p \leq .000$) is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis was not accepted. Therefore, test anxiety and achievement motivation jointly and significantly correlated with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State.

Discussion

The researchers sought to ascertain and to test the nature of the relationship between the independent variables of test anxiety, achievement motivation and the outcome variable of university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State. The need for this study is timely given the rising concern over the trend and the debilitating impact of examination dishonesty among students in Nigeria. The socio-demographic information about the participants showed that more female (414, 63.9%) than male (234, 36.1%) undergraduate students participated in the study; a greater number of the students are in 400 level (286, 44.1%) while minority of them are 100 level (80, 12.3%). Additionally, many of the students are Arts-based students (348. 53.7%) while about 300 which represents 46.3% of the students are Science-inclined.

The study found a weak but positive relationship between test anxiety and university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State. When further subjected to statistical analysis, the test of the relationship was significant, implying a significant relationship between test anxiety and the students' attitude towards examination dishonesty. This finding could be attributed to the fact that anxiety orchestrated by taking tests or examinations have the tendency to push students into depending on other students to scale through in such examinations. Moreover, psychological symptoms such as panic, fear of failure, sense of test insecurity, sweating, headache triggered by test anxiety could push students into cheating to pass an examination. This aligns with Nnaji (2022) who found a positive relationship between students' examination anxiety and their cheating behaviour. Similarly, Abuh and Okpanachi (2021) revealed that 65% of students with high test anxiety admitted to engaging in examination malpractice which corresponds with the finding of this study. This is a pointer that anxiety emanating from lack of preparedness, fear of failure could force a student to consider cheating in an examination to scale through. Again, the finding of this study agrees with Ozochi (2022) high academic stress arising from test anxiety is a factor contributing to cheating during examinations. Moreover, the finding validates that of Oguezie *et al* (2022) test anxiety has a high and positive relationship with students' attitude towards examination malpractice. Eremie and Ikpa (2020) underscored cognitive test anxiety as a factor. This could be because forgetfulness and other psychological symptoms of anxiety predispose students to examination dishonesty.

The study showed that achievement motivation has a weak but positive relationship with university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty in Anambra State. When further subjected to statistical analysis, the test of the relationship was significant. This implies that the quest for success is a contributing factor in students' disposition for

examination dishonesty. Craving for success per say should drive every student's effort at school but the quest or crave to pass at all cost is a red flag due to its ability to push a student into examination dishonesty. The finding of this study agrees with the existing literature. It agrees the finding of Köfünyeli (2022) indicated that academic motivation plays a significant role in predicting academic dishonesty among undergraduate students. It however, disagrees with Köfünyeli that higher levels of academic motivation were associated with lower instances of academic misconduct. This is because excessive quest to academic success can push a student into believing that passing by all means is not a bad idea. The finding aligns with Ghimire, Baral, and Bhattarai (2022) who reported that motivated students are more likely to adopt effective learning strategies, but disagrees that it reduces the need for dishonest practices among students. It further aligns with Ghimire, Baral, and Bhattarai (2023) that students with lower levels of motivation may struggle to meet academic expectations, leading to a higher likelihood of resorting to unethical behaviours, such as examination dishonesty, to attain desirable results. This is because, an excessively success-centered student could give a thumbs up for cheating in order to maintain tops in the class. This aligns with Nwankwo and Nwankwo (2020) who observed that achievement motivation correlates positively with students' attitude towards examination malpractice.

A weak joint but positive relationship was found between the independent variables (test anxiety and achievement motivation) and the dependent variable (university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty). The test of the relationship was significant, implying a joint significant relationship between the predictor and outcome variables. By this finding, it could be asserted that the presence of test anxiety and quest for success are more likely to affect a students' attitude towards cheating in examinations. In other words, a student who develops test anxiety but has an urge to pass

at all cost, would likely through ethics to winds and consider cutting corners to pass his or her examination. The findings agree with Ghimire, Baral, and Bhattarai (2022) that students with lower levels of motivation may struggle to meet academic expectations, leading to a higher likelihood of resorting to unethical behaviours, such as examination dishonesty, to attain desirable results especially when the student develops examination anxiety (Nwankwo & Nwankwo, 2020). Similarly, Köfünnyeli (2022) observed that academic motivation plays a significant role in predicting academic dishonesty among undergraduate students and the presence of psychological symptoms due to test anxiety would likely make a student vulnerable for examination dishonesty (Oguzie *et al*, 2022). Although, Ghimire, Baral, and Bhattarai (2022) reported that motivated students are more likely to adopt effective learning strategies, reducing the need for dishonest practices, Eremie and Ikpa (2020) observed that cognitive test anxiety is a predisposing factor to academic dishonesty among students. This is because forgetfulness and other psychological symptoms of anxiety predispose students to examination dishonesty. The finding further validates that of Zulfiqar and Abbasi (2024) who reported that test anxiety mediates the relationship between perfectionism and imposter feelings, which is could increase the likelihood of academic dishonesty.

Conclusion

The correlational designed study sought to establish the relationship between the predictor variables (test anxiety and achievement motivation) and the outcome variable (university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty) in Anambra State. The findings of the study showed that the predictor variables separately and jointly had a positive relationship with the outcome variable. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that test anxiety and achievement motivation are separate and combined factors determining university students' attitude towards examination dishonesty. In

other words, as the students test anxiety and quest for academic success increase, their attitude towards examination dishonesty will be strengthened.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University Management should sponsor internal programmes such as seminars, conferences and talkshops to discuss the dangers of examination dishonesty to positively alter the attitude of students towards examination dishonesty.
2. Clear rules and policies should be set, and enforced to discourage students from nursing ideas about taking part in academic dishonesty.
3. The Federal and State Governments should set up Counselling Centres in universities to serve for students already caught in the web of test anxiety for intervention plans.
4. Emphasis should be shifted from certification to expertise, functional education and mastery learning to disabuse the minds of students from cutting corners to pass their courses.

Implications/Limitations of the Study

The findings of the study have some educational implications for positive attitude formation among university students regarding approaching examinations without comprise. It is obvious test anxiety and desperate quest for good grades could push students into forming an attitude that permits cheating in examinations. Thus, for students to develop a pro-examination integrity attitude, the issue of test anxiety and quest for success should be put in check. This could be achieved through providing psychological intervention and other enlightenment programmes for students to help them manage anxieties especially during examinations. The programmes should also enlighten them on the need to avoid desperation in their quest for academic success.

Despite this study's critical educational implications, there are few limitations to generalizing its findings. The use of online form of collecting data for the study may have excluded some students who might be willing to participate but not disposed at the time of data collection. Thus, the opinion of 648 participants might not represent the opinion of all the undergraduates in Anambra State. Therefore, there should be caution in making generalizations based on the findings of this study.

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