## Assessment of Sex and Age in Copying as Academic Dishonest Behaviour among Postgraduate Students of Federal Universities in South-South Zone of Nigeria

[1]**Julius Michael Egbai, Ph.D**
*juliegbai@gmail.com*

[1] **Caroline I. Ita**
*Carolineita33@gmail.com*
[1]*Department of Educational Foundations*
*Faculty of Education*
*University of Calabar, Calabar*

### Abstract

*The study investigated influence of sex and age in copying as academic dishonest behaviour among post graduate students of federal universities of South-South, Nigeria. The study which adopted survey design, used multi-stage stratified random sampling technique to select 440 males and 490 females from 3 universities and 3 faculties of the same universities in South-South, Nigeria. "Academic Dishonest Behaviour Questionnaire" (ADBQ) with Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83 was used for data collection. The gathered data was analysed using frequencies, percentages, factor analysis and multiple classification analysis. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated for the study. The findings indicated that the students used for this study were involved in copying as an aspect of academic dishonest behaviours; there is no significant influence of sex on copying while there is significant influence of age on copying among students. Similarly, female students are more involved in copying than their male counterparts, and those within 20-24years are more involved in copying. It is therefore recommended, among others, that there should be synergy among stakeholders in the educational process to fight the incidence of copying as an academic dishonest behaviour.*

**Keywords:** Sex, Age, copying, academic, dishonest, behaviour, Postgraduate

### Introduction

Academic dishonesty is a criminal offence. Despite this legal fact, available research evidence indicates that offenders abound in the nation's educational institutions at all levels, neither apprehended by the law enforcement agencies nor prosecuted in the court of law. In most cases, educational institutions have devised extra-judicial means of punishing offenders without recourse to the law. This, however, has not acted as a strong deterrence, and so the tendency for increased incidence of academic cheating at all levels of the school system.

In Nigeria, emphasis has been on academic dishonesty that takes place during examinations, while dishonesty in other important assessment activities outside examinations is ignored. This is in spite of the fact that all forms of assessment before, during and after examination (formative and summative) have far reaching implications on decisions made about the student's learning and progress and the performance of the entire school system. For instance, if such decisions are based on invalid and unreliable data, such decisions will therefore be very misleading. Academic dishonesty negatively impacts on validity and reliability of assessment results, and thus poses a serious threat to the school system. There is therefore the need to eradicate this menace or possibly reduce it to the barest level. One of the ways this can be achieved is by empirically documenting the various forms that these behaviours occur, so that specific strategies could be devised to address the challenge.

Singg, Thomas and Null (2005) examined the relationship between students' academic dishonesty and their personal responsibility in a regional south-western university in the United States of America (USA). Survey design was adopted for the study. Purposive sampling was employed to select the study's respondents. Four different types of questionnaires were used for collection of data which was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique. Part of the investigation included an inquiry into the relationship between cheating in examinations and personal responsibility in terms of gender honesty/dishonesty. The finding of the study showed that among the group identified as honest, a large portion were women while amongst the dishonest group, men slightly outnumbered women. The investigators thus noted on the basis of their data that women display a greater sense of responsibility than men on matters of academic dishonesty. Thus the study demonstrated that women display greater academic honest tendencies than men across several disciplines of the university.

As a derivative of a study designed to ascertain factors which influence the prevalence of students' academic dishonesty among dental hygiene students in Texas Dental Hygiene Schools, Muhney, Gutmann, Schneiderman, DeWald, McCann and Campbell (2008) also sought to inquire the age factor by adopting a survey research design. Respondents were randomly selected and a questionnaire was used to collect the data. In their own investigation, the researchers categorised the students into the following age grade groups: 18-21 years, 22-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years and greater than 35 years. Frequency counts, Chi-Square statistics and Fisher's exact test were the statistical tools employed. Their investigation showed that the level of prevalence of academic dishonesty in order of decreasing magnitude among the age groups was as follows: 22-25 > 26-30 > 18-21 > 31-35 > 35 and above. The researchers reported that age as a variable, was not a statistically significant predictor of prevalence of academic cheating among the students based on their collapsing of the age factor into two distinct groups (those below 30 and those above 30). However, the researchers noted that their finding was consistent with many others. Notwithstanding, their finding is in line with the

finding of Rabi, Patton, Fjortoft and Zgarrick (2006) on the age group that indulges more in academic cheating. The report showed that age is not a statistical predictor of academic dishonesty among students.

By adopting a survey research design in an investigation designed to ascertain the relationship between pharmacy students' dispositional traits and their attitude towards academic cheating in a South-western university in the USA, Saulsbury, Brown, Heyliger and Beale (2011) also found out that age as a variable had no effect on the attitude of students toward academic dishonest behaviours.

In terms of being an issue, academic dishonesty has been on the increase, most especially in this era in which society places great emphasis on certificates/degree as a prime requirement for employment and the associated financial security. It is based on this that students are concerned about the quality of grades they receive in schools (Wilkinson, 2009) and why they may take extra steps, including unauthorised means to meet their expectations.

In a similar study conducted by Egbai and Ita (2019), the study examined academic anxiety, locus of control and cheating tendencies among undergraduate students in Universities in Cross River State. Two hypotheses were formulated to be tested. The study adopted an ex-post facto research design with a stratified and purposive sampling technique to select a total of 1000 students from the two universities that were selected for the study. A questionnaire titled "Psychological Variables and Cheating Tendencies Scale (PVCTS)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated, and Cronbach alpha reliability technique was used for estimating the degree of consistency of the sub scale and the coefficient of 0.74 to 0.86 was obtained. Data were collected by the researchers and analysed using simple regression statistics; the result showed that there is a significant influence of academic anxiety and locus of control on cheating tendencies among students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that students should be encouraged to develop a positive self-image that would help them avoid cheating in the examination hall. That student should learn to always realise where they have not worked well and improve on it rather than blame people for cheating in the examination hall.

Similarly Craig and Dalton (2013) carried a study on understanding first year undergraduate student perceptions of copying and plagiarism, with a view to developing a platform for a culture of honest inquiry and the academic construction of knowledge. According to them, academic integrity is a concern in tertiary institutes globally with some perceiving it as endemic. Findings show that at the start of the undergraduate programme, three quarters to four fifths of the students viewed copying as serious or very serious. However, after only one semester this percentage had dropped considerably for some areas. Frequency of cheating also varied from the first to the

second semester. Such data has resulted in considerations of what kind of changes might be required in order to minimize the perceived "need" to copy or plagiarize, and generate institutional discussion on the issues. The paper highlights proposals for structural and content changes to curriculum focus, delivery, and the learning environment, based on current good practice in these contexts within the institute, in particular, concepts and practices of student ownership and buy in which they believe removes a significant part of the "need" for copying and plagiarism.

Focusing on unethical behaviour and academic integrity of students in the Czech Republic's University of Life Science, and by adopting a survey research design, Domeova and Jindrova (2013) sought to ascertain the influence of gender on the students' ethical judgement relating to academic integrity. Purposive sampling technique was employed by the researchers. The respondents were students of Business Administration and Economics Management. A questionnaire was used to collect data which was analysed using Cramer's contingency coefficient. The findings showed that gender had a significant influence on the students' ethical judgement relating to academic integrity. Female students were shown to be more inclined towards ethical rules relating to academic integrity. The researchers thus concluded that female students are generally more ethically conservative toward academic integrity than male students. The finding is supportive of other studies depicting proclivity and inclination of female students towards academic integrity behaviours as compared to their male peers.

In another study that sought to identify socio-demographic and situational conditions which influence two Midwestern United States University nursing students' engagement in academic dishonesty, Krueger (2014) focused on determining if a correlation existed between gender and attitude towards frequency of engagement in dishonest practices in classroom and clinical settings. He adopted a survey research design. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select the study's respondents. The study's respondents included nursing students from only two associate degree nursing programmes. Data were collected using a questionnaire while frequency counts, percentage scores and Pearson Moment correlations were employed to analyze the collated data. The study's finding revealed that there exists a positive correlation between gender and the students' attitude towards frequency of engagement in acts of academic dishonesty. Female respondents indicated a higher level of attitude and frequency of engaging in acts of academic dishonesty than the male respondents. The result also revealed that male students were more academically ethical than their female counterparts. Given that the subjects for the study were drawn from two associate nursing degree programmes, it would be appropriate that the study be subjected to further investigation.

A study conducted by Bretag and Borg (2013) asserted that academic dishonesty has been a matter of great concern in higher education in the last few decades. The dishonest behaviour of students at graduate and undergraduate levels has become a severe issue

for education and business sector, especially when the students exercise same dishonest practices at their jobs. According to them, the number of private and public sector universities is increasing; therefore, the effects of academic dishonest behaviour on potential professionals need to be carefully investigated and appropriate policies must be formulated by academics in order to resolve this issue. Therefore their study intended to present research to address this matter by investigating into the relationship of student's demographics such as age, gender, academic programme, business/non-business major and CGPA with academic dishonesty. The results have reported that male students of less age studying at the undergraduate level have their own code of conduct and they are less concerned about academic ethics. The study found students' demographics to have a significant impact on their attitudes towards academic dishonesty. The results provide a strong implication for academics to develop the moralities and ethics in students so that institutions may provide ethically cultivated professionals to the business community.

In a study carried out to evaluate the demographics of undergraduate and postgraduate industrial psychology students in a South African university in order to determine factors which influence the prevalence of academic dishonest behaviours amongst them, Patricio (2014) found no significant difference between the two age groups of $\leq 21$ years and $\geq 22$ years. This suggests that academic dishonest behaviours were essentially similar for the two age groups. It would therefore follow that results of studies that have reviewed relationship between age and engagement in academic dishonest behaviour are somewhat mixed. The actual direction of this relationship, especially in a place like Nigeria, may at best be conjectured; thus the need to embark on this study.

**Statement of the problem**
The increasing tendency for copying as academic dishonest behaviour among students at all levels of the educational system has been a serious threat to the Nigerian School System. This menace has great consequences on assessment validity, and decisions which depend on such falsified data. However, copying does not happen in a vacuum, but rather result from the interaction of many variables and factors. A lasting solution to this problem can only be meaningfully addressed when the root causes are identified and explained.

Previous attempts at addressing these challenges have directed researches more on common academic dishonest behaviours like copying from another student in examination with or without consent. Also influence of moral development, and home environmental variables on academic dishonesty, with a total neglect of influence of Sex and Age in copying that manifest before or outside the examination like: allowing own course work to be copied and copying materials for course work from a book without acknowledging the source. Moreover, researches that focused on how post graduate students' and how sex and age influence various copying as academic dishonest behaviours are rare. It is on this basis that the present study was conceived to address the

problem of influence of Sex and Age in copying as academic dishonest behaviours in federal universities of the South-South zone of Nigeria.

**Research questions**
  1. What are the rampant academic dishonest behaviours among post graduate students of Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?
  2. What are the underlying factors associated with academic dishonest behaviours among post graduate students of federal universities in South-South Nigeria?

**Hypothesis**
**Ho1:** There is no significant influence of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviours.

**Methodology**
The research area is the South-South zone. It is one of the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. The South–South zone lies approximately between latitudes 40201 and 50551 North of the equator and between longitude 50 251 and 90 001 East of the Greenwich Meridian. It comprises Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers State. The zone is made up of a population of 27,783,551 from the 2006 National Population Census figure. There are about 2500 communities speaking different languages and of different ethnic groups spread across the zone (NDRDMP, 2006). It is bordered in the north by the South-East and North Central geo political Zones, in the south by the Atlantic Ocean, in the east by the Republic of Cameroun and in the West by the South–West geo-political zone.

The area is rich in natural resources such as petroleum and gas which accounts for about 90% of the country's earnings from oil and gas. The climatic condition is distinctly marked and influenced by two major seasons; rainy and dry seasons. The vegetation of the zone falls within the tropical rain forest with some areas occupying the tropical mangrove forest enclaves in the Atlantic Ocean (NDRDMP, 2006). The region is endowed with resources like geothermal energy, solar energy and wind energy, thus making its economy essentially natural resources based. Fishing, cropping, timber exploitation and related secondary economic activities constitute the main stay of livelihood for at least 42% of the inhabitants of the zone. According to Amayie (2003), the land is fertile all year round hence it supports agricultural production that helps to boost the economy of the zone. Despite the rich resources, the area is marked with lots of problems which include ecological degradation, pollution and devastation by acid rain which results from oil exploitation and gas flaring on a daily basis. Majority of the youths are unemployed and seem to have lost hope, faith and dignity in life. About 40% of the population are illiterate and with the high rate of poverty, there is bound to be youth restiveness (Inyang, 2007; Eteng, 2014).

Educationally, South-South zone has many primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Among the tertiary institutions are the federal universities under study. The restiveness of the zone due to militancy has impacted on the educational institutions. This, in turn has made the zone and the various institutions within it vulnerable to a lot of vices including academic dishonest behaviours, which is not favourable for the achievement of educational goals.

The population is estimated at one thousand eight hundred and sixty (1860) post graduate students of federal Universities in the South-South zone of Nigeria. The universities are those of Benin, Calabar, Otuoke, Port-Harcourt, Uyo and Warri. Data relating to population of students in the universities used for this study were obtained from their various graduate schools. A multi-stage cum stratified random sampling approach was used for this study. The universities were stratified along states. The first stage involved simple random sampling to select three states from the six states of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers. The selected states were Edo state, Cross River state and Rivers state. The three federal universities from these states were those used for the study. The universities selected were Universities of Benin, Calabar and Port Harcourt. The second stage involved simple random sampling to select three Faculties in one of the participating Universities whose outcome was replicated to other participating universities in the study. The Faculties of Education, Social Sciences and Art/Humanities selected are those that were used for this study. Simple random sampling approach was further adopted to select the respondents.

For each of the participating faculties, 50 percent of the students were selected through simple random sampling approach. The researchers collected the names of post graduates students and their addresses from their respective Heads of Departments. For students who lived off campus, the researchers enveloped the instrument and dispatched through a staff in the Head of Department's office to them with the Head of Department's office as the returning address. For those students living on campus, the researchers visited the hostels and administered the questionnaire. Lecture halls as well as defence venues were also visited to administer the instrument to the respondents.

The sample for this study consisted of nine hundred and thirty (930) post graduate students of three federal universities in South-South zone of Nigeria. The sample is made up of 440 males and 490 females while age categories included 20-24=69; 25-29=215; 30-34=232; 35-39=241 and 40 and above = 173.

Academic Dishonest Behaviour Questionnaire (ADBQ) was used to measure the frequency of occurrence of each type of dishonest behaviour identified among students. It has two major sections. Section A focuses on students' characteristics: university, faculty, programme of study, sex and age. Section B is made of the academic dishonest behaviours which include, among others, doing another student's course work for

him/her. The sub scales were designed on a five point rating scale in which subjects indicated their responses such as Never, Once, 2times, 3times and more than 3times.

In order to estimate the validity of the instruments, the draft version of the questionnaire was given to five research experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation and educational counsellors to give it face validity. In order to estimate reliability of the instruments, the draft version of the questionnaire was trial-tested on 68 post graduate students in three faculties from the Cross River University of Technology, Calabar who were not part of the final study sample. Cronbach coefficient alpha of 0.83 was obtained as estimate of internal consistency reliability for the instrument of "Academic Dishonest Behaviour Questionnaire" (ADBQ).

The final version of the questionnaire was administered by the researchers after due permission had been obtained from the Dean of the various graduate schools to respondents in the respective Universities. Lecturers in the universities cooperatively worked with the researchers to ensure maximum cooperation of respondents in their respective lecture halls. The researchers sent questionnaires to students who lived off campus by hand delivery; they also visited the respondents in the hostels and other areas on campus where activities were being carried out like defence venues.

A scoring key was developed for every variable in the questionnaire and coded. Information on personal data was coded as follows: Sex: Male = 1, Female = 2; Age group: 20-24 = 1, 25-29 = 2, 30-34 = 3, 35-39 = 4, 40 and above = 5. The responses on the instruments were manually scored. This provided the initial raw data for the study. Each response on the Academic Dishonest Behaviour Questionnaire (ADBQ) was measured on a weighted value of five through one (Never = 1; Once = 2; 2times = 3; 3times = 4; More than 3times = 5). Frequency count and percentage of rampant academic dishonest behaviour were calculated. Factor analysis was used to provide data on the underlying factors associated with sex and age as influencing academic dishonest behaviours. In addition, multiple classification analysis was used to find out the relationship of the independent variables, sex and age, on the factor of academic dishonest behaviour.

**Presentation of results**

**Research question 1:** What are the rampant academic dishonest behaviours among post graduate students of Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?

To provide answer to this research question, mean and standard deviation were used to summarise the data. The result is presented on table 1. The result on table 1 presents the general pattern of academic dishonest behaviours.

**Table 1:** Mean and standard deviation of the underlying factors

| Factors | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| Impersonation | 34.72 | 14.38 |
| Plagiarism | 30.45 | 10.26 |
| Unruly Behaviour | 21.40 | 8.83 |
| Concoction | 13.16 | 5.17 |
| Copying | 14.97 | 4.48 |
| Colluding | 15.05 | 4.94 |

The result on table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation of academic dishonest behaviours. Copying was part of the academic dishonest behaviours with mean of 14.97 and standard deviation of 4.94. The behaviours includes doing coursework for another student, medically lying to secure extension of deadline, taking illicit materials into the exam, collusion with another student to communicate answers, inducement of examiners such as begging and appealing for marks. Others are pressing lecturers for areas of concentration, pre-meditated collusion between two or more students, pre-arranging to sit together to collude, exchanging question papers on which notes have been made, telling colleagues answers to question verbally.

**Research question 2:** What are the underlying factors associated with academic dishonest behaviours among post graduate students of federal universities in South-South Nigeria?

Copying accounted for 3.839% of the total variance of the 61 variables in the analysis. Six items of 48, 50, 57, 58, 59 and 60 loaded significantly without incidence of double loading. The items on this variable accounted mostly on copying so the factor was named "copying".

**Table 2:** Rotated factor matrix for the dimension of academic dishonest behaviour Copying

| Items | F | Items | F | Items | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| item1 | -.037 | item21 | .052 | item41 | .035 |
| item2 | .121 | item22 | .289 | item42 | .177 |
| item3 | .017 | item23 | .257 | item43 | .160 |
| item4 | -.019 | item24 | .236 | item44 | .159 |
| item5 | .065 | item25 | -.008 | item45 | .033 |
| item6 | .177 | item26 | -.167 | item46 | .250 |
| item7 | .045 | item27 | -.063 | item47 | .316 |
| item8 | .064 | item28 | -.036 | item48 | **.434** |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| item9 | .244 | item29 | -.042 | item49 | .366 |
| item10 | .148 | item30 | -.187 | item50 | **.450** |
| item11 | .124 | item31 | .291 | item51 | .347 |
| item12 | .259 | item32 | .136 | item52 | .121 |
| item13 | .272 | item33 | .359 | item53 | .152 |
| item14 | -.002 | item34 | .307 | item54 | .122 |
| item15 | -.045 | item35 | .228 | item55 | .050 |
| item16 | -.022 | item36 | .280 | item56 | .092 |
| item17 | .116 | item37 | .152 | item57 | **.585** |
| item18 | .128 | item38 | -.018 | item58 | **.725** |
| item19 | .092 | item39 | .037 | item59 | **692** |
| item20 | .281 | item40 | .124 | item60 | **.681** |
| | | | | item61 | .227 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Eigen value | | 2.342 |
| Percentage | | 3.839 |
| variance | | 48.551 |
| Cumulative% | | |

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant influence of gender and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviour among post graduate students of federal universities of South-South, Nigeria.

To test this hypothesis, the result is presented in table 3. Table 3 shows that there is no significant influence of sex on copying while there is significant influence of age as academic dishonest behaviour among post graduate students in federal universities in South-South, Nigeria ($F_1, F_4, 928 = 2.596, 2.508$; $p > 0.05$, $p < 0.05$ respectively).

**Table 3:** Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on academic dishonest behaviour of copying in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria

| Source of variance | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F-ratio | P-level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Combined effect | 333.921 | 5 | 66.784 | 2.525 | .028 |
| Sex | 66.654 | 1 | 68.654 | 2.596 | .107 |
| Age | 265.268 | 4 | 66.317 | 2.508 | .041 |
| Model | 508.025 | 9 | 56.447 | 2.135 | .024 |
| Residual | 24302.397 | 919 | 26.444 | | |
| Total | 24810.422 | 928 | 26.735 | | |

Multiple classification analysis (MCA) on academic dishonest behaviour of copying in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria, according to the independent variables, was further used to explain the effect, as indicated on table 4.

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**Table 4**: Multiple classification analysis (MCA) on academic dishonest behaviour of copying in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria

| Variables | Group/levels | No. | Unadjusted mean | Adjusted mean | Eta | Beta |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sex | Male | 440 | 12.8727 | 12.8739 | | |
| | Female | 489 | 13.4172 | 13.4161 | .053 | .052 |
| Age | 20-24years | 69 | 14.0435 | 14.1481 | | |
| | 25-29years | 215 | 13.6698 | 13.6475 | | |
| | 30-34years | 231 | 13.3117 | 13.2943 | | |
| | 35-39years | 241 | 12.9544 | 12.9338 | | |
| | 40years and above | 173 | 12.2543 | 12.2921 | .104 | .103 |

Table 4 indicates that the adjusted mean scores for the male and female students are 12.8739 and 13.4161 respectively, suggesting that female students are more involved in copying than their male counterparts in academic dishonest behaviours among post graduate students in the federal universities of South-South, Nigeria. Similarly, the adjusted mean scores for the ages stand as 14.1481, 13.6427, 13.2943, 12.9338 and 12.2921 respectively. These results show that those within ages 20-24years, 25-29years, 30-34years, 35-39years and 40years and above are involved in copying as academic dishonest behaviour in that order of magnitude. The result also shows that a beta value of .052 for the influence of sex and .103 for the influence of age was obtained. This implies that only 5.2 percent of variance of scores for sex and 10.3 percent of variance of scores for age are involved on copying as academic dishonest behaviours in the federal universities of South- South, Nigeria

**Discussion of the findings**
The findings on the influence of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviour among post graduate students of federal universities of South-South, Nigeria show that there is no significant influence of sex on copying while there is significant influence of age as academic dishonest behaviour. The result indicates that the adjusted mean scores for the male and female students suggested that female students are more involved in copying than their male counterparts in academic dishonest behaviours. The result is in disagreement with the work of Singg et al (2005) whose investigation saw men as more dishonest than women. However, the study of Krueger (2014) agrees with this finding that there exist a positive correlation between gender and the students' attitude towards frequency of engagement in acts of academic dishonesty. He further proved that female respondents indicated a higher level of attitude and frequency of engaging in acts of academic dishonesty than the male respondents. The result also revealed that male students were more academically ethical than their female counterparts. Domeova and Jindrova (2013), Muhney et al. (2008), and Patricio (2014) saw gender as not significant in academic dishonest behaviour. This is in agreement with this finding. Craig and Dalton's (2013) findings show that at the start of the undergraduate programme, three quarters to four fifths of the students viewed copying as serious or very serious.

However, the result is not in agreement to the work of Patricio (2014) who said that there exists significant difference in gender in their academic dishonest behaviour. Similarly, the adjusted mean scores for the ages show that those within ages 20-24years, 25-29years, 30-34years, 35-39years and 40years and above are involved in copying in academic dishonest behaviour in that order of magnitude. On the aspect of age, Patricio saw no significance. This is in contrast to the findings of Saulsbury, Brown, Heylinger and Beale (2011) but in agreement with Krueger (2014) who admitted that age is significant as a factor to academic dishonest behaviour and that younger ages are more incline to dishonest behaviours. The significance of age on copying is not surprising, though it is expected that one who is in post graduate studies should see him/herself as mature and behave as such.

**Conclusion**

The findings on academic dishonest behaviour among post graduate students of federal universities in South-South, Nigeria, show that there exist some levels of influence of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviours in the area of study. The association by way of significance of the students' characteristics like sex and age to the different underlying factors mentioned above are clear signs that the students, lecturers, parents, training institutions as well as the government need to rise up to the challenge staring them on the face and bring these menace to an end. These will help to restore the lost glory of Nigerian universities and place them among the topmost universities of the world.

**Recommendations**

In light of this study, the following recommendations will be useful in curbing the influence of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviours among post graduate students of federal universities of South-South, Nigeria on one hand and indeed, the National and Global Educational System by extension.

1. Since it has been seen that the influence of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviours exists, the university authorities should produce code of conduct for the students. If they already had, then its implementation should commence and drastic sanctions meted on defaulters.

2. With the identifiable underlying factors of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviours, universities should no longer treat with kid gloves issues and incidences of academic dishonest behaviour in tertiary institutions. Sanctions or penalties should appropriately be meted to defaulters to discourage them from further engagement and to serve as deterrent to others.

3. There should be synergy among stakeholders in the educational process to fight this ugly problem of copying, starting from the point of admission by universities; the students should be made to know the consequences of getting involved in it.

4. Universities should create clear and firm academic regulations in anticipation of the influence of sex and age on copying as academic dishonest behaviours. The regulations under consideration should include procedure for examinations, use of software like turnitin, hidden cameras in examination halls etc to detect offenders.

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