Pains and Gains of Some Selected Social Vices in Nigerian Art and Design Schools: An Experience from within

BY

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Highlights
The study carried out in the Department of Industrial Design, Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Ondo State, Nigeria on the prevalence of social vices reflects an experience from within. FUTA aims to be one of the best Universities of Technology in the world, committed to carving out an enviable niche for itself as a centre of excellence. It is epitomized by high quality programmes, products and contributions to the immediate and distant society. However, contemporary vices which continue to be trendy in almost all the tertiary institutions in Nigeria tend to negate the vision and mission of the institution. The objective of this study is to showcase the most frequent social vices on the university campuses with a view to determining whether they are pains or gains for the perpetrators. Two hypotheses were generated; the first was to find out if there is no significant difference between the pains and gains of examination malpractice while the second one was to find out if there is no significant difference between the pains and gains of cultism. A pilot study was initially conducted. As a survey research, 350 students of the Industrial Design Department, FUTA were randomly selected as sample size. The research instrument used was questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed with percentage frequency count and chi square statistics and tested at significant level of 0.05. The two hypotheses were rejected because the table values were greater than the calculated chi square values. It then means that there is significant difference between the pains and gains of both examination malpractice and cultism. Findings of the study revealed that examination malpractice and cultism are truly the most frequent moral ineptitudes that cut across all the institutional campuses in Nigeria. However, the institutional campuses consider them as unacceptable and are tackling the menaces headlong with all available resources including posters and billboard campaigns.

Keywords: Education, social-vices, counseling, socialization, moral ineptitude.

The Prelude
The vagaries of socialization on Nigerian institutional campuses are not only on a steady rise, it has widely and wildly crystallized into one of the contemporary problems on hand (Maddeh, Bennour and Souissi, 2015). The art and design students co-exist with other students on the campuses and so the chances are there that they share heterogeneous mix and behavioural reference points that call for generalization. The study carried out in the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Ondo State, Nigeria on the prevalence of social vices reflects a common experience from within. Students, known for their youthful impulsiveness vividly possess a compelling desire for social activities. The propensity dimensions for crime along that line are of both institutional and global concerns. For those who have closely followed the social trends on the campuses or, lately, visited at least a Nigerian university campus, the ill manner of dressing and violent
agitations when pressing for their needs (popularly called aluta continua) come as no surprise. Secret cult manifestations and published cases of examination malpractice, part of which are discussed in this write up as a negation of the value system of Nigerian culture also come as no surprise.

School community is saturated with social misdemeanours – all of which are unacceptable and decisively sanctioned (Supaporn, Dodds, & Griffin, 2003, Umaru, 2005, Obidigbo, 2011, and Bruno and Obidigbo 2012). It is necessary to appreciate the role of universities in the way they have come out bold to expose and denounce the unacceptability of societal ills. Recent years have witnessed increased rustication of students and dismissal of erring staff from faculties. Suspension and termination penalties often meted out on erring individuals have again, earned the education industry a huge mistrust and lack of integrity. The rapid-growing and widely-reported moral decadence is changing the way organizations, and the world outside perceive quality when a mention is made of the Nigerian high school graduates. Ethics which Jamil, Tariq and Shar (2013) consider as the standards of human conduct have been jettisoned. The study of Ambasht (2003) which posits that education is an essential parameter to measure the quantum of advantage accruing to any country and that of Oluya (2004) which mentions that the development of a nation is to a large extent dependent on the level of the education of its citizenry may not be the case in the Nigerian context. There are many certificate holders who cannot live up to expectation in their fields. Most institutional certificates and transcript records have been discredited for reasons traceable to the instability of academic programme calendar and moral deficiencies. The discredited manner of acquiring knowledge and understanding and the mad rush for certificate acquisition (Fatusin, 2004) are causative factors for moral decadence in schools. Given this insight, the concept of certifying a student worthy in character and learning before the award of certificate on graduation remains a welcome development. In this paper, two frequently reported menace on Nigerian institutional campuses are examination misconduct and cultism. According to Kouassi and Jintian (2013), education as a social institution is a platform where intelligence, imagination and behaviours are nourished

Examination misconduct and secret cult activities are far exceeding imaginations and have reached alarming levels in the institutions of higher learning in the country. It is incredibly reported that the menace of cultism and examination malpractice have systematically crept into the secondary school domain. Unfortunately, students at all levels claim to be passing through the school but the school seems not to be passing through them. Worse still, students no longer make good representatives of their parents, and the school authorities are very concerned about these. Igwe and Nath (2005) poignantly remark that various forms of delinquencies and deviances by pupils and students have negatively influenced the entire educational system. Most institutional certificates and transcript records have been discredited for reasons traceable to academic and moral deficiencies. Furthermore, a comparison between education in the colonial era and what it is now is evidential to reveal that social vices have engulfed the present Nigerian educational system in its entire sum total. The assertion in Igwe et al (op cit) that much damage has been done to the fabrics of the education industry in Nigeria is a corollary that calls for both intellectual concern and proactive intervention of parents and the government. Specifically, this is to say that, presently the Nigerian university campuses have become a bee hive for all manners of social vices ranging from certificate forgery, truancy, stealing, drug abuse and examination malpractice, all of which Wodi and Dokubo (2005) describe as a social plague. These social vices are considered as social and educational plagues because, like the plague of locust on farms, are disastrous and its numerous influx are unwholesome for decent lifestyles. All these are happening on the campuses of educational institutions as disruptors of school activities (Tousignant, 1985, Morin & Battilio, 2004).

Ills are mostly perpetrated by the youths under the guise of socialization and acquisition of technological know-how which Olusanya (2013) considers as desideratum for the understanding of the principles of globalization. The pervasiveness of technology and the social media is apparent in the proliferation of cell phones which the youths use wrongly for cheating and other fraudulent practices. This
study considers examination malpractice and cultism as frequent social vices on the Nigerian institutional campuses which should be nipped in the bud.

Background of the Study

A 2003 report about the case of parents aiding and abetting their children to cheat in a pre-degree entrance examination that took place at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife, Osun State, Nigeria cast in bolder relief the scope and depth of the scourge of examination malpractice in our society. The Peace Education Centre of the university produced this report. Hitherto, various stakeholders had expressed concern about what should be done to check examination malpractice which has robbed many young persons of required commitment to edifying values with parents now actively involved. As indicated, children-centred solutions may no longer be enough; existing assumptions and hypotheses on examination malpractice and perhaps other social vices need to be reviewed. Parents have no moral misgivings about assisting their children to cheat in examinations. They seek to buy examination questions before the day of the examination; and thus actively encourage leakages. They provide funds for their children to hire impersonators who write examinations on their behalf in remote examination centres. Some parents even go to examinations centers and seek to compromise with invigilators and supervisors. Indolent students and syndicates prefer posting to miracle centres. Miracle centre is a term used for examination centre that are in remotely far areas too uneasy for the invigilators to do their work. Such remote areas could be coastal and waterside areas as well as villages where malpractice and compromise are easy. There is so much desperation in the land. The outside world has lost faith in the system (Afariogun, 2007).

The emergent scenario is that surrogates now impersonate real candidates to write vital examinations including the West African School certificate Examinations (WASCE) and the various tests conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Admission into the universities used to be simpler in the past and most parents did not have to intervene as the parents of today now do. The real crises are that corruption has now become a national ethic. The involvement of parents in examination malpractice is a reflection of the general collapse of values in the larger society. Parents have abdicated their traditional responsibilities; integrity, character and hard work are endangered ideals in our land. But to condone the corruption at whatever level is to compromise both the future and the foundation of the country. Part of the problems perhaps, is undue emphasis on examinations as the only measurement of scholastic ability. The average Nigerian student lives under the mortal fear of examinations. For many parents, a child’s performance in an examination is a matter of considerable concern, if not trepidation. There may well be a need for new measurement and evaluation criteria that will reduce the burden on examination as the only yardstick for academic progress. As long as examinations have a role to play in ranking performance and ability, there will be some overzealous persons who would seek to compromise the process. General enlightenment is, therefore, essential. Education should not merely be about the acquisition of certificates, but character and integrity. It is partly the failure of our system to concretely appreciate this important element of evaluation that is pushing our society to the abyss of frustrations.

In 2002, former Education Minister Professor Babatunde Fafunwa, at an interview, called for the establishment of a code of conduct for the university community. He decried the seeming lack of discipline that now pervades our universities. He was of the view that members of staff, by showing so much indiscipline themselves, do not inspire in their students the desire to be of good behaviour. According to ‘Babs’, as he is fondly called in education circle, Prof. Fafunwa said: ‘Before you can discipline your students, you must be disciplined yourself’. He was right. A cursory look at our institutions of higher learning reveals a disturbing onrush to moral decadence. Students dress as carelessly as their fancies can carry them. Female students in particular, appear to have thrown caution to the wind, as they are often clad in the most unbecoming and provocative attire. A university is a place of learning and the development of character. It is called an ivory tower because it is supposed to be a rarefied domain where in an almost ascetic atmosphere the characters of future leaders are moulded. In many universities abroad, considerable credence is placed on the manner of
dressing and general comportment. This matter is important as quite often, one’s mode of dressing defines one’s behaviour at the same time as it generates expectations and attitudes on others. As a rule, students should be modestly dressed, courteous and well mannered. They should shun vulgarism both in dress and speech. In short, they should be ladies and gentlemen.

An experience from within

As a matter of vision, The Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Nigeria aims to be one of the best Universities of Technology in the world. It is committed to carving an enviable niche for itself as a centre of excellence, epitomized by high quality programmes, products and contributions to the society. It also has a mission of ceaselessly promoting technological advancement through motivated and skilled staff dedicated to teaching and research, geared towards global needs and production of self-reliant high level manpower, goods and services. The institution engaged in partnership with outside organizations to tackle social vices on its campuses. For example, on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2004, the university signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Drug Abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention in tertiary institutions. FUTA is the only university chosen in the Southwestern Nigeria for the project, which was expected to last twelve months in the first instance. Other universities in the region are expected to draw from the FUTA experience. The signing of the MOU between FUTA and UNODC was cheering news to all. It was another right step forward in the efforts aimed at tackling the albatrosses of social vices like examination misconducts, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS. It was the first time in the history of the university that the institution would be partnering with a United Nations Agency on the major problems confronting the human race.

Nevertheless, government and the various institutional authorities are determined to nip all anti-social behaviours in the bud with deep sense of commitment and have always commissioned continued best efforts in that direction. One of such efforts is widespread cautionary campaign and mass education against all sorts of campus misdemeanours. FUTA for instance, adopts the outdoor graphic designs that have captivating inscriptions. The school commissioned visual design concepts and illustrations on billboards, posters and banners to be mounted at catchy locations of both the Obanla and the Obakekere campuses of the university. Screen printed fabrics are also worn by individuals to preach against cultism and examination malpractice. This clearly shows that the challenge of tackling social vices on the university campuses and building a peaceful and thriving academic environment is not limited to the application of force. Graphic design provides a civil mechanism for visual education and correction. Massive campaign against anti-social behaviours through the use of visual design concepts is as well suitable. This is vividly explained in Kayode (2005) that graphic design transcends mere drawing and colouring activities to present itself as a communication channel that has implications for mass mobilization. Indeed, students need to be sensitized to make the right choice of lifestyle everywhere, including especially, on the university campuses in a relational manner.

Statement of the Problem

Each level of education in Nigeria was established for a purpose (National Teachers Institute, 2003). For instance, the university was established to train and produce skillful hands that will take care of the high level manpower requirements of the nation. Polytechnics and colleges are established to take care of middle level manpower. Graduates from these levels of education are expected to come out to become productive, self-fulfilling, self-actualized affective and patriotic in their respective callings. Reverse is the case today, the program has lost the finesse of its purpose. Standard of education is dwindling by the day as a result of the contentious vices that have overwhelmed learners (Osagie, 2009). The present educational system in Nigeria lays a great emphasis on developing learners’ cognitive abilities and ignores altogether character formation among them (National Teachers Institute, 2003). Indecent dressing, sexual harassment, examination malpractice and cultism are common contemporaneous vices among students (Afariogun, 2007). Cultism gathers coercive momentum at the resumption of school academic calendar. This is when the stale students
have the opportunity to lure the innocent fresh students into clubs. Sexual harassment comes up during the period of studentship while examination malpractice occurs at the tail end of semester calendar when examinations are conducted to close a particular period of study. Suspected students are made to face various disciplinary panels and if found guilty, are pitifully thrown out of school. The rate at which recalcitrant students are thrown out of school sake of examination misconduct and cultism is increasingly making the dropout and unemployment rate rare extensive. The possibility of dropouts not being able to repackage themselves for another chance of better future is very high and they could remain perpetual societal misfits (Kuta, 2011, Okojie, 2013).

Research Questions
1. What are the pains and gains of examination malpractice?
2. Are there pains and gains in the cultism practiced by students of higher learning?

Hypotheses
1. There is no significant difference between the pains and gains of examination malpractice.
2. There is no significant difference between the pains and gains of cultism on institutional campuses.

Purpose of the study
Ogunduyile, Kayode and Ojo (2008) mentioned the menace of dropping out of school. One of the reasons advanced in that study was the incessant rustication of students for one offence or the other. Olusanya (2013) has found out in its nationwide study that examination malpractice and cultism are the most prevalent social vices in all levels of education in Nigeria that could lead to rustication. The purpose of this study is to critically look at the scourge of those social vices among the students of higher learning and the way institutions view it. Specifically, the study will ascertain statistically whether there are pains or gains in both examination malpractice and cultism.

Scope of the study
Part of what seems to have brought about a decline in the education standards in Nigeria is the social vices which manifest in different garbs. Although a plethora of others exists, the study restricts itself only to examination malpractice and cultism in art and design schools and the campus of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria is one of them.

Methodology
The study adopted a descriptive and explanatory research design. It involved the use of questionnaire instrument which consists of a five-point Likert scale model. To ensure the face and content validity of the instrument, the items that constituted the questionnaire were carefully scrutinized by two experts from the Department of Industrial Design, FUTA. A pilot study was then carried out which led to the modifications of few of the questions. To further ensure that the questions could reliably be tested elsewhere apart from FUTA, the questionnaire was administered twice on twenty (20) respondents from The Federal College of Education, Ogun State which also has an art and design department at an interval of two weeks. The data collected at the two different administrations of the questionnaire were subjected to chi square statistics and the coefficient obtained for each set of the questionnaires was 0.67. The target population was students of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria. Random sampling technique was used to draw 350 respondents from the heterogeneous mix of students and staff gathered in the main auditorium of the university during an annual lecture organised by the School of Environmental Technology, FUTA. Data gathered were analysed with the aid of chi-square and interpreted.
Results
The data collected for the study were analysed with chi-square and the two hypothesis raised were tested at 0.05 level of significance

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between gains and pains of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities.

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<tr>
<th>N/S</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
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<td>9.</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>26</td>
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*Source: Author’s field work.*

$\chi^2$ calculated value = 21.74  
$\chi^2$ table value = 28.869  
df = 18  
Level of significance = 0.05

Table 1 showed that the calculated $\chi^2$ value was 21.74 while the table value at 0.05 level of significance with df 18 is 28.869. From table 1, it is revealed that the calculated $\chi^2$ value (21.74) is less than the table value (28.869). Since the calculated $\chi^2$ is less than the table value, the hypothesis (tested with chi square) that states there is no significant difference between the gains and the pains of examination malpractice in Nigerian universities, is therefore rejected. This then means that there is significant difference between the pains and
gains of examination malpractice in the Nigerian institutional campuses. By implication of the hypothesis tested, more people agreed that there is a world of difference and that the consequence which is the pains cannot be matched with the unmerited success which is called the gains. The gains might be that a cheater got involved and went undetected but when caught in subsequent time, could lose his or her studentship and end up the academic pursuit without being certificated. These behaviours as noted in Maddeh, Bennour and Souissi (2015) disrupt and terminate the teaching and learning process. Cheaters have opted to put their future and destiny on the line. This study strongly supports the studies carried out in Amechi (2001), Kulinna, Cothran & Regualos (2006), Kulinna (2007-2008) and Onah (2010) which reported that the consequences and aftermath of students’ misbehaviour are multidimensional and they affect class functioning negatively. According to Amechi (op cit) and Onah (op cit), perpetrators have always been expelled from school and this may ultimately put an end to their good future ambitions. This is an explosive risk to take in the sense that it will not only affect the student concerned but also the parents who have strained to picked up the expenses of giving their children desired education.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the pains and gains of cultism among Nigerian university students.

Table 2: Summary of $\chi^2$ test of difference between gains and pains of cultism among Nigerian university students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/S</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<td></td>
<td>O</td>
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<td>R₁</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Cultism is like culture, it is a way of life of students on campus.</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Cultic practices are common in all higher institutions in Nigeria.</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Only the male students are involved in cultism.</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Those who engage in cultic activities are easily identified by their gentle look.</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cultism builds fake confidence in members that they are influential everywhere on campus and off-campus.</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Cultists employ force to recruit members into cultism.</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>There is no record of cultist that is brilliant.</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Cultists are vandalistic and brutal only when they clash for certain interest.</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Expulsion from school should be meted out as repercussion to cultism.</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cultism is not crime it is a social club and should be encouraged.

Source: Author’s field work.

\[ \chi^2 \text{ calculated value } 22.02, \]
\[ df = 18 \]
\[ \chi^2 \text{ table value } 28.869 \]
Level of significance = 0.05

From Table 2, it is indicated that the calculated \( \chi^2 \) value was 22.02 while the \( \chi^2 \) table value is 28.869 at 0.05 level of significance and df 18. Since the table value (28.869) is greater than the \( \chi^2 \) calculated value (22.02) the hypothesis that says there is no significant difference between the pains and gains of cultism is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference between the pains and gains of cultism. Like examination malpractice, students who are caught participating in cultic practices are always given fair hearing and when they are found to be truly involved, are suspended for a certain period of time, rusticated or expelled completely from the institution. The findings of this research is in agreement with the findings and conclusions of Olusanya (2013) that the major social vices that Nigeria has as student-centred challenges are examination malpractices and cultism that permeate all the levels of education. This is seen as a far departure from the code of educational conduct and ethical procedures. This study also lends credence to Maddeh, et al (2015), the Nigerian Policy on Education (2004), Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) and also aligns with UNESCO (2004) which posit that the vision of education that will sustain an individual is not just to learn cognitively but also to learn values, behavior and lifestyle required for sustainable future and positive social transformation. Dismissal from school may, if care is not taken lead to dropping out and becoming wasted future. It implies therefore, that any fundamental change in the intellectual as well as social outlook of any society must first be preceded by an educational revolution (Osaghae, 2002; Oyeneye, 2010, Ijaduola, 2011 and Olusanya, 2013).

Conclusion

This study reflects that efforts to adopt punitive measures to correct contemporary ills on campuses are increasing as the rate of social ills is increasing. The university community is a part of the larger society and is not exempted in the crusade against the scourge of social vices. The massive campaign against the scourge is yielding results because citizens are aware of the position of the law through the media, publications and billboard campaigns. The content of this paper does not mean to relegate or devalue the education industry in Nigeria; neither does it mean to insinuate any disregard or lack of confidence in it. Rather, it has established the need for value-added education and morally upright positions for all stakeholders of the education industry.

The need to probe through research findings what is negating the quality of education in the country is essential in this contemporary time and that is the thrust of this paper. In doing this, there also comes an essential need to unveil and expose the probable cog in the wheel of academic progress. More respondents agree that examination misconducts and cultic practices are ills on the campuses and the perpetrators are misfits. Government and school authorities have been commended as they are bent on sieving the chaff from the grain. This therefore means that drastic punitive consequences await those within the institutions who err. The FUTA example has been the principle of get caught and get gone. The paper has done so much to mention the use of billboard captions and other graphic communication materials as inroad to curbing social menaces if not completely abating it. Considering the rate of growth of global civilization in terms of the measurable advancements in technology, given also its social merits and demerits and the hidden dangers of globalization, one cannot but say that the need for proactive surveillance on institutional campuses is huge.
However, the institutions and the government have more concerted commitments in mounting up strategies and beefing up surveillance to tackle social vices on the campuses. More efforts should be directed towards exposing the various manifestations of social vices and its damaging effects owing to the fact that it is more convenient to prevent than to cure a disastrous problem.

**Recommendations**

By virtue of the giant stride taken so far, FUTA has become a leading example of FUTA-UNIDOC partnering project on crime and social vices fighting in the southwestern Nigeria. Other institutions of learning in the country should as a matter of necessity brace up to borrow a leave from this successful humanitarian project undertaking, that is, balancing morals and education for a fulfilled academic life of the youths in Nigeria.

Parents and the faculty teachers are to serve as prototypes for behavioural models that are excellent and exemplary. The consensus that home is the first school of the child is a truism and as such, parents have the biggest stake in this regard, in the sense that they need to season their wards morally and thoroughly supervise their socialization upbringing through close observations, one-on-one counseling on moral uprightness and enviable parentage.

Institutions of higher learning should establish and strengthen its guidance and counseling units to become more pro-active in rendering the various forms of formative counseling services to staff and students. It will be of immense usefulness to fortify the student-parent-teacher and counselor relationships as well.

Funding of education is important; government should improve on its funding responsibilities to schools so that more enlightenment programmes and campaign strategies could be mounted on the university campuses. Academic institutions may deem it fit to strengthen their internally-generated revenue (IGR) base from time to time.

Well meaning Nigerians, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropists and international organizations could partner with educational institutions to save the future of education in the country. However, the efforts of the Niger Delta Development commission (NDDC), private individuals from the different geo-political zones of the country, and most commendably, all international agencies of goodwill, one of which is the UNIDOC, are sincerely appreciated in providing support services in funds, infrastructure and logistics to tackle social problems in FUTA.

More of impact graphics and publicity awareness designs in the form of print and electronic media (billboards, newspaper, T-shirts, radio and television) need be adopted by institutional campuses for creating awareness on the need to eschew social vices.

Religious groups and professional bodies as well as students’ unions should serve as watch-dogs for combating the prevalence of all youthful exuberances and immaturity of faculty undergraduates.
References


