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## Examining the Prevalent Forms of Examination Misconduct in Tanzanian Universities

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study examined the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. It was guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour developed by Ajzen in 1991. The study employed convergent research design under mixed methods research approach. The target population consisted of 27 universities, which offer Bachelor of education degree in Tanzania mainland, 51,489 students, 708 lecturers, 27 Chief examination officers and 27 Directors of quality assurance from which the sample size of 460 was selected through purposive and stratified random sampling techniques. Questionnaires, document analysis guide and interview guide were used to collect data. Source triangulation and research experts ensured validity. Reliability was ensured through Cronbach alpha and intercoder agreement techniques. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics whereas qualitative data was analysed through thematic analysis. The study found out that, the common forms of examination misconduct included the use of unauthorized materials, copying, collusion, examination leakage and impersonation. The study concluded that, there are diverse forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. The study recommends that, universities in Tanzania should provide moral education to students to sensitize them about the negative impact of embracing academic misconduct.*

**KEY WORDS:** Prevalent, forms, examination misconduct, Tanzanian universities.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education is a process by which individuals acquire and develop new knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for appreciating and adapting to the environment and the ever-changing society. University education is an engine for national development. The Government of Tanzania (GoT) has been striving for excellence in her higher education sector (URT, 2018). Fostering

university education enables graduates to possess requisite knowledge, skills, values, and competencies in order to diligently undertake specific professional tasks and to develop ethical behaviours for national development endeavours (Guerrero-Dib et al., 2020). In this regard, Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) are expected to produce graduates with essential expertise for solving societal problems. Therefore, HLIs need to reinforce commitment of students and academic staff to educational integrity in order to attain expected learning outcomes (Peters, 2019; Stoesz et al., 2019). Toward this end, universities need to develop and effectively implement institutional integrity management strategies that combine policies and good academic practices (Kasler, 2019). The process of developing institutional integrity management strategies may consider, among other things, regular reviews of institutional academic integrity policies and processes coupled with decision-making systems (Bertram-Gallant et al., 2015). Additionally, the process should consider an understanding of students and their engagements; enhancement of students' commitment in their studies; revisiting record keeping; assessment practices and implications for staff professional development Schemes. In this regard, integrity in education is founded on principles of respect for knowledge, honesty and truth in academic activities (Karanauskienė et al., 2020).

Besides, examinations are used as assessment tools where knowledge, skills and competencies of candidates are evaluated in order to establish the credibility and relevance of university education. Different forms of examinations are administered for various purposes (Karanauskienė et al., 2020). For instance, applicants are required to show evidence of scores from secondary school leaving examinations (SSLE) that meet designated thresholds before being admitted to different academic programmes in HLIs. In a similar context, Onyibe et al. (2015) noted that an examination is a yardstick to measure progress of candidates after undergoing a given training and acts as a tool to make decision on who should be permitted to pursue the next level of studies. While studying in HLIs, students are required to sit for semester examinations and some might be required to sit for special/supplementary examinations (TCU, 2019a; TCU, 2019b).

When inconsistencies, discrepancies or examination misconduct happen reliability and validity of the results as well as the relevance of education provided in HLIs are threatened. Indeed, terms such as examination misconduct, examination dishonesty, examination malpractice and examination cheating have been used in several literatures interchangeably (Brimble, 2016; Badea & Presada, 2017) Clearly, examination misconduct is an issue of growing concern as it has been compromising the quality of education systems globally (Baran & Jonason, 2020; Denisova-Schmidt, 2017; Keter et al., 2020). It should be noted that examination misconduct does happen before, during and after the administration of designated examinations venues. Forms of examination misconduct include leakage, paring methods, impersonation, collusion, and bringing unpermitted writings in the examination rooms (Velliaris, 2017).

The common form of examination misconduct before the scheduled timeframe for administering a given question paper is examination leakage. In most cases, this form of examination misconduct involves lecturers, examination officers, secretaries, and sometimes examination moderators. This form of academic misconduct entails hacking of examination documents through the use of information and communication technology (ICT) (Situma & Wasike, 2020; Duvie & Eluwa, 2016; Mulongo et al., 2019). According to Velliariis (2017), examination misconduct during the actual scheduled timeframe for a given examination is often associated with impersonation, copying, collusion, unauthorized writings and paring method. It is typified by the use of both traditional and contemporary methods of cheating. Specifically, traditional methods include acts of recording answers on washroom stalls, body parts, and crib sheets and concealing unauthorized materials in belts, eyeglass cases, hats, belts, scarves, water bottles, food wrappers, shoes, and wristwatches. Other methods include the use of cheating codes such as signals of yawning and sneezing at different levels of pitch, intensity and duration, head-nodding, back-stretching, arm-crossing, hair-twirling, fist-clenching, ear-tugging, eraser-dropping, neck-scratching, eye-rubbing, nose-touching, pen-tapping, collar-pulling, cap-turning, and feet-stomping. Some of the empirical studies (e.g. Situma & Wasike, 2020; Velliariis 2017) that focused on different forms of examination misconduct had been undertaken in other parts of the world but there was inadequacy of such studies for HLIs in Tanzania.

In the case of Tanzania, despite the existence of rules and regulations governing examinations in HLIs under the spotlight of TCU, several cases of examination misconduct have been reported. In January 2021, for instance, the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) arraigned 13 students of the Institute of Rural Development Planning (IRDP) for solving questions for a supplementary third-year course of Applied Statistics outside designated venues and for attempting to sneak their answer booklets into examination venues (Anonymous, 2021a, January 18). Furthermore, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania gave a directive, on March 28, 2021, to PCCB to investigate cases of corruption relating to examination leakages amongst 47 HLIs apart from cases of sextortion that were reported at the University of Dar Salaam (UDSM) and the University of Dodoma (UDOM) (Suluhu, 2021, March 28). However, there was inadequacy of literature that focused on the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in universities within Tanzania.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The cases of examination misconduct in higher learning institutions in Tanzania and beyond are often reported (Baran & Jonason, 2020; Denisova-Schmidt, 2017; Keter et al., 2020). In recent years, several stakeholders of higher education have been complaining about the quality of many graduates from HLIs within Tanzania and other countries despite their good grades as indicated in their academic transcripts and degree certificates. One of the causes of graduates' incompetence is examination misconduct. As a result, they fail to deliver or compete in the changing demands of the labour market (Situma & Wasike 2020; Mwita, 2018). The phenomenon has attracted several

studies to examine prevalent forms, causes and effects of examination misconduct in HLIs in different parts of the world (cf. Nyamoita & Otieno, 2016; Cinali, 2016; Baran & Jonason, 2020). However, in the case of Tanzania, there was inadequacy of literature that focus on issues of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. Therefore, this study examined the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities.

### **Research Question**

The study was guided by the following research question:

- i. What are the prevalent forms of examination misconduct experienced in Tanzanian universities?

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will contribute in creating awareness on the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. Furthermore, the findings will help the university management to formulate and/or review an academic integrity policy that would clearly specify and uphold universities' ethical principles and values, the practices of appropriate academic behaviour as well as the procedures for handling policy violations. Moreover, familiarity of the occurring forms of examination misconduct will help university management and administration to find out innovative and appropriate strategies to address those forms in order to produce competent graduates needed to contribute to national and global development. This study will also function as a reference point for HLIs in discovering other forms of examination misconduct used by students and staff to cheat during examination and address them accordingly. Besides, the findings of the study will inform HLIs on initiating teaching and learning as well as evaluation strategies to enhance students' levels of concentration and acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills and values. Moreover, the findings of this study will provide considerable basis for further studies assessing the other components of examination misconducts.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Icek Ajzen in 1991. The theory maintains that three core components, namely, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control shape an individual's behavioural intentions. A person's attitude toward a specific behaviour is the function of his/her beliefs, which refers to the perceived consequences of carrying out a specific action and his/her evaluation of each of these consequences. This state of affairs explains a person's intention whether to perform a given behaviour or avoid it. When a person has a higher intention to perform a given behaviour, it is more likely that he/she will engage in that behaviour. Students engage in various forms of examination misconduct due to their attitude and the perceived availability of gaps in university management strategies.

The Theory explains the reason why students engage in various forms of examination misconduct as they hope to get advantage by scoring good grades that lead to reputable certificates, which gives them a comparative advantage in the labour market. However, the theory did not consider other variables that could influence students to engage in examination misconduct such as fear of failure and threats caused by examination anxiety or past experience of students' cheating in primary and secondary school examinations. The TPB establishes linkages between the prevalence of various forms of examination misconduct in universities and the available opportunities in university management strategies. In this regard, examination misconduct happens as a result of students' intention to cheat and the gaps in the university management strategies. The relevance of the theory to this study is that, it explains why students engage in various forms of examination misconduct and how universities can address such forms of misconduct.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Prevalent Forms of Examination Misconduct in Universities**

There is an increasing need for HLIs to implement proactive strategies in order to address different factors that lead to different forms of examination misconduct. It is worth noting that significant advances in science and technologies have led to complicated modern forms of examination misconduct (Ojwan'g, 2019).

To begin with, Landa-Blanco et al. (2020) investigated attitudes and practices of students on cheating behaviour in a public university in Honduras, Central America. Specifically, the study used a quantitative approach and a non-experimental design. Data were collected from a sample of 713 undergraduate students from a target population of 55,084 students who were enrolled in different programmes. The respondents were sampled through a convenience sampling technique under a non-probabilistic approach. Furthermore, respondents filled out an online survey questionnaire. The findings from Landa-Blanco et al. (2020) revealed, among other things, copying in assignment/tests, paying someone else to do one's tests and assignments, plagiarism and data fabrication as the most common prevalent forms of academic misconduct in public Universities in Honduras.

Landa-Blanco et al. (2020) study offered valuable information to this study on the prevalent forms of academic misconduct that were experienced in universities within America. There was however, need for this study to be conducted in Tanzania with a different context from that of America in order to gain more insights on prevalent forms of academic misconduct in Tanzanian universities. In addition, the study focused its finding largely on contract cheating and plagiarism. This study therefore, bridged the gap by focusing its findings specifically on forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities such as use of unauthorized materials during examination, copying, collusion, examination leakage and impersonation. It should be noted, however, that a mismatch between a quantitative research approach and convenience sampling technique as used

in Landa-Blanco et al. (2020) study, might raise questions on the validity and reliability of the findings. This study adopted a convergent research design whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently and the sample size was obtained through probability and non-probability-sampling techniques to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

Similarly, Sendur (2022) investigated academic malpractice in examinations and tests. The purpose of the study was to identify methods adopted by students to cheat in tests and examinations in universities within France, Spain, Ukraine, Germany, Italy and the USA. The study adopted a survey research design where data were collected through online questionnaire from 1309 respondents. The findings revealed that the prevalent methods of cheating in examinations and tests included copying from someone's work, use of crib notes, impersonation and use of electronic devices, among others. It is worth noting that although Sendur's (2022) study provided useful information on the various methods used by students to cheat in examination and tests in universities, there was inadequate information on methods used by students and staff to cheat in examination misconduct in universities in Tanzania. In addition, the study restricted its findings on responses from only students. This study bridged the gap by focusing its findings on responses from both students and staff as both groups in one way or another is involved in examination misconduct. Therefore, this study was conducted to address that deficit.

Furthermore, Quintos (2017) carried out a study on the prevalence and correlates of academic dishonesty amongst students who were pursuing four undergraduate degree programmes in the Philippines. The study adopted a stratified random sampling design and a questionnaire was administered in order to collect data from a sample of 237 undergraduate students. The findings revealed that collusion during examination, quizzes and exercises, as well as copying from each other and the giraffe method were the most prevalent forms of academic dishonesty.

Generally, the study focused on forms of academic misconduct in general. Therefore, this study sought to address the gap by focusing specifically on the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities such as use of unauthorized materials, copying, collusion, examination leakage and impersonation. Also, the study employed a stratified random sampling as a design. Drawing on Cohen et al. (2018), a stratified random sampling should be interpreted as a sampling technique rather than a research design. In this regard, a mismatch between a research design and a sampling technique raises questions on the validity and reliability of research findings. Therefore, this study addressed this methodological anomaly by employing both probability and non-probability sampling procedures in order to ensure credibility of research findings. Also, the use of a questionnaire as the only tool for data collection limited opportunities for triangulation of information. This study bridged the gap by using four methods for collecting data namely questionnaires, interview guide and document analysis guide as well as observation guide which, in turn, enabled the researcher to triangulate the information for reliability purpose.

Furthermore, Bibi et al. (2020) conducted a study on types and levels of undergraduates' involvement in examination malpractice in Gombe State University within Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey and consisted of 3,891 undergraduates from five faculties at Gombe State University. Stratified sampling and random sampling techniques were employed to select a sample of 778 respondents who filled out the questionnaire. Bibi et al. (2020) found out that the commonest forms of examination malpractice at Gombe state University were copying from other students, collusion, and leakage, exchange of answer scripts among students and use of phones. Moreover, the study revealed that guidance, orientation, and counselling programmes helped to curb the menace.

Indeed, Bibi et al. (2020) study offered valuable information to this study on the prevalent forms on examination misconduct and the degree of students' involvement in examination malpractice as well as measures undertaken to mitigate the problem in universities within Nigeria. However, the study focused on undergraduates' perceptions on types and levels of involvement in examination misconduct based on variables such as age, gender, level and faculty of study. Therefore, this study widens respondents by involving both students and staff perceptions on common forms of examination misconduct being experienced in Tanzanian universities. Nonetheless, the use of a descriptive survey research design, which falls under a quantitative approach, as used by Bibi et al. (2020), limits investigation of respondents' feelings and emotions. A thorough investigation of such aspects demands the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Also, the use of a questionnaire as the only instrument of data collection raises questions on the validity and reliability of information (Cohen et al., 2018). Therefore, this study filled the gap by employing a convergent research design under a mixed-methods approach whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently using a variety of instruments such as questionnaires, interview guide, document analysis guide and observation guide which enable the triangulation of information, thus enhanced the reliability of the findings. Besides, Odongo et al. (2021) used a qualitative case study to investigate innovative approaches to cheating amongst tertiary students at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana. The study involved all Ghanaian undergraduate students from different programmes whereby a total of 22 key informants were sampled through a purposive sampling procedure. It used a semi structured interview guide for collecting information from key informants. The research findings unveiled that students' examination misconduct largely involved the use of foreign materials, body parts, and technologies coupled with sitting arrangements. Although Odongo et al. (2021) study informed the current study on the innovative methods of cheating among students in Ghanaian universities; it mainly focused on advanced methods that were used by students to cheat. This study filled the lacuna by focusing on both modern and traditional methods used by both students and staff to cheat during examination sessions in Tanzanian universities. It should be noted, however, that the use of a semi-structured interview guide only to collect the data limits triangulation of the information. Thus this study triangulated methods of

data collection: questionnaires, interview guide, and document analysis guide as well as observation guide (methodological triangulation) in order to collect credible data.

Furthermore, Situma and Wasike (2020) investigated types, causes and implications of examination malpractices in HLIs in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and the target population constituted staff and students in five public universities in Kenya. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 250 students and a purposive sampling technique was employed to sample 45 administrators, thus making a total of 195 respondents. Questionnaires and interview schedule were employed to obtain data that were analysed qualitatively and presented thematically. The findings revealed that examination leakage, unauthorized writings, copying, collusion, and impersonation were common forms of examination misconduct. In addition, the main causes of examination malpractices were inadequate preparation for examinations, lack of integrity, monetary gain, sexual favour, and the need for promotion. Additionally, the study revealed that examination misconduct contributed to generation of incompetent graduates.

Generally, Situma and Wasike (2020) provided relevant background information specifically on some forms of examination misconduct that were occurring in universities within Kenya. In this regard, there was need for similar studies to be conducted in universities in Tanzania to obtain deeper insights on prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzania and in East Africa at large. Other inherent methodological concerns in this study were a mismatch between a research design and a research approach as well as use of a simple random technique to select 250 students where no explanation was given whether the students' population was homogeneous or heterogeneous. Certainly, the foregoing affairs raise questions on the credibility of the findings. This study attempted to fill the identified gaps by using a convergent research design under mixed methods approach whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected in parallel and stratified random sampling was used to select students to enhance the credibility of the findings.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a convergent research design under mixed research approach. The benefit of using this approach is that the weakness of one approach was supplemented by the strength of another (Creswell & Creswell 2018). In this study, the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data in a single phase, analysed them separately and merged them to see if they confirmed or disconfirmed each other. Then, integration of information was done in the interpretation of the general results. The adoption of convergent research design helped the researcher to cross-validate qualitative and quantitative information and hence confirmed the research findings. Besides, convergent design allowed the researcher to collect data from a large sample that could be generalized to a wider population and from a natural setting. In addition, convergent design eased the researcher's time management as both forms of data were collected



in a single phase. The sample of this study consisted of 380 third year students, 70 lecturers from the faculties/schools of education selected through stratified random sampling procedure. The sample also contained five chief examination officers and five directors of quality assurance who were included in the study making a total of 460 respondents.

This study drew its sample from two public universities out of eight and three private universities out of 19 universities by using proportionate sampling procedure. Due to ethical issues, the names of the selected universities were kept anonymous. Therefore, they were given the letters A, B, C, D and E. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments which included questionnaires for students and lecturers, interview guide for Chief Examination Officers and Directors of Quality assurance, observation guide as well as document analysis were used. Validity of quantitative instruments was ensured by 04 research experts whereas validity of qualitative instruments was ensured through source triangulation. Reliability for quantitative instruments was ensured through pilot testing; whereby Likert scale items in a questionnaire were subjected to SPSS and Cronbach alpha coefficient for lecturers' instruments was 0.73 and the coefficient for students' instruments was 0.77. For qualitative instruments, reliability was confirmed through intercoder agreement. Quantitative data was analysed through descriptive statistics (Frequencies, means and percentages).

Qualitative data was analysed thematically using the seven steps as proposed by (Creswell & Creswell 2023). The researcher organized and prepared data for analysis, read all the data, coded the data, identified themes (categorized the codes into themes), developed a story line interpretation, further analysed the data using an analytical framework, presented and interpreted it. The analysis of data begun from the initial stages of data collection. While the interviews were going on, the researcher was transcribing the information collected from the earlier interviews, and analysing them, as notes which were eventually included in verbatim in the final report were being written. Meanwhile, organization of the structure of the study was taking shape. The transcriptions were read and re-read in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the issues arising. There after data was coded to produce transcription of themes in relation to their categories, which in turn assisted the researcher to present and interpret the data.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The research question sought to find out the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. The information to address the question was collected from students and lecturers through questionnaires, and from DQAs and CEOs via interviews. Document analysis was also used to collect information to answer the question. For questionnaires, the respondents were required to circle the most appropriate number against each item in Table 1 using the following scale 1=Never, 2 = Rarely, 3= Occasionally, 4= Often, 5= Very Often. According to

Warmbrod (2014), the mean scores could be summed up as follows: 1.0 – 2.4 = rarely, 2.5 – 3.4 = occasionally and 3.5 – 5.0 Often. Data are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Responses on the Prevalent Forms of Examination Misconduct in Tanzanian Universities (n=431)*

Forms of examination misconduct		X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	Grand mean
i.	Someone doing examination for another person	1.72	1.54	1.63
ii.	Copying from another person during examination with his/her knowledge	3.54	3.31	3.43
iii.	Copying from another person during examination without his/her knowledge	2.93	2.75	2.84
iv.	Use of handwritten crib notes/cheats during examination	2.70	2.59	2.65
v.	Planning to help each other to cheat during examination (collusion)	2.69	2.62	2.66
vi.	Examination leakage	2.49	1.76	2.13
vii.	Purchasing examination papers	1.82	1.57	1.70
viii.	Hiding materials in the washrooms during an examination session	2.87	3.29	3.08
ix.	Use of unauthorized electronic devices (including , written papers, mobile phone) during examination	2.81	3.47	3.14
x.	Answering the examination paper outside the examination room and sneaking answer booklets into the examination venues	1.59	1.37	1.48

**Source: Field data (2023)**

*Key: X<sub>1</sub>=mean for Students, X<sub>2</sub>=mean for Lecturers*

Data in Table 1 indicates that, students and lecturers showed mean scores of 2.81 and 3.47 respectively on the use of unauthorized materials in the examination venues. This indicates that, students acknowledged occasional use of unauthorized materials during examinations whereas lecturers admitted the frequent on the same. This implies that, some students enter the examination rooms with unauthorized materials. This means that, students are not well checked before entering the examination rooms, and therefore, they take chance to enter with and use such materials to cheat during examinations. This is supported by the theory of Planned Behaviours by Ajzen (1991) which holds that, an individual's behaviour is shaped by his/her intention and the perceived behavioural control. The theory establishes the linkages between students the level of

implementation of university management strategies and students' engagement in various forms of examination misconduct. The findings are in line with the study by Odongo et al. (2021) who established that, students' examination misconduct largely involved the use of foreign materials, writing on body parts and the use of technologies. In the context of Tanzania, this form of misconduct could be due to invigilators' time limit for checking of students' illegal materials before ushering them into the examination venues caused by large number of students in examination venues. This could also be attributed to invigilators' lack of commitment and seriousness in invigilation. Furthermore, during interviews with the Directors of Quality Assurance and Chief Examination Officers, they had the following views:

The Director of Quality Assurance from university D said:

Other candidates enter the examination rooms with unauthorised materials such as written materials, putting materials in the washrooms, some writing answers on the handkerchiefs, others writing on their body parts, scrubbing on tables or on classroom walls. Surely, students are very in using a variety of unpermitted materials during examination (*DQA D, personal communication, 16 November, 2022*).

Similarly, another Chief Examination Officer from university "A" commented: *Yeah! Here you find students entering the examination rooms with unauthorized materials, which include smart phones and smart watches. Other students enter with answers written on pieces of papers, some hide the learning notes in the toilets, or write on the desks (CEO A, personal communication, 5 November, 2022)*.

Furthermore, another Director of Quality Assurance from university C reported:

For me, what I can say is that, using unpermitted materials during examinations is common at our university. Students have been caught entering the examination venues with or using unauthorized materials from time to time. Students who were found with such materials have been discontinued from studies (*DQA C, Personal communication, 9 November, 2022*).

Moreover, the Chief Examination Officer from university "B" confirmed:

Some students enter the examination rooms with different materials, which are not allowed in order to assist them during examination sessions. Several students have been caught during examinations and some have been discontinued from studies. Although there are some improvements because of the measures undertaken but the behaviour is repeating as no semester passes without incidences of examination misconduct at this university! Surely, it is a problem. (*CEO B, personal communication, 11 November, 2022*).

The views from the participants implied that, the use of unauthorised materials during examinations is among the most prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian

universities. Moreover, the analysis of disciplinary-case documents unfolded different unauthorized materials, which included mobile phones, smart watches and written papers which were confiscated from students during examinations as evidence for academic dishonesty. This implies that, students in Tanzanian universities use both traditional and modern trickeries to cheat during examinations and this, in turn, demanded innovative strategies that can address the two types of trickeries in Tanzanian universities.

On the aspect of hiding materials in the washrooms, the mean scores were 2.87 and 3.29 for students and lecturers respectively. Thus, both students and lecturers confirmed occasional prevalence of forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. This implies that, some students seek for permission to go out for calls of nature with a different intention of copying from hidden materials in washrooms. This also implies that, earlier plans by either individuals or groups to contravene examination rules and regulations. The findings are in agreement with the study by Velliari (2017) which revealed that, students used both traditional and contemporary methods of cheating whereby traditional techniques included acts of recording answers on washroom stalls. Also, during interviews with CEOs and DQAs it was revealed that hiding materials in the washrooms was among the forms of examination misconduct experienced during examinations as one of the DQA from university A reported:

Students have many techniques of cheating. These include placing materials in toilets, writing on walls, writing on body parts etc. During examinations, some students pretend to go out for short calls while their intention is to look for answers from the materials hidden in toilets. Sometimes students go to the toilets to discuss answers with their colleagues (*DQA A, personal communication, 03 November, 2022*).

Furthermore, the CEO from university E revealed: *Another form of misconduct experienced, which is common at our university, is hiding examination related materials in the washrooms. Some students have been caught reading materials in the washrooms during examinations (CEO D, personal communication, 17 November, 2022)*. The CEO of university D had this to say:

There are some incidences whereby students put notes in the washroom for the intention of referring them during examinations. So you find these students asking for permission to go for short calls in order to get use of such materials. This is a challenge because sometimes it is not easy for invigilators to monitor students especially when they go to the toilet. It is also difficult to access valid evidence to report such cases of examination misconduct (*CEO D, personal communication, 19 October, 2022*).

The information obtained from DQAs and CEOs indicates that hiding materials in the washrooms was among the forms of examination misconduct experienced during examinations. The views from DQAs and CEOs were in line with responses given by students and lecturers which implies

that, hiding of materials in toilet rooms is one of the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. This means that, students hide examination materials in washrooms, then during examination sessions, after reading examination questions, they ask for permission to attend call of nature with the intention of consulting such materials in order to cheat during examinations. This could be attributed to invigilators' inadequate follow up as well as inadequate number of invigilators in examination venues especially those with a large number of students.

Similarly, students and lecturers identified copying from other people's work during examinations without their knowledge at the mean scores of 3.54 and 3.31 respectively. This means that this form of examination misconduct is habitual for students whereas for lecturers, it occurs occasionally. This implies that, despite the slight difference between the mean scores of students and lecturers, copying during examinations exist and it is a problem in Tanzanian universities. This is in line with a study by Landa-Blanco et al. (2020) which established that copying during examinations was and still the most prevalent form of academic misconduct in Universities. Furthermore, the findings supported by the study by Situma and Wasike (2020) which revealed that, examination copying was among common forms of examination misconduct in universities. Besides, the findings are in agreement with Sendur's (2022) study, which established that, among others, copying from someone's work during examinations was a predominant form of examination misconduct in universities. This implies that copying is among the forms of examination misconduct experienced not only in Tanzanian universities but also in other countries. This might be associated to lack of universities' regular review/ or formulation of academic integrity policy that would clearly specify and uphold universities' ethical principles and values. Moreover, during interviews with the directors of quality assurance and chief examination officers, copying was mentioned as one of the forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. The Director of quality assurance from university B reported:

One of the forms of examination misconduct experienced at this university is copying. Sometimes students copy from someone's work or from each other and sometimes it is done through exchanging of answer scripts or exchanging of question papers. The students write answers on the question papers by using the pencils, after copying those answers they rub them to hide the evidence (*DQA B, personal communication, 11 November, 2022*).

Also, the Chief Examination Officer from university B remarked:

There are many forms of examination misconduct at our university. Copying from someone's work during examination has been experienced from time to time. However, cases of such kinds especially copying from one another or exchanging of answer booklets are difficult in establishing evidence when reporting cases of examination misconduct (*CEO B, personal communication, 11 November, 2022*).

Another Chief Examination Officer of University D commented: *Yes, we have a problem of students copying in examinations. Now days we have multiple-choice questions, true and false, matching questions. These make students to cheat and it is very easy to copy from one another (CEO D, personal communication, 17 November, 2022).*

The views given by Chief Examination Officers and Directors of Quality Assurance indicate that, copying during examinations is a common form of cheating used by students in Tanzanian universities. This implies that, students' copying from each other and /or from someone's work during examinations is a common practice among students in universities due to the nature of examinations. Students tend to cheat especially in multiple-choice questions since they know that it is not easy for invigilators to produce valid and adequate evidences for such cheating incidences. The findings are in line with the responses given by students and lecturers that copying is used as a way of cheating during examinations. This implies that, copying was among the most common forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. This might be due to either student's lack of confidence or their poor preparation for examinations as well as lack of academic integrity among students. This in turn implies that distance from one candidate to another favoured copying from each other with or without neighbouring candidate's consent. Moreover, this could be attributed to inadequate invigilation.

Considering examination leakage as a form of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities, the students and lecturers had 2.49 and 1.76 mean scores respectively. With these data, students acknowledged that examination leakage occurred occasionally, whereas for lecturers, it occurred rarely. This implies that, despite the disparity in views between students and lecturers, examination leakage exist in universities. However, the difference in mean scores could be attributed to the fact that examination leakage is directly associated with lecturers, and therefore, they might feel offended to acknowledge its prevalence. Moreover, lecturers might be less informed than students about various forms of examination misconduct. Based on students' views, examination leakage was among the most popular forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. The findings are in line with the study by Bibi et al. (2020) which found out that, examination leakage was among the common forms of examination misconduct in universities. The researcher was also interested to check whether examination leakages exist across Tanzanian universities. Data are summarized in Table 2.

**Table: 2**

*Occurrence of Examination Leakages among Students in Tanzanian Universities (n=363)*

University	N		R		OC		OF		VO	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
A	23	31.1	27	36.5	6	8.1	17	23.0	1	1.4
B	22	31.0	23	32.4	8	11.3	16	22.5	2	2.8
C	15	20.8	21	29.2	9	12.5	16	22.2	11	15.3
D	21	27.6	17	22.4	8	10.5	26	34.2	4	5.3

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E	14	20.0	33	47.1	10	14.3	12	17.1	1	1.4
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**Source: Field data (2023)**

*Key=frequency, %=percentage, N=Never=Rarely, OC=occasionally, of=Often, VO=Very often*  
 Data in Table 2 indicates that, more than 30% of the respondents in each university reported the occurrence of examination leakage to be neither rarely nor never and in two of these universities C and D the percent was 50. This means that examination leakage across sample universities was a reality. This examination leakage implies that, there is inadequate management of examinations in Tanzanian universities before they are administered to students. In addition, during interviews with Chief Examination Officer from university D. The occurrence of examination leakage was confirmed by another participant:

Love affairs make students and staff engage in examination misconduct; especially affectionate relationship among male lecturers and female students. You find a lecturer who is in love with his student giving answers and or some questions to the girlfriend. There was a time when students in a certain class were heard talking among themselves “Hello, our brother in law has not yet provided possible areas for the examination” (*CEO D, personal communication, 17 November, 2022*). Furthermore, the DQA of university A reported:

Although examination leakage is not common at this university, there are rumours of unhealthy relationship between male lecturers and female students which lead to suspicion of examination leakages from such lecturers. Issues related to love affairs and examination leakages in universities are very complicated to establish evidence but it is a reality (*DQA A, personal communication, 03 November, 2022*).

The views from DQAs and CEOs indicate that, examination leakage is among the prevalent forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities although sometimes it is difficult to prove it. This implies that, examination leakage is the trickiest form of examination misconduct, which is not easy to be noticed but it exist. The findings concur with the responses obtained from students and lecturers that examination leakages rarely occurred in universities. This implies that, examination leakage is one the forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities, seem not to be common due to its nature of being done in secrete between the two parties but it is a reality.

Furthermore, as part of examination leakage, students and lecturers have identified purchasing of examinations at a mean score of 1.82 and 1.57 respectively. This means that both categories (students and Lecturers) acknowledged that purchasing of examinations was rarely occurring in Tanzanian universities. In addition, students and lecturers identified answering examination outside and sneaking the answer booklets in the examination room at a mean score of 1.59 and 1.32 respectively. Since purchasing of examinations and answering examination outside the

examination rooms are part of examination leakage, this indicates that, examination misconduct was rarely occurring in Tanzanian universities. Data obtained from DQAs and CEOs were in agreement with responses given by students. This indicated that, examination leakage was rarely occurring in universities. This implies that, although examination leakage was less common but it still exists in Tanzanian universities. The findings are associated with serious moral decay and lack of professionalism as they involved members of staff who were expected to play a significant role in ensuring academic integrity in Tanzanian universities. This might be attributed to lack of institutional priorities in the provision of regular seminars to both staff members and students aiming at strengthening of moral behaviour and code of professional conduct in order to address the problem.

On planning to help each other to cheat during examination (collusion), the mean scores were 2.69 and 2.62 for students and teachers respectively. Both students and lecturers indicate that, joint examination cheating occurred occasionally in Tanzanian universities. This implies that collusion is among the forms of examination misconduct experienced in Tanzanian universities. These findings corroborated with those by Quintos (2017) which pointed out that, collusion was the most prevalent form of academic dishonesty in universities. This implies that, inadequate arrangement of students in the examination venues influence students' earlier plans to collude during examinations. Collusion might be cultivated by dependency on others, lack of confidence for some students during examinations and poor preparations for examinations. During interviews with the Chief Examination Officers and Directors of Quality Assurance, this form of examination misconduct was found prevalent in Tanzanian universities as the Director of Quality Assurance of University D said:

There is a kind of network, now days we have a problem of big numbers of students. For example when you have a room of five hundred students, it is not easy for invigilators to detect what kind of network they have formed and shifting them becomes difficult. Sometimes they enter the examination venues early and they make sure they sit together and they put someone who is very intelligent at the strategic angle and they know the way they share the answers. This technique is mostly known as "Formation" (*DQA D, Personal communication, 16 November, 2022*).

Another Chief Examination Officer "C" had this to say:

Collusion is another form of examination misconduct used by students to cheat during examinations. This form of misconduct is common, not only at this university but also in other universities. Students in each university have their pseudo names, here they call it "Kijiji" and some call it 'Kamati'. (*CEO C, personal communication, 9 November, 2022*).

Furthermore, the Chief Examination Officer from university "B" commented:

Yes! Some students have a tendency of sitting in pairs or in groups with the intention of helping each other during examinations. It is a challenge for invigilators to identify them as they enter into



the examination venues especially in rooms with many students and few invigilators (*CEO B, personal communication, 11 November, 2022*).

The information obtained from Directors of Quality Assurance and Chief Examination Officers suggests that collusion is a common form of examination misconduct experienced in Tanzanian universities. This means that, students are not well monitored as they enter the examination rooms because of their large numbers and time limit for ushering them into the examination venues. It further implied that collusion is taken by students as an ordinary practice since several students can be involved in the plan and none of them is ready to report the incidence. This is further supported by the Social Learning theory developed by Bandura (1997) which hold that each act of behaviour is learned from the social environment. Individuals learn from imitating, observing and modelling other people who engage in similar acts. This means that students' dishonest behaviour is a socially constructed issue, which is developed through practices of a certain institutional culture. This might be associated with moral decay and lack of passion in their careers. This might have been caused by lack of preparation for career choices at lower levels of education.

Furthermore, apart from Likert scale items the respondents were asked an open- ended question to mention other forms of examination misconduct. The forms of examination misconduct mentioned included; forging of examination cards as one of the forms of examination misconduct experienced during examination sessions. This implies that, forging of examination cards is a form of examination misconduct, which might be attributed to poverty, because some students are not able to pay the required tuition fees that allowed them to obtain examination cards so that they could sit for the examinations. This pressure influence students' engagement in forging of the examination cards. This could further implies that, there are students in Tanzanian universities who come from poor families and therefore, unable to pay their tuition fees. It is a challenge to the government to identify such students and support them with the loan so that they may settle and concentrate on their studies. On the other hand, it could be due to students' immoral behaviours. Some students misuse the money given by their parents for tuition fees for other business.

Moreover, the respondents mentioned other forms of examination misconduct to include: use of programmable scientific calculators, writing on their body parts, scribing notes on the walls and on the desks, as well as using the headphones especially female students whose dresses cover their ears (all these can be generalized as use of unauthorized materials). This implies that, use of unauthorized materials as a form of examination misconduct involves a variety of materials, which are both traditional such as written papers, writing on body parts, writing on desks and walls and contemporary such as use of scientific calculators, cellular phones, smart watches and spay camera. The findings are in line with the study by Sendur (2022) which revealed that, cheating in examinations among university students in France, Spain, Ukraine, Germany, Italy and USA included; use of crib notes and use of electronic devices. These forms of examination misconduct identified in other parts of the world were found to be a reality in Tanzanian universities as well.

This implies that, Tanzanian universities are not exceptional to this challenge in the academic arena. This could be attributed to invigilators' inadequate keenness in checking of students' possession of illegal materials before ushering them into the examination venues. The findings are in agreement with the theory of Planned Behaviours by Ajzen (1991) which proposed that an individual's behaviour is shaped by his/her intention and the perceived behavioural control. Therefore, the findings provide a basis for Tanzanian universities to address the challenge in a Tanzanian context.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concludes that, there are various forms of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities, the most common being the use of unauthorized materials, copying, collusion and the least common including examination leakage and impersonation. Since examinations are used as assessment tools for evaluating candidates' knowledge, skills, values and competencies, the existence of various forms of examination misconduct compromise the validity of the examination results as well as the quality of graduates from Tanzanian higher learning institutions. It also endangers the credibility and relevance of education provided in high learning institutions in Tanzania.

## Recommendations

Based on conclusion, the study recommends that, universities in Tanzania should provide moral education to students to sensitize them about the negative impact of embracing academic misconduct towards their career development in relation to the aspirations of the society and the demands of the labour market and global competitiveness. Besides, universities in Tanzania in collaboration with TCU should create a forum to discuss the issue of examination misconduct in Tanzanian universities. This would help to come up with collective and innovative strategies such as use technologies to address the issue of examination misconduct and create awareness on the gravity of the problem of examination misconduct. Furthermore, the researcher recommends for further studies to be conducted on contract cheating among postgraduate students in order to obtain deeper understanding on the issue of academic misconduct in Tanzanian universities.

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