

// A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFICACY OF
UNIVERSITY ENTRY EXAMINATIONS IN KENYA: THE LIVED
EXPERIENCES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS //

BY

ATIENO KILI K'ODHIAMBO

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
KIKUYU LIBRARY
P.O. Box 92 - 00902,
KIKUYU

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

University of NAIROBI Library

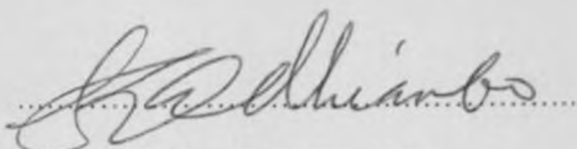


0436152 3

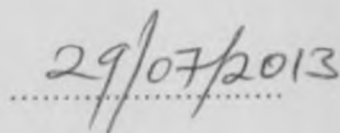
2013

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.



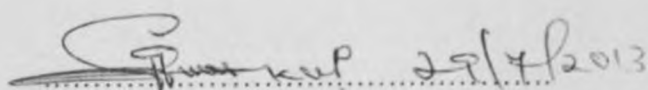
ATIENO KILI K'ODHIAMBO



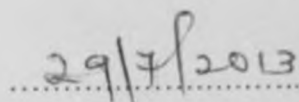
Date

REG. NO. E80/84081/2012

This thesis has been submitted with our approval as University Supervisors.

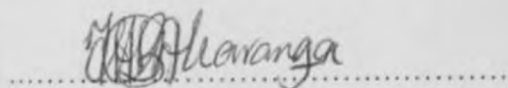


PROF. SAMSON OKURO GUNGA

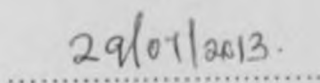


Date

Associate Professor of Philosophy of Education
and Dean, School of Education, University of Nairobi



DR STEPHEN IFEDHA AKARANGA



Date

Senior Lecturer and Chair,
Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies,
University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

To Phenomenologists

“Phenomenology is the science of all sciences”- Edmund Husserl (1891-1938)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacy of university entry examinations in Kenya in the light of the lived experiences of prospective teachers. The study examined the lived experiences of prospective teachers on university entry examinations. A phenomenological hermeneutic method was used to investigate the efficacy of university entry examinations whereby the prospective teachers described their lived experiences in relation to Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations, referred to as the university entry examinations. The lived experiences were subjected to hermeneutic interpretations. Forty eight first year Bachelor of Education students in six Kenyan public universities were involved. The students, referred to as co-researchers, were provided with semi-open-ended questionnaire that they filled by describing their lived experiences of university entry examinations (KCSE). Several sessions were held with the co-researchers to ascertain the authenticity of their description of the lived experiences. It was found that the lived experiences of prospective teachers which form the subjective knowledge is not captured by university entry examinations. The examinations are neither designed to select prospective teachers nor other professionals but only show academic accomplishment at the Form Four level. This does not augur well for the teaching profession because those selected to train as teachers may end up being *teachers-of-the profession* but not *teachers-in-the-profession*. While the latter would demonstrate professional passion and call for duty, the former would simply apply occupational commitment. It was suggested that examinations should be phenomenological whereby both subjective and objective knowledge of the learner are assessed. The subjective knowledge should show an individual learner's own assessment of their knowledge, whereas the objective knowledge should show a learner's ability as per the requirements of a wider society and the school leaving certificate is to have both information. It was proposed that prospective teachers joining universities are to be selected by faculties/schools of education of respective universities. This should be done after completion of secondary education for which the certificate has to stipulate an individual learner's career prognosis, which is teaching.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Individuals, groups and institutions contributed to make this thesis what it is, although mistakes and shortcomings, if any, are solely mine. I appreciate the continuous guidance and support offered by my supervisors. Professor Samson Okuro Gunga guided me from the time I identified the right topic up to its completion. His comments were inspiring and challenging from the beginning to the end. He was thorough and prompt in correcting the work and this enabled me to complete the study in time. The other supervisor, Dr Stephen Ifedha Akaranga, motivated me to be focused and precise on whatever I wrote. I thank him for the excellent rapport that not only made me think deeply but enabled me source for information with relative ease. Before Dr Akaranga came in as my second supervisor, Dr Sammy Kipkemboi Rutto shaped the proposal and enabled me to focus on education. He also provided me with books dealing with phenomenology.

I thank the University of Nairobi for employing me and waiving the fees for my PhD study. This enabled me to carry out my research well with relative peace of mind. I was also enabled to travel to Kenyan public universities through the University of Nairobi Deans Committee Research Grant in the Academic Year 2011/2012, as I administered the questionnaire. For this reason, I jointly own this work with the Deans Committee Research Grant of the University of Nairobi. The encouragement I got from the Department of Educational Foundations and the School of Education as a whole inspired and propelled me to move on, up to the completion of the study. On behalf of the Department of Educational Foundations, I thank the former Chairperson, Professor Samson O. Gunga and on behalf of the

School of Education, I thank the former Dean, Professor Genevieve Wanjala. Both the Department and the School gave constructive criticisms and encouragement from the initial defence of the proposal to the completion of the study.

I also had correspondence with people outside Kenya whose advice and support contributed immensely in writing this thesis. For this reason, I thank Professor Shuying Li who provided me with his thesis on phenomenology of examinations that formed an invaluable resource for this thesis. Besides that, he further explained to me and provided a lot of insight as to why examination is regarded as the fifth invention of China. I also cherish the email communication I had with Professor Max van Manen the founder of educational phenomenology who not only directed me on where and how to get more literature on phenomenology but also advised me to consult Professor Li whose PhD he had supervised. Professor Anders Lindseth sent me a paper co-authored with Professor Astrid Norberg that candidly explained how to search lived experiences using phenomenological hermeneutic method.

I am grateful to the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) for allowing me to use their library where I found relevant literature on examinations thus enabling me to focus on the study.

I extend my thanks to all the Kenyan public universities that offer the Bachelor of Education as one of their degree programmes; namely, Egerton, Kenyatta, Maseno, Masinde Muliro, Moi and the University of Nairobi for facilitating this study and allowing me to do research in their institutions.

I thank the students (co-researchers) who the prospective teachers, from the six public universities mentioned above who participated in the study, although their actual names are not mentioned but the ideas contained in this study emanated from their efforts.

Many thanks go to Miss Betty Caplan for proof reading the thesis and correcting grammatical omissions. She was able to do the work at short notice and in a faster way that did not delay the completion of the study. Her expertise in journalism positively contributed to this thesis.

I owe much thanks to my wife Grace Adhiambo Kili and all our children (Alexander, Nicholas, Benedicto, Virginia, Beda, Gertrude, William, Sarah, Christine and Jeremiah) who endured many difficult years and provided unconditional moral and material support throughout the period I undertook this programme. I also thank my late brother Michael Opere Odhiambo who ensured that my home was well taken care of when I pursued my studies. I pay tribute to my late parents: Mzee Dismas Odhiambo Omolo and Mama Gertrude Bondo Odhiambo whose inspirations, sacrifices and prayers contributed a lot to my success. My late step-mother Margaret Lalo is dearly thanked for the role she played in my studies after my mother's death. Encouragement and support received from my late uncles John Otieno (Ndei) Odhiambo and Elias Opiyo Omuga Odhiambo are appreciated. To my late sisters Angeline Auma Okomo, Rosa Anyango Abila and Cosolata Opiyo, thank you for all the support and positive encouragement. To my brother Mr Aloys Akama Odhiambo and my sister Mrs Josephine Odira Okombo your prayers and stimulation for my education are invaluable to the studies' success.

I am sorry that other people, including some institutions are not acknowledged directly here but their contributions were great. I request them to accept my regards and agree to be represented by those mentioned.

Last but not least, the metaphysical hand of God was the driving force behind everything achieved and may His name be glorified forever.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
EPIGRAPH	i
ABSTRACT	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
DEFINITION OF TERMS	v
ABBREVIATIONS	x
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	xi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	1
ackground to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	1
1.3 Purpose of the study	1
1.4 Objectives of the study	1
1.5 Significance of the study	1
1.6 Limitations of the study.....	1
1.7 Delimitations of the study	1
1.8 Assumptions of the study	1
1.9 Theoretical framework: Phenomenology	1
References	2
CHAPTER TWO	3
LITERATURE REVIEW	3
2.1 Introduction	3
2.2 Global overview of university entry examinations	3
2.2.1 National examinations.....	3
2.2.2 Entrance examinations.....	3
2.2.3 Standardized aptitude tests	3
2.2.4 Multiple examinations.....	3
2.2.5 No examinations.....	3
2.3 Phenomenological aspect of global overview of examinations	3

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
 KIKUYU LIBRARY
 P. O. Box 92 - 00902,
 KIKUYU

2.4 Importance of examinations in education.....	3
2.5 Shortcomings of examinations	4
2.6 Norm-referenced assessment.....	4
2.7 Attributes of norm-referenced assessment as depicted by KCSE examinations.....	5
2.8 Limitations of KCSE examinations as a true measure of candidate's lived experience.....	6
2.9 Administration and processing of KCSE examinations by KNEC	6
2.10 Phenomenology and educational research.....	6
2.11 Phenomenology and educational assessment	6
2.12 Educational assessment: The view of phenomenologists.....	6
2.13 The focus of the research.....	6
2.14 Conclusion.....	7
References	7
CHAPTER THREE.....	7
METHODOLOGY: PHENOMENOLOGICAL HERMENEUTIC	7
3.1 Introduction	7
3.2 Meaning of phenomenological hermeneutic method	7
3.3 The appropriateness of phenomenological hermeneutic method for the study.....	8
3.4 Strategies used in collecting lived experiences of university entry examinations from prospective teachers in Kenyan public universities.....	9
3.5 Conclusion.....	9
References	9
CHAPTER FOUR	10
DATA REPORT AND EXPLICATION	10
4.1 Introduction	10
4.2 Anecdotal reports.....	10
4.2.1 Examinations for university entry in Kenya.....	10
4.2.2 Degree preferences before KCSE examination results.....	10
4.2.3 Degree preferences after KCSE examination results	10
4.2.4 Co-researchers' lived experiences on missed degree choices	10
4.2.5 Co-researchers' lived experiences on the merits and demerits of revising the choice of degree courses after the KCSE examination results.....	11
4.2.6 Co-researchers' lived experiences on preparations for examinations	11
4.2.7 Co-researchers' lived experiences on being teachers forever	11
4.2.8 Co-researchers' lived experiences on their abilities being captured by the KCSE examinations.....	12
4.2.9 Co-researchers' lived experiences on their greatest joys and disappointments after getting the KCSE examination results	12
4.2.10 Descriptions of any other lived experiences of KCSE examinations	12
4.3 Data explication.....	12
4.3.1 The relationship between lived experiences and literature reviewed.....	12
4.3.1.1 Norm-referenced assessment.....	12
4.3.1.2 Examinations as hindrances to individual career paths.....	13
4.3.1.3 Examinations as incomprehensive benchmarks for determining potentials of prospective teachers	13

4.3.1.4 Single examinations vis-à-vis many examinations for university entry.....	13
4.3.1.5 The KCSE examinations and university entry	13
4.4 Phenomenology of the teaching profession.....	13
4.5 Phenomenology of KCSE examinations and the Kenya Society	13
4.6 Living experiences of university entry examinations as triologic phenomena.....	14
4.6 Conclusion.....	14
References	15

CHAPTER FIVE.....	15
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	15
5.1 Summary.....	15
5.1.1 Major clarifications of the study.....	15
5.1.1.1 Ontology and university entry examinations in Kenya	15
5.1.1.2 Incongruity of grades of university entry examinations with individual prospective teacher's potential	15
5.1.1.3 Apparent manipulation of examination grades.....	15
5.1.1.4 University faculty/school admissions in Kenya	15
5.1.1.5 Passing examinations and being educated.....	15
5.1.1.6 University entry examinations and the Kenya society	15
5.1.1.7 Inadequate syllabus coverage	15
5.1.1.8 Recycled questions	15
5.2 Conclusion.....	15
5.3 Recommendations	15
5.2.1 Holistic assessment.....	16
5.3.2 Career prognosis.....	16
5.3.3 Examination courts.....	16
5.3.4 Examinations for university admissions.....	16
5.4 Suggestions for further study.....	16
5.4.1 Examination irregularities	16
5.4.2 Teacher-of-the-profession	16
5.4.3 Grading in examinations.....	16
References	16
Appendix	18

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Assessment:** It means reflections on invaluable decisions an individual learner makes about their potential coupled with other observations by players in the education process.
- Examinations:** A series of formal tests for assessment.
- Evaluation:** A process of making a decision on assessment.
- Existentialism:** Philosophy that focuses on human existence as an independent, thinking and deciding individual.
- Existential phenomenology:** Also known as phenomenological existentialism is a philosophy that describes experiences of human being as independent, existent individual.
- Hermeneutic:** Theory of interpreting texts.
- Phenomenological hermeneutic:** Theory of describing and interpreting conscious experiences. It is also known as hermeneutic phenomenology.
- Potential:** An individual's ability assessed using school subject(s).
- Phenomenology:** Theory and method of investigation that studies reasoned appearances from the first person point of view.
- Test:** A short examination. The terms: examination, assessment and test are used interchangeably.

ABBREVIATIONS

AORN: Association of Registered Nurses

B Ed: Bachelor of Education

JAB: Joint Admissions Board. In future the admission into public universities will be done by Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service.

JSTOR: Journal storage, an online system for archiving academic journals, founded in 1995.

KCSE: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education is the ‘university entry examinations’ and both terms are used interchangeably; sometimes the word ‘entrance’ is used instead of ‘entry’

KIE: Kenya Institute of Education

KNEC: Kenya National Examinations Council

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

RMIT: Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

SEAMEO: Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 Varieties of Phenomenology	16
1.2 Conceptual Framework.....	17
2.1 KCSE Results 2008: Percentage Pass/Fail against Candidates and Their Grades (Nearly Bell-shaped Curve).....	54
2.2 KCSE Results 2009: Percentage Pass/Fail against Candidates and Their Grades (Nearly Bell-shaped Curve).....	57
2.3 KCSE Results 2010: Percentage Pass/Fail against Candidates and Their Grades (Nearly Bell-shaped Curve).....	60

LIST OF TABLES

1.1	5
CSE Examination Results 2004-2007 (C+ and above)	5
2.1 KCSE Examination Results 2008.....	5
2.2 KCSE examination Results 2008: Candidates' Grades as Percentages	5
2.3 KCSE examination Results 2009: Candidates' Grades as Percentages	5
2.4 KCSE examination Results 2010: Candidates' Grades as Percentages	5
4.1 Merits and Demerits of Revising Degree Choices	11

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Examinations are intertwined in education systems all over the world. As noted by Li (2005, p. 221), examinations seem to be entrenched in education systems for good. The offering of examinations in the education system originated over four thousand years ago in China and this, besides other inventions such as gunpowder, paper, the compass and the printing press, has been described by some scholars as being “the fifth great invention of China” (Li, 2005, p.28 and Crozier, 2002). This concept of examinations spread to Europe, America and other parts of the world, in later years. Japan embraced the idea in about 701 AD. The French writer Voltaire (1694-1778) advocated for the same concept for his country. In the early nineteenth century, British diplomats and missionaries were influenced by the Chinese examinations system whose ideas were incorporated into the then newly established British civil service examination system, which acted as a precursor to the establishment of an examination system in the United States of America in 1883 as reported by Li,(2005, pp.28-29).

The history of school examinations in Kenya is traceable to the British colonial government with its attendant education system. In 1856, the University of Cambridge Examinations Syndicate was established and was charged with handling examinations in Great Britain whereby the first examinations took place the same year (Steinberg et al., 2008). The Cambridge Examinations Syndicate was then introduced and became the official examining body for the three East African

countries: Kenya , Uganda and Tanzania. This examining body was however later replaced by the East African Examinations Council in 1973 (Eshiwani, 1993, p. 181). In 1980, the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) was set up by an Act of the Kenya Parliament (Cap 225A) as a non-profit making institution to objectively conduct school and post-school national examinations except university examinations, and to award certificates to successful candidates (Eshiwani, 1993, p. 181 and KNEC, 2009).

Examinations seem to be entrenched in most education systems, although the issue of what they assess and how efficacious they are is of concern to scholars and education stakeholders. Among the many problems that have been facing education planners, curriculum designers and developers in East Africa according to Bogonko (1992, p. 87) is the role of examinations in education. Some of the major worries include: “Who should go to secondary schools and higher institutions? What criteria should be used to select them? How effective, reliable and valid are these devices?”

As an attempt to address such questions, it was appropriate to investigate the efficacy of procedures in assessing learners. Examinations are objectively administered and processed, although they may not measure accurately human potentials manifested in the school subjects and other areas that may be manifested in life outside the school setting. For example, Winston Churchill failed his college entrance examinations but later became one of the most renowned prime ministers in Great Britain (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 4, 1979, p. 595). He wrote, “My education was interrupted by my schooling” (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia,

2010). Churchill's schooling entailed the administration and processing of examinations in which he was branded a failure.

Another example is Albert Einstein who failed his examinations and could not join a coveted college in Zurich to study electrical engineering, yet he was one of the most prolific scientists who ever lived (O'Conner and Robertson, 1997). John Stuart Mill, also, never attended formal schooling or even sat any formal examinations but was tutored at home by his father and became one of the respected British philosophers (Flew, 1999, p.231). The implication that can be drawn is the failure of examinations to assess all individual potentials. Ouma (2009) notes that people excel in life using other talents that school did not consider.

Examinations are an integral part of education and the examples cited show that they may not assess fully the potentials of learners. This is why it is apparent that learners may not fully accept their judgments by examinations and may therefore wish to have other alternative fora for voicing their disagreements.

The KNEC is sanctioned by the Kenya government to assess the potentials of school candidates by overseeing many examinations. The most significant one is the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination, which is designated to serve as a "university entry examination." The KCSE examination is central to lives of the learners because it marks the beginning of potential careers when most learners are about the age of 18 years, when they are considered to be mature. The examination is taken at the end of four years of study at the secondary education cycle. This serves as the chief benchmark of selection into both Kenyan and foreign

universities. The other learners who do not meet the stipulated minimum university entry requirement may opt to join tertiary institutions and study for either diploma or certificate courses, depending on the examination grades attained in the KCSE examination. It is rather unfortunate that the candidates who fail in the KCSE examination cannot be admitted into any nationally recognized institution for further education or training, unless they take those courses whose requirement is the standard eight primary certificate of education. It is acknowledged that a few institutions such as the Kenya Institute of Open Learning (KIOL) admit learners for certificate or diploma courses depending on their ability.

It is often observed that some parents, guardians and teachers of KCSE candidates feel that examinations do not fully assess an individual learner's potential. This is why they would even appeal for the remarking of candidates' scripts (Mutai, 2012, Nyarora & Mbithi, 2012 and Wesonga & Oduor, 2012). In some cases, the careers of various people have been shattered by examinations. The researcher was informed that Ruto had wanted to be an engineer but instead ended up being a teacher because his examination grades could not allow him gain entry into the course (Ruto, personal communication, March 13, 2010). The same was noted of Akaranga who also ended up teaching religious studies despite having a passion for engineering (Akaranga, personal communication, January 23, 2011).

This is why students who join teachers colleges say it is their grades which make them join the colleges but not their interest in teaching (Newly Recruited Student Trainees at Asumbi Teachers College, personal communication, October, 2007). A student who wanted to study for a degree in pharmacy could not make it and was

advised by the father to pursue the Bachelor of Education Science degree with specialization in Mathematics and Physics (Kenyatta University student, personal communication, July, 2008). These examples drawn from informal conversations indicate that there seem to be an apparent mismatch between what the examinations portray and learners' interests and actual potentials. A problem seems to exist if such complaints are realized because the examinations do not make people fit into their dream careers.

In Kenya for example, the debate is on by the general public and newspaper reports on whether examinations really measure fully what candidates know. One half of the students sitting for the KCSE examinations as explained by Siringi (2009) score a mean grade of D+ and below. He further reports that since 2004, 45% of the students have been scoring D+ and below, except in 2007 when it dropped to 43%. He notes that about 100,000 students who sit the KCSE examinations each year do not attain the minimum entry grade into tertiary institutions. Siringi explains that when all candidates were traced back into their post-school environments, only 26% were in formal employment; 30% were self-employed; 29% were unemployed, and ten per cent were not looking for a job at all. Caplan (2009) and Hassan (2012) recommend that the Ministry of Education in Kenya should find a better way of examining students because the existing system does not adequately assess the potentialities of learners since it is exam centred.

An analysis of examination performances against admissions into public universities as expressed by statistics from the Joint Admissions Board (JAB, 2009), a body formed by public universities for admitting all students with direct government

sponsorship to Kenyan public universities, indicates that less than ten per cent of students who sit KCSE examinations were admitted into public universities to pursue degree courses. This is exemplified by an analysis of the examination results over a span of four years (2004 to 2007) which attests to this trend. It is evident that in the year 2004, the number of candidates who sat for the KCSE examinations was 222,519. And, out of this number, 58,239 (26.2 %) attained grade C+ and above while only 10,632 (4.8 %) students were admitted into public universities. The following year, 2005, the number of candidates who sat for the KCSE examinations was 260,643. Only 68,040 (26.1 %) obtained grade C+ and above and 10,218 (3.9 %) students were admitted into public universities.

In the year 2006, the number of candidates who sat for the KCSE examinations was 243,318. Out of this number, 62,853 (25.8 %) attained grade a C+ and above while 10,263 (4.2 %) students were admitted into public universities. In the year 2007, the number of candidates who sat for the KCSE examinations was 276,193. Of this number, 74,299 (26.9 %) attained grade C+ and above while 16,629 (6.0 %) students were admitted into public universities.

The information provided on examinations' statistics is presented in the table below:

Table: 1.1

KCSE Examination Results (C+ & above) and Public Universities' Admissions from 2004 to 2007

Year	Total No. of KCSE Candidates	Candidates with Grade C+ & Above	Total No. of Students Admitted to Public Universities
2004	222,519	58,239 (26.2 %)	10,632 (4.8 %)
2005	260,643	68,040 (26.1 %)	10,218 (3.9 %)
2006	243,318	62,853 (25.8 %)	10,263 (4.2 %)
2007	276,193	74,299 (26.9 %)	16,629 (6.0 %)

Table 1: JAB, University of Nairobi, June, 2009

The table shows that about 26 % of candidates who sat for the KCSE got grade C+ and above, while five per cent of the KCSE candidates are admitted to public universities. In other countries, more students than in Kenya get admission to universities. In USA, for example, 86% of those who pass join university; South Korea takes 56%, and India 55% (Saturday Nation, 2010). Ochieng (2010) notes that Kenyan education system is not geared towards solving problems because many people who fail to join local universities because of poor form four grades usually

go overseas and come back with degrees and they serve Kenya well, hence examinations do not gauge fairly and accurately an individual's intelligence.

The information provided in the table leads to the following questions in Kenya: How efficacious are the examinations that regularly screen less than 10 % of the candidates for public university admissions? What reason could be given for the 26 % of KCSE candidates who regularly get C+ and above and do not get direct admission to public universities? Or, what reason could be given for 76 % of KCSE candidates getting below C+?

Furthermore, do individuals who sit for these examinations agree with the results as being the true measures of their potentials? Do they get an opportunity to express what they feel the examinations might have missed to measure? Do individuals who take up different careers in Kenyan public universities agree with what the KNEC portrays they are? What are the lived experiences of individuals who sat the KCSE examinations and have joined Kenyan public universities as prospective teachers?

In order to address the issue of whether university entry examinations accurately measure candidates' potentials, a phenomenological method of investigation was applied. This method illuminates the specifics and identifies how phenomena are perceived by the actors in a situation (Lester, 1999, p. 1). The phenomenological method approach is based on personal knowledge and subjectivity that is termed lived experience or existence (Audi, 1999, p. 135f and Curtis & Mays, 1978, p. 1). It somehow appears problematic to explain education in terms of natural sciences

which leave out lived experiences of individuals who are actors in the education process (Curtis and Mays, 1978, p. xi).

It is this subjective approach to investigating the lived experience, as noted by Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006, p. 461f) that distinguishes the phenomenological method from other research approaches. This approach analyses the phenomena of lived experiences of an individual while the experiential world of the individual as lived is explored to gain a reflective understanding (Li, 2005, p. 54). The lived experience of an individual according to Charlesworth (1976, p. 9), is the touchstone of all knowledge that accounts for human potential and it is the task of philosophy to employ a phenomenological approach to make explicit this a priori knowledge that eludes scientific investigation.

A study done by Rutto (2000) shows that subjective knowledge is the basis of scientific understanding. This is why it is worth looking at lived experiences of learners that call for subjective investigation that even goes beyond objectivity. Subjective investigation does not match phenomena against perceived facts as it is in an objective study (Dana & Leech, 1974 and Rose, 2005). It instead examines feeling, emotions and imaginations of individuals as opposed to objective investigation, which is the domain of what is perceived with the senses (visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, and tactile and kineasthetic). In an objective study however, phenomenon is matched with sense perception. Subjective investigation examines what an individual thinks beyond the perceptible, while a phenomenological study cuts across both objectivity and subjectivity. This is why it was the most appropriate for the study.

1.2 The problem statement

The administration of examinations all over the world and Kenya in particular, uses the scientific methodology that utilizes objectivity as the way of assessing learners. The lived experiences of individuals who are candidates in an examination situation are, apparently, not taken into consideration by the scientific nature of management and administration of examinations. The process of examinations and their attendant methodology does not consider learners' lived experiences, which form the foundation of subjective knowledge. The KCSE examinations performance as the main determinant of entry into Kenyan universities controls the future of the majority of learners and an investigation into its efficacy is therefore called for.

This study employs a phenomenological investigation and a philosophical critique of learners' lived experiences by focusing on prospective teachers. The approach employed goes beyond scientific or objective knowledge. It is phenomenological approach since it accepts objectivity and delves into subjectivity. The KNEC states in its mission statement that it "objectively" assesses learners but why not assess learners both objectively and subjectively? The assessment of learners becomes phenomenological when both objective and subjective knowledge are considered.

The grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and E are assigned to candidates after sitting KCSE are the objective reality of the examinations. The questions which arise here are: What are the meanings and understanding attached to these grades? What are the lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to these grades? The meanings and understanding of these grades are subjective and this calls for a

phenomenological investigation to establish whether the KCSE examination used as a determinant for university entry in Kenya is efficacious to assess the lived experiences of prospective teachers.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The study was undertaken because the private lives of individual learners which are termed lived experiences form subjective knowledge and cannot be objectively assessed. This study therefore investigated how KNEC assesses both the objective and subjective knowledge. It was concerned with the lived experiences of prospective teachers in Kenya and laid emphasis on the root of KCSE examinations as an efficacious tool to measure the potentialities of candidates and determine their destiny in choosing teaching as a career. The study also investigated the efficacy of university entry examinations that measure learners' potentials as portrayed in their lived experiences, which could be the benchmark for joining teaching as a career.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study sought to:

- (i) investigate how KCSE examinations show the lived experiences of prospective teachers;
- (ii) examine the implications of using KCSE examinations as a basic instrument for measuring prospective teachers' lived experiences, and
- (iii) investigate how the perceived academic potential relates to the results of university entry examinations.

1.5 Research questions

Each of the three objectives addressed relevant questions to the study. Objective (i) was premised on the following questions:

- i) Are examinations administered by KNEC phenomenological, which is, showing the lived experiences of learners?
- ii) How do KNEC examinations show the lived experiences of learners?

The objective (ii) attempted to answer the following questions:

- i) What are the implications behind learners who underwent KNEC assessment in KCSE examinations?
- ii) What is the consequence for the Kenyan society when knowledge assessment of learners is done by KNEC?
- iii) What are implications behind the teaching profession when KNEC screens prospective teachers through KCSE examinations to join Kenyan public universities?

The third objective focused on the following questions:

- i) Are the grades assigned by KCSE examinations for university entry portraying prospective teachers' knowledge accurately?
- ii) Do prospective teachers accept their potentials as authenticated by KCSE examinations?

1.6 Significance of the study

The results of the study could sensitize universities to select students for the teaching career on the basis of students' lived experiences, which are subjective and reflective of true knowledge. If students to be teachers are selected to join the universities on the basis of their interest in the teaching profession as revealed by

lived experiences, then it is likely that there will be a passion to develop the minds of the learners to strive to achieve universal goals that directly focus on education such as the Kenya Vision 2030 and Eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Kenya Vision 2030 as a development blue print was launched in 2008. It was to be implemented through the successive five-year mid-term plans up to 2030. The main objective is to make Kenya “a globally competitive and prosperous nation with a high quality of life by 2030.” The vision has economic, social and political pillars, whereby education comes under social pillar and the vision of education is, “To have a globally competitive quality education, training and research for Kenya’s sustainable development” (Republic of Kenya, 2008 and Republic of Kenya, 2012).

Teachers are expected to play a role in achieving vision 2030 because their participation has both direct and indirect influence on realization of the three pillars. The absence of sufficient competent and motivated teachers to man Kenyan classrooms, Vision 2030 according to Ochieng (2011) could be a big lie.

Just as the study is significant in the achievement of Kenya Vision 2030, it is equally significant in the achievement of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, reduction of child mortality, improvement of maternal health, combating HIV/AIDs including malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and developing a global partnership for development. The MDGs were launched by the United Nations in 2000 and they are expected to be achieved by 2015 (UNDP,

2004). The principles underlying the goals will still be equally important and worth striving for beyond 2015, whether achieved or not.

The study can inform test designers and education policy makers to examine the importance of assessment that incorporates subjective experiences, which are usually left out during examinations and hence omitting holistic assessment of the learners. Holistic education is defined as a philosophy that considers all human potentials in totality rather than an aggregate of constituent parts (Holistic Education Network, 2003 and Khan, 2008). It regards every human being as important and exploits intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual potentials (Amada, n.d., Holistic Education Network, 2003 and Melissa, n.d.). When objective assessments are used to gauge learner's potential, it is only intellectual potential that is considered.

The results of the study could be replicated in other careers, other than teaching, so that individual potentials manifested in lived experiences could form the basis of selection into further education and careers.

The study creates awareness in individual learners that each and every one of them has potentials and none can be a failure in life. An individual's uniqueness is valued and utilized in career choices. The idea of high and low achievers in education will be re-examined since each individual's educational achievement will be based on lived experiences, which is the true knowledge about an individual.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The study is limited in the sense that it left out very many learners such as those who sat KCSE examinations and joined universities or tertiary institutions and enrolled for other professions other than teaching. It also left out those who sat KCSE examinations and joined private universities or were self-sponsored or those who failed. These learners are important but there was no time to include them all.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

The study focused on students who passed university entry examinations and were admitted into Kenyan public universities to pursue education as prospective teachers. It was based on candidates who qualified straight from schools and were in their first year of study at the public universities. This cadre of students comprised prospective teachers who had taken up teaching as a career. Consequently, they enrolled for the degree of Bachelor of Education in their respective universities. These students were able to describe vividly their lived experiences of examinations that were still fresh in their minds. The study left out other students admitted into other university courses. It also left out those who joined institutions below the university and those who did not join any institution after the examinations.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The proposed study made the following assumptions:

- (i) If both subjective and objective assessments are employed in measuring learners' potential then the knowledge assessed is holistic. Holistic knowledge is considered phenomenological. Such knowledge clearly covers the lived experiences of the candidates,

- (ii) The application of KCSE examinations as the only basic instrument for measuring prospective teachers' lived experiences may impact negatively on teaching as a career, and
- (iii) There is likely to be a gap between the potentials of prospective teachers and what the university entry examinations show as described by the lived experiences.

1.9. Theoretical framework

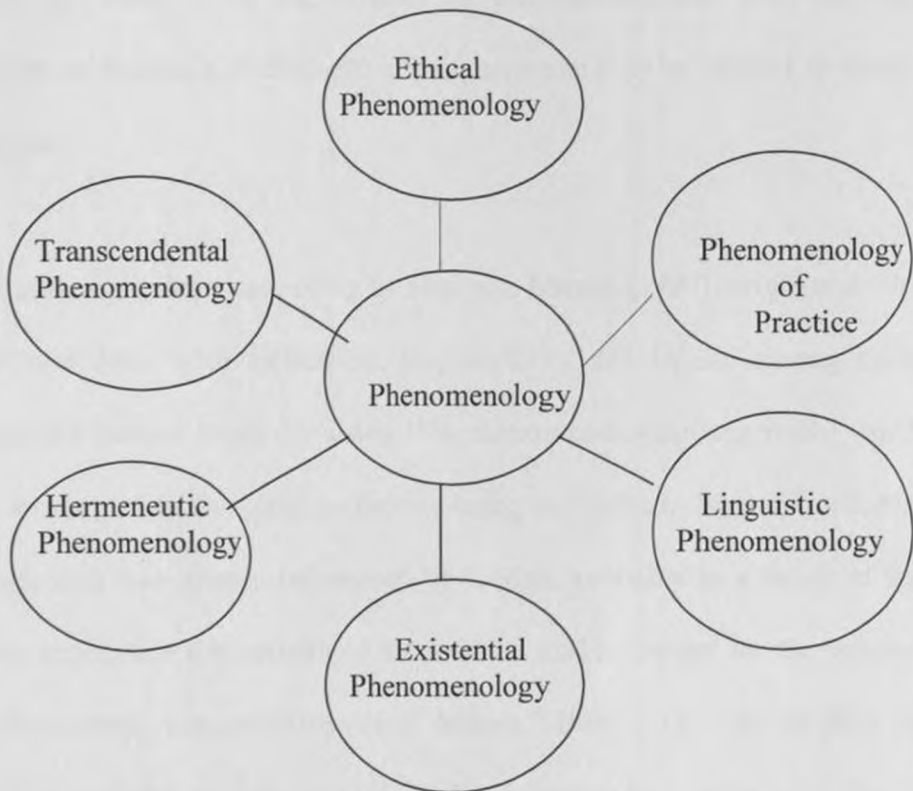
Theoretical framework as defined by Ocholla and Roux (2010, p. 1) is the structure that holds and supports the theory of a research work. It entails drawing and designing architectural work prior to construction as noted by Ocholla and Roux (2010, p. 2). A theoretical framework is analogous to the human skeleton, whereby the brain (head) is the topic of investigation. Through the direction of the brain, the researcher fleshes the skeleton in accordance with the objectives and the significance of the study is given prominence. It is like training an individual to lift weights through exercising relevant muscles.

This study focuses on the efficacy of university entry examinations which entails the fact that lived experiences of prospective teachers are investigated phenomenologically. It uses the phenomenological theory postulated by Max van Manen (2002) and supported by Chaffee (2005), Harrington (1975), Harris (1976) and Smith & Woodruff (2008). In this section, phenomenology is discussed as a theory while phenomenology as a method is discussed in chapter three under methodology. Phenomenology is the study of phenomena as they appear to human consciousness as intentional and as lived in perception, imagination, expectation,

remembering, thinking and feeling (Churchill and Wertz, 2003, p. 557). Phenomenology is both theoretical and methodological and as a theory it has cross fertilization of ideas from various disciplines (Campbell, n.d.). This theoretical framework contains other theories and methods within it as suggested by Scruton (1995, p. 250) and Larrabee (1990) and shown.

Figure 1.1

Varieties of Phenomenology



The theory, as adapted, gives six themes (varieties) of phenomenology as transcendental phenomenology, linguistic phenomenology, ethical phenomenology, phenomenology of practice, existential phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology.

Transcendental phenomenology deals with objects in pure consciousness and has no relation to objects around us (Smith and Woodruff, 2008). It does not take into account how humans are connected to the outside world. Apart from viewing the learner as a transcendental being, this study examines learners as being connected to the outside world and are influenced by that world.

Linguistic phenomenology deals with the philosophy of language, focusing on the relationship between words and the world (Harrington, 1975 and Harris, 1976). The focus of this study is on the efficacy of examinations and does not deal with philosophy of language. Philosophy of language can only be implied to clarify lived experiences.

Ethical phenomenology according to Max van Manen (1999), originated with Max Scheler and deals with 'otherness, responsibility and I-thou' among others. To understand a human being by using this phenomenological approach, van Manen (1999) explains that, one must go beyond being and delve in 'alterity' or the infinite. This approach was greatly influenced by Levinas, probably as a result of the Nazi brutality experience that sensitized his passions and a concern for the vulnerable as an indispensable responsibility (van Manen, 1999). The philosopher Jacques Derrida, as noted by van Manen (1999), also expounds on it in his work *The Politics of Friendship*. Ethical phenomenology is concerned with issues beyond a human being as a being and such issues deal with the infinite or God but this study does not go beyond an individual learner as a being.

Phenomenology of practice deals with daily living practices in a pragmatic and ethical manner (van Manen, 2007). And, when issues are dealt with pragmatically, they might lose inherent principles and hence become deficient in proper clarifications that are epistemologically sound. This study examines lived experiences which are epistemologically sound from the first person perceptions.

The study focuses on the latter two: existential phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. Whereas existential phenomenology forms the core of the theoretical framework, hermeneutic phenomenology forms the basis of the methodology in chapter three. Existential phenomenology which is sometimes referred to as ontological phenomenology focuses on understanding individual experience. It incorporates existentialist and phenomenological thoughts in clarifying individual experience (Bailey, 1954, *Existential-Phenomenology*, 2011 and Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989, p. 133). It is concerned with being and its basic themes are 'lived-experience' and 'life -world' (Chaube and Caube, 1973 and Max van Manen, 2002). This study investigates the lived-experiences of prospective teachers as applied to the efficacy of university entry examinations.

Prospective teachers as individuals are not detached from the world, but rather live in it, that is referred to as the life-world. The study examines an individual's inner life and also the outside world of the individual. This makes existential phenomenology a theme or a variety of phenomenology within the phenomenological theory which fits the study. In existential phenomenology the inside and the outside are seamlessly woven, which means they fit into each other smoothly without any distinct boundary (Chaffee, 2005, p. 142). In addition,

existential phenomenology attempts to apply terms that vividly describe what is studied. The terms are usually applied in polarities, focusing on two extremes. Philosophers from time immemorial have been using philosophical terms in polarities in an attempt to reach the ultimate reality. Heraclitus, according to Cohen (2002) talked of the unity of opposites whereby cold equalled hot; mortality equalled immortality. Heraclitus was probably emphasizing the metaphysical relationship between the two extremes. As noted by Brandt (1963) and Copleston (1953, p. 400), Plato used objects of sense perception as opposed to forms (ideas of the mind); Descartes theorized about mind and body; Kierkegaard's philosophy of existentialism uses existence and essence, and Husserl came up with phenomenology to cut across polarities. The polarities focus on objectivity and subjectivity.

What could be perceived through the senses, as noted by Plato, is not the reality but reality lies in the mind beyond the perceivable and it could only be reached through reasoning. The same idea was taken up by Descartes who explained the concept of body and mind.

Husserl, according to Copleston (1953, p. 409), says that Plato carried out a phenomenological analysis of 'essences' without leaving out presuppositions. Plato did not bracket out preconceived concepts and theories, hence he did not employ *epoche*. Husserl shares with idealists such as Plato and Kant a tendency to stress a priori conditions of knowledge (Robbins, 2006, p. 5). The study employs phenomenological approach because it goes beyond objectivity and reaches the realms of subjectivity.

Phenomenology is considered by Husserl as the science of all sciences, meaning it can lay a foundation and justify all other sciences. It is not built on presuppositions like statistics of a good exam forming a bell-shaped curve. Such statistics are taken for granted in pure sciences but phenomenology goes beyond this to unravel their inherent meanings. The clarification made by a phenomenological study is *propaedeutic* (preparatory) to any philosophical or empirical inquiry since what is experienced is more than what is known (Churchill and Wertz, 2003, p. 550 and Heidegger, 1927). The word comes from Greek, *propaideuein*, meaning providing introductory introduction or to teach beforehand (American heritage dictionary, 2009). Churchill and Wertz (2003, p. 554) explain that the purpose of a phenomenological piece of research is to help gain insight in what has been lived unreflectively. For example, KCSE examinations are objective, but can they be subjective or both objective and subjective? This study is both propaedeutic and epistemological in its reflections.

The study uses two modalities: ontological and ontic, for reflections, which respectively mean emic and etic. The lived experiences of examinations of learners are described ontologically and ontically. Ontology according to the Great Soviet encyclopedia, was first used by Rudolphus Goclenius (1547-1628) of Germany as a synonym for metaphysics but Christian Wolff (1679-1754) designated it to the definition of being. And from the 19th century onwards, it means the hidden essences of things. Ontology refers to lived experience that cannot be found outside the individual. This experience is within the individual. Kierkegaard refers to it as the inwardness, while St Augustine refers to it as the interiority (Klinger and Rimiru,

2000, p.7). Ontological issues according to the Great Soviet encyclopedia (2010), refer to the interiority of ontics. Ontic experiences are not only physical but are outside the individual. They lead to ontological experiences. This means that both are seamlessly woven together, implying that our mental and physical beings are inseparable as asserted by Merleau-Ponty and Husserl (Chaffee, 2005, p.142). When learners sit examinations, ontological and ontic experiences, as postulated by Merleau-Ponty and Husserl, are intertwined in the lived experiences and may not be adequately expressed by KNEC when objective procedures are employed in assessing learners. The individual learner has inner attributes that are ontological and that can be described within phenomenological theory. It is the phenomenological research that can gain their essential 'truths' (essences), which are lived experiences (Byrne, 2001).

Emic evidences are similar to ontological evidences since they come from within an individual while etic evidences are similar to ontic evidences that come from outside the individual (Stone, 1979, p. 11). In a phenomenological study, both evidences within and outside an individual interact dialectically on an individual's consciousness, which is found within the lived experience so that individual perceptions can be identified and interpreted (Stone, 1979, pp. 1-2).

An individual learner who sits examinations is the subject, *noesis*, and the object, *noema* refers to examinations. The subjects are co-researchers since the boundary between a researcher and subject in a phenomenological study is blurred (Stone, 1979). In phenomenology, there is a juxtaposition of noetic and noemic clarifications (Stone, 1979, p.11). Noetic experiences can be described as subjective

while neomic experiences could be described as objective. Phenomenology attempts to create conditions for the objective study of topics usually regarded as subjective: consciousness and the content of conscious experiences such as judgments, perceptions and emotions (Barnacle, 2004 and Stone, 1979). It is a study that covers objectivity and goes into the realms of subjectivity and because of this it is rooted in intentionality.

Intentionality originated with scholastics in the medieval period and was expounded by Brentano who in turn influenced Edmund Husserl and it deals with the 'aboutness' (Byrne, n.d., Lycan, n.d., Moltmann, n.d. and Silby, 1998). Mental states are about something, which may be existing or not. According to Churchill and Wertz (2003, p. 557), intentionality is the dialectic and dynamic relationship between the perceiver and the perceived. The perceiver is conscious about something, which is expressed in lived experiences. It includes imagination, perception, expectation, remembering, thinking and social behaviour. Does the perceiver experience reality? If the learner sits examinations and gets grade D, is the D which is the perceived grade the reality? Is there a gap between the individual learner and the grade D? Churchill and Wertz (2003, p. 557) say that intentionality releases the insiderness of a person and bridges the gap between the subject and the object so that the very unit of investigation becomes the person-in-the-situation. Indeed, examinations should measure the potential of individual learners. The learner is to be seamlessly joined with the grade, that is, a *learner-in-the-grade*.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty says that the phenomenologist returns to the world that precedes scientific descriptions (Robbins, 2006, p. 5). Husserl and Maurice Merleau-

Phenomenology describes the lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to examinations, which is the seamless woven of ontics and ontology. The lived experience of examinations is also termed the intentionality.

1.11 Conclusion

Having introduced the study and attempted to explain its premises within the theoretical framework of phenomenology from which the conceptual framework is derived, it can be concluded that the KCSE examinations touch the inward and the outward of a learner. The prospective teacher as a learner who sat KSCE examinations and entered university was affected by both ontics and ontology, which are seamlessly woven intentionality. The next chapter reviews the related literature relevant to this study by exploring the discipline of phenomenology and its application to examinations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The literature related to this study is reviewed from three perspectives. First, a global picture of examinations used for university entry is presented. These examinations vary considerably as some universities do not use a single examination for university entry while a few do not use examinations at all. In assessing the global picture of university entry examinations, a question that features throughout is, 'Which method of admission can be described as more phenomenologically sound in as far as measuring learners' experiences is concerned?'

In the second perspective, the idea of examinations is discussed whereby the merits and demerits are analyzed. Although reference to the examinations is made in chapter one from the year 2004 whereby a pattern is depicted up to the year 2007, in this chapter additional tables and graphs are presented to show the full KCSE picture of examinations done from 2008 to 2010. The examination results for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 are given as recent examples.

The purpose of tables and graphs for examination results during the three consecutive years further elaborated the magnitude of what was considered problematic with the KCSE examinations. It is from this elaborated problem that the study is explicated. The tables and graphs of KCSE examinations results form a pattern, which phenomenologists describe as predictive, objective and scientific (Rose, 2005).

The central question upon which the literature is reviewed in the second perspective is, 'Are KCSE examinations efficacious enough to ascertain the lived experiences of prospective teachers?'

In the third perspective, phenomenology is discussed in relation to KCSE examinations. It is noted that phenomenology deals with issues within and without the individual learner. Issues within an individual learner are covert or ontological in nature, whereas overt issues outside an individual learner are ontic. Ontological and ontic relationships do not only overlap but are seamlessly interwoven, which means they fit into each other without any distinct boundary. The discussion considers the learner as a being with ontological and ontic considerations. Ontological issues are subjective and can best be researched through lived experiences.

2.2 Global overview of university entry examinations

Examinations for admission of students into various courses in universities all over the world differ. Helms (2008) explains five ways admissions are done: national examinations, entrance examinations, standardized aptitude tests, multiple examinations and no examinations. The discussion that follows is pegged on these five ways with emphasis on examinations where states or state agencies have influence.

2.2.1 National examinations

National examinations can also be regarded as school leaving examinations. For example, The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE) is also the school leaving examination. These examinations are generally administered by the

governments of respective countries or examining bodies appointed by such governments (Helms, 2008). The examinations can also be conducted by a regional body as was formerly done by the then East African Examinations Council.

Some countries such as Austria, France, Ireland, Kenya and Egypt admit students to universities on the basis of a single examination, as noted by Helms (2008). In Austria, the school leaving examination, *matura*, consists three to four written examinations plus three to four oral examinations. In France, students who attain a passing score of at least 50% on the nationally administered essay-based baccalaureate can join most university programmes. However, those who wish to join elite universities (Grandes Ecoles) are required to sit additional examinations (Helms, 2008).

In Ireland, Helms (2008) reports that the National School Leaving Certificate Examination is taken at the end of secondary school and administered by the State Examinations Commission of the national government. Admission into Irish universities is coordinated by the Central Admissions Office, an independent commission owned by institutions from which students are admitted to universities. In Kenya, KCSE examinations are administered by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and selection to join the universities in Kenya is currently done by the Joint Admissions Board (JAB), which comprises public universities, although according to the new government policy this is set to change. In Egypt, the admission is also based on one examination, which is centrally coordinated by the Admission Office of Egyptian Universities, *Maktab Transeek Al-Jame'at Al-Masriyah* (Helms, 2008).

Some countries require national examination scores and other additional qualifications or dossiers. For example, in Tanzania students are admitted to its public universities based on the requirements of national examinations and secondary school academic performance. In some programmes, in addition to the above, supplementary materials and interviews may be required. In the United Kingdom, the secondary school leaving examination known as 'A-Level' is the main admission criteria but it is supplemented by an application dossier. Admission is coordinated by the University and College Admissions Service (UCAS). The dossier contains secondary school academic information, a personal statement, predicted scores (if they are still in school), among other details (Helms, 2008). In the Kenyan situation, KCSE examinations are standalone criteria for admission into public universities but private universities such Strathmore and United States International University (USIU) administer entrance examinations to learners who qualify for university education.

2.2.2 Entrance examinations

Entrance examinations are separate from the national or school leaving examinations as discussed above. The entrance examinations may have a national outlook but they are done when students have completed their secondary education and attained school leaving certificates (Helms, 2008). Such examinations measure the knowledge acquired by students in high school and may be considered alone or in combination with other factors in the admission process. Entrance examinations are administered by governments or by universities.

China, Iran, and the Republic of Georgia depend on entrance examinations alone. In China there are two categories of entrance examinations, which are (i) humanities (ii) sciences and engineering. The admission is coordinated by the government. Cutoff points are lower for candidates from disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities, athletes and recipients of national and international awards (Helms, 2008). In Kenya, no preference is given to sportsmen and sportswomen. However, the students with disabilities get government scholarship if they attain grade C+ and above. Furthermore, the cut-off point for female candidates and those from arid, semi-arid regions is lowered by about two points.

In Iran, the entrance examination is centrally administered and it comprises a four-and-half hour multiple-choice examination that covers all subjects taught in Iranian high schools. The subjects to be examined include: mathematics, science, Islamic studies, and foreign languages. Priority is given to underprivileged groups and to candidates applying to institutions in their own home provinces. In the Republic of Georgia, university admission is based on an entrance examination whereby individual universities set minimum required scores every year. The examination is administered by the National Examination Centre, which circulates its ranked list of candidates who attained the minimum score. The list is to be strictly followed in admission (Helms, 2008). Such procedure is not followed in Kenyan public universities.

2.2.3 Standardized aptitude tests

In Sweden, according to (Helms, 2008), standardized aptitude tests or secondary school academic performance tests are used for university admission. Here a learner

who did not get the required score in their secondary school academic performance for university admission has a chance to do another test, which is standardized aptitude test. This is a rare phenomenon that does not happen in places like Kenya.

Universities in the USA admit students using mainly three types of tests which are standardized aptitude test I (SAT I), standardized aptitude test II and American college testing (ACT), depending on the region and preference (Hatch & Hatch, 2013 and USA Study Guide, 2011). Most standardized tests are designed to measure a student's skills and not knowledge. The tests evaluate a student's ability to solve problems.

SAT I, or the general SAT, is the most popular and it is accepted by most universities as an admission requirement. It tests reading and writing whereby candidates are asked to complete sentences and identify errors in passages. The test takes three hours and twenty minutes. The test examines whether the candidate is competent in the English language to enable them pursue their degree courses. In Kenya competence in the English language is accepted by universities as depicted by KCSE results without recourse to ascertain whether the learner can defend the results.

For testing learner's competence in subjects of the core courses they would pursue at the universities, only the State of California in USA uses SAT II, which is also known as the subject test (Helms, 2008). SAT II takes one hour for each subject test. It tests subjects such as literature, history and biology. SAT II provides opportunity

for learners to show their capabilities in the disciplines they would study at universities, which is not the case in Kenyan universities.

Competence in mathematical and science reasoning, besides reading and English grammar, are examined by ACT. The test is similar to SAT I but it is more rigorous. ACT is accepted by American universities instead of SAT I. The most important aspect of ACT is emphasis on reasoning which is a very important ingredient in university education. There is no test in Kenya that examines a learner's reasoning ability before being admitted into a university.

Aptitude tests are administered by independent organizations, such as the College Board, which administers the SAT tests in the United States (Helms, 2008). Aptitude tests are focused on what a learner will do but KCSE examinations do not have a specific focus. The KCSE examinations may focus in the past, present or the future (Otieno, 2010).

The three tests cited are given at least five or at most seven times a year, evenly spread from the month of October to the month of June the following year. This gives learners chance to plan for their university admissions without much time wastage, whereas in Kenya university entry examinations are administered once a year and if a learner wishes to retake the examinations they have to wait for another complete year.

In addition to the three tests, applicants who are not Americans take Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (USA Study Guide, 2011). The TOEFL is a

computer-based test, although paper-based test is available in some places. It solely tests English as it is spoken in America whereby listening, reading, speaking and writing skills are emphasized. University entry examinations in Kenya do not stress learner's skills in English or any other language spoken in Kenya.

2.2.4 Multiple examinations

In Japan, Russia, France (*Grandes Ecoles*), Brazil, Finland and India, for instance, learners are admitted into universities on the basis of multiple examinations (Helms, 2008). The Performance on national secondary leaving or entrance examinations is considered together with performance on additional examinations.

Russia's universities rely on centralized examinations but since 1999 each university has been encouraged to set its own entrance examinations because institutionally set examinations are considered better indicators of students' knowledge. In France, students who pass the *Baccalaureat* go to universities as noted in single examination systems, but for elite universities candidates must pass institutionally administered entrance examinations that require two years of study (Helms, 2008).

Helms (2008) further note that in Brazil, the Federal University of Brasilia introduced in 1999 an admission system that assesses students on their performance throughout secondary school. Each university in Brazil is free to determine what criteria to use in their admission process. In Kenya universities do not have any working relationship with either primary or secondary schools. Such relationship can enhance the education of learners, especially in career choices.

Universities in Finland administer their entrance examinations, which are programme specific. Students proceed to universities after achieving high school diploma. In Israel, in addition to a government-determined minimum level of performance on national secondary leaving examinations, candidates must take a Psychometric Entrance Test (PET), which is a standardized aptitude examination administered by the national Institute for Testing and Evaluation. The minimum required scores on PET are determined by each university (Helms, 2008).

In India, a candidate may pass two or more examinations administered by different entities in order to gain university entry. The examinations are conducted by national government, provincial governments, individual institutions and groups of institutions. Candidates apply to individual institutions and some places in public institutions are reserved for members of certain castes, as noted by Helms (2008). The concept of multiple examinations is not considered in Kenya although it may provide diverse ways of ascertaining a learner's ability.

2.2.5 No examinations

One of the most unique procedures reported by Helms (2008) is that some universities in the US admit students to their bachelor's degree programmes without examinations. There are about 750 such universities. Examples include the University of Oklahoma, Arizona State University, Wake Forest University, Hampshire College, Bennington College, Connecticut College, Mount Holyoke College, Bates College and Bowdoin College. The universities may require a dossier that includes high school record, information about extracurricular activities, application essays, recommendation letters, and interview with officials or alumni in

order to grant admission. If this procedure is applied in Kenya, very many people without secondary education who have succeeded in different spheres of life like politics, businesses, and community mobilization could access degrees.

2.3 Phenomenological aspect of global overview of examinations

The university entry examinations that take into account the feelings and the emotions of the learner can be described as more phenomenological. They are more subjective and explore various experiences of the learner. This seems to be the case when more than one examination is used for university entry. Phenomenological research recommends meeting the participants or co-researchers as often as possible (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006, p. 472). When more than one examination is used, the learner has the opportunity to express their experiences more fully in diverse contexts. The idea can be compared to a court of law in which after a verdict has been given there is chance for appeal. In the appeal, more experiences of the offender can be revealed which might in turn affect the verdict otherwise.

Helms (2008, p.23) explains that aspects of subjectivity in an examination are covered by non-objective procedures such as recommendation letters, application essays, institutionally administered examinations, interviews and other procedures that strive to get more information from individual learners. All these procedures that attempt to phenomenologically reach an individual and recognize the individuality in a person and are more humane. An examination that is inhumane according to Pratt (1999), is not appropriate to be used with human beings. The university entry examinations in Kenya, when compared to other examinations in the global scene, are administered once and there are no any other examinations or

application dossiers, which a learner who wishes to join university can fall back on and hence there is no “appeal” after a verdict.

2.4 Importance of examinations in education

The terms examination, assessment and test sometimes mean the same thing, although with some notable differences. Assessment as explained by Kithuka (2004, p. 17) and Watson(2013), is a process of assigning numerical values to objects and events and comparing the quantities and qualities whereby strengths, weaknesses, difficulties and needs of the learner are identified. Assessment as any procedure or activity as described Kellaghan (2004) is designed to obtain information about the knowledge, attitudes, or skills of a learner or a group of learners whereupon such information is used to make decisions such as promotion and to guide policy formulation. The information is obtained from the learner without the learner’s input since people who carry out the assessment assume they know about the learner.

Weaver postulates two objectives of assessment: provision of more effective instruction and to evaluate achievement or learning. It requires more time and expertise to make the comparisons meaningful. If a learner is to be assessed in school subjects, the time interval between the assessment of one subject and the other is taken into account so as not to induce fatigue and boredom in the learner. Subject experts who can give undisputed judgment are also incorporated into the process.

Examination as explained by Kithuka (2004, p. 5) is a battery of tests that measure different traits of an individual that can facilitate decision making on that individual.

For example, the Kenya national examinations council may examine a learner in various subjects which may each contain several tests. In studying English, a learner may be tested in comprehension, analysis and writing skills. Each skill is tested and examined on its own. Sometimes the boundary between a test and an examination may be blurred, but the significant difference is that a test is usually skill specific, while an examination tests many skills and takes a longer time than a test.

The term measurement as defined by the Macmillan English dictionary for advanced learners (2002, p. 886) is the degree or strength of something expressed in numbers or standard unit. The main description of assessment is that it is done according to some predetermined rules using measuring instruments such as tests (Kithuka, 2004, p. 3). Measurement is closely related to evaluation which is judgmental and facilitates decision making among alternatives (Kithuka, 2004, p. 3f). This implies that it is the examinations or the tests done that are being evaluated.

The importance of examinations in education systems all over the world is deeply entrenched. Public examinations as an assessment tool according to Abagi (1998), Bundu & Nyaga (2010, p. 131) audits the success of any educational system through four critical goals: access, quality, equity and efficiency. Accessibility by the candidates to the next educational ladder and attendance in various courses in tertiary institutions are determined by examinations. Those who pass the KCSE examinations with 'A' grades can access coveted university courses such as engineering and medicine.

The quality of an educational system is a factor of its examinations and the certificates issued are recognized on the basis of the quality of examinations taken. The Importance of Examinations (2009), examinations motivate students to learn by investigating all possible questions and absorb new knowledge thus sharpening their logical and critical thinking. Without examinations, most of the scholars would be less informed than they are today (WikiAnswers, 2011). All these have positive impact on the quality of an education system.

Examinations help in the distribution of resources based on merit. Without Examinations, according to Nyichomba and Mkilaha (1992, p. 3), people would be selected to join courses or take up jobs on the basis of nepotism or some favouritism. The same was realized by Confucius (551-479) who stressed the invaluable role of examinations as a determinant factor in job placement whereby an individual is selected meritoriously rather than being based on family or political affiliations (Crozier, 2002). Examinations according to Kellaghan and Greaney (1992) are a fair means of distributing scarce educational resources to citizens. They motivate both teachers and learners and exert greater effort in the achievement of educational objectives (Kellaghan 2004 and Kellaghan & Greaney, 1992). Examinations provide feedback to teachers and learners on their weaknesses and strengths thus allowing for the reevaluation of curriculum objectives, which can be applied in the teaching of future learners. Examinations, according to Wasanga and Ramani (2010), measure the magnitude and the interpretation of the curriculum and shape the behaviour of the youth and their future. Hence, learners who join universities will have their behavior and future shaped by the courses they pursue.

It is easier to evaluate one's educational standard through the examinations one has passed. For example, if one has passed the KCSE examinations, it is easier to ascertain their standard of education. Indeed, what one is capable of doing when one joins university or takes up employment can also be determined. This is further confirmed by the formal evidence of educational achievement, which is certification (Kellaghan and Greaney, 1992).

A country's educational goals can form the topics or the contents of an education system whereby a set of questions to be addressed by learners in examinations are explicated. For example, in Kenya the national goals of education such as national unity are tested in examinations by explaining how they can be achieved. By setting such questions, examinations can unify the country towards common goals (Kellaghan & Greaney, 1992 and Secondary School Examination Systems, 2001).

Examinations offer indisputable platforms for accountability on services relevant workers offer to the public. People employed in the education sector have a responsibility to prove to the public that the work they are paid for is well done when learners pass examinations and move to the next educational level. The public tax-payers, donors and other education stakeholders get motivated when funds and resources channeled into education are rightly spent in a transparent and accountable manner whereupon the productivity is tangible. Examinations offer evidence of standards attained by individual teachers and schools (Kellaghan, 2004 and Kellaghan & Greaney, 1992). In Kenya, especially during the month of March when the KCSE examination results are released, praises and condemnations are

experienced in various institutions in diverse parts of the country, depending on how well or poorly the examination performances have been reflected.

Public examinations like the KCSE are free and fair from personal grudges and the bias of individual teachers (Ongom, 1992, p. 2). Learners are free to sit for the examinations and pass according to their ability. The KNEC examinations are marked by qualified and trained examiners. As a human being, an individual learner may have problems with a teacher or teachers thus hindering good performance in school-based continuous assessment but this does not arise in public examinations because the school teacher's influence on examination results is minimal or nil.

The role of examinations in education is quite significant and any attempt to do away with them has always met resistance. The current public debate in Kenya is focusing on whether to ban both Kenya certificate of primary education (KCPE) examinations and Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE) examinations and replace them with school-based continuous assessments. These sentiments were reiterated by the institute of policy analysis and research (IPAR), which proposed the same and was vehemently condemned (Kigotho, 2009). Many people agree that examinations should not be interfered with but should be improved to make them meet the set demands.

2.5 Shortcomings of and issues with examinations

The question that disturbs education stakeholders is whether education should be controlled by examinations or examinations should be controlled by education. In certain instances examinations are believed to control the education system. In

essence, education should control examinations (Nyichomba and Mkilaha, 1992, p. 3). In India, the greatest evil in education according to Murthy (2011) is that teaching is subordinated to examinations and not vice versa. In a situation where education is examination driven and teachers teach solely to enable the learners to pass examinations. Learners may pass examinations but fail to get education. Examinations according to Asthana (2007) are interfering with learners' attitudes towards education. It is easy to find people who passed examinations yet they have forgotten what they learnt because the experience of reading and passing examinations were traumatic and they repress that experience by shying away from reading even if what to be read is important. Such people do not have the urge to read continuously and replenish their learned skills, which may be advantageous to some employers if their employees do not have a reading culture because that could make them know their rights and end up being inquisitive and uncontrollable. Most employers need disciplined and obedient workers who are not inquisitive and are not very much aware of their rights. Do examinations in Kenya control education or it is education that dictates the ways the examinations should be done? The manner in which learners prepare for examinations and the celebrations that go with passing of examinations and the treatment given to teachers immediately after the release of results may be construed that examinations control education in Kenya.

Examinations invade the privacy of the individual thus exposing weaknesses that need not be disclosed (Nyichomba and Mkilaha, 1992, p. 5). As noted by Nyichomba and Mkilaha (1992, p. 5), the right to privacy can be defined as the one which enables an individual to decide how much of their secrets could be shared with others. This is a right to self-dignity and self-determination.

The exposure of performance in examinations on notice boards and even in newspapers infringes on an individual's privacy Ongom (1992, p.1). The issue of privacy could however be counterproductive because people who pass examinations are viewed as being public figures. Since, they are expected to serve in the public service in a transparent manner; there is no point in keeping secret the details of an individual and more so professionals such as teachers are purportedly persons of impeccable credentials, which are open to public scrutiny. They are expected to instill confidence in the people to whom they offer their services. In Kenya, examinations probably have no privacy that can warrant complaints.

Examinations cause extreme anxiety to learners. Teachers, parents and relatives of the learners urge them to work hard and pass thus making examinations a 'monster' to be confronted (Ongom, 1992, p. 12). Examinations terrify learners and may make them lose self-confidence. In some cases, candidates commit suicide or exhibit some psychotic behaviour. In China, a learner killed his mother who persuaded him to do examinations (Li, 2005, p. 1). In Tanzania, there is a worrying trend of students committing suicide after the announcement of national examination results when they realized they did not perform as expected (Meserani Project, 2013). In Kenya, Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) is also a source of great anxiety although it is not the focus of this study. When poor results are witnessed in KCPE, parents rough up teachers chasing them out of schools and demanding their transfers and in some cases withdrawing their children from the schools, some learners and even some head teacher commit suicide (Amadala, 2012, Daily Nation, January 5, 2012, Daily Nation, January 6, 2012, Kituyi, 2012, Miruka, 2011, Muthuri, 2011,

Njung'e,2012, Nyarora and Mbithi, 2012, Olwenya, 2011, Onyango-Obbo, 2012 Talking Point, 2012).

To counter the effects of extreme anxiety so as to make candidates face examinations with courage, pre-exam injections and intravenous drips designed to boost energy levels are given to Chinese candidates and girls are, in addition, use pills to delay menstruation (Daily Nation, 2012). Ongom notes that learners faced with examinations look like suspects in a court case in which they are unsure of the examiner's verdict-'guilty or not guilty', which in other words means 'pass or failure'. The nature of the grade attained is significant because it enables the learner access further educational opportunities. A learner who fails to attain the examination grade aimed at may live with a chronic guilt of letting down their parents (Njung'e, 2011). In Kenya, learners are urged to work hard so as to pass examinations and parents and guardians pay for their children to attend tuition during weekends and school holidays (Oriang' 2010, p. 12). Currently the ministry of education is to outlaw weekend and holiday tuitions (Kigotho, 2012). Apart from sufficient sleep and relaxations, other equally important educational activities like games, sports, clubs and societies are abandoned in favour of examinations (Ongom, 1992, p. 12).

Learners get deprived of sleep when they read and prepare for examinations. Their health suffers due to lack of sleep when they stay awake reading at night; they get fatigued, have no time for personal hygiene and may get hurt during practical examinations (Ongom, 1992, p. 13). Gathura (2008, p. 1f) reports on the results of a piece of research on effects caused by lack of sleep that was conducted by a team of

44 scientists from ten countries commissioned by the World Health Organization's International Agency on Cancer Research. The research established that when individuals are awake they are over-exposed to light and could contract cancer. Exposure to light when one is sleeping disrupts the body clock (circadian rhythm) and is carcinogenic (cancer causing condition) to humans. Indeed, as reported by Gathura (2008, p. 1f), there is a connection between light at night and leukaemia or blood cancer.

It is noted further by Gathura (2008, p.1f) that when learners are deprived of sleep, the hormone, melatonin, which is produced by brain during sleep, is suppressed. This hormone suppresses the development of tumour that can cause cancer. Melatonin is also an antioxidant, that is, it acts as a sink for chemicals that are dangerous to life. The hormone also spurs the production of other hormones like oestrogen. Altered sleep patterns and sleep deprivation weaken the immune system and upset natural rhythms the body uses to maintain healthy cells. Preparation for examinations interferes with learners' sleep and it is not unusual to find learners immersing their feet in cold water at night while reading so as to stop them from sleeping. According to proven statistics, as noted by Mwamwenda (1986, p.249), 'one-third of the entire life of a human being is devoted to sleep.' In a day an individual should work for 8 hours, rest for 8 hours and sleep for 8 hours, although these vary. According to the National Sleep Foundation (2011), sleeping for more than eight hours a day is not good for one's health but less sleep is linked to decreased ability to pay attention, react to signals or remember new information. The National Sleep Foundation (2011) notes, 'Short sleep durations of four to five hours a day have negative physiological and neurobehavioural consequences.'

Examiners who set papers are, according to Murthy (2011), obstacles to examinations' efficacy because they do not have much time to go through the entire syllabus so as to set relevant questions. In most instances they use past question papers and often the questions are set by the same examiners. But, when questions are recycled, candidates who did not focus on past papers may fail yet they are knowledgeable enough to have passed if new questions were set. In practical examinations like biology, learners may be required to dissect some animals without gloves and they could risk injuring themselves or contract diseases from the animal specimens (Nyichomba and Mkilaha, 1992, p.14).

Examinations may be marred by irregularities; hence the results may not be valid leading to a public outcry when some candidates' results are cancelled (Nyichomba and Mkilaha, 1992, p. 14). On March 25, 2010, the Kenya Parliament debated exam cheating and accused the KNEC of wrongly cancelling results of candidates (Daily Nation, 2010). In the year 2008, the results of KCSE candidates from 700 secondary schools were cancelled because of irregularity (Caplan, 2009). How can some schools be affected by examination irregularities yet others are not affected in this era of information and communication technology? When results are cancelled the individual learner is portrayed as one who did not go to school. How can one describe the educational capability of a learner whose results are cancelled? Although issues of irregularity may be attributed to management of examinations, their overall effects contribute to shortcomings in examinations.

Sometimes examination results are manipulated during processing so as to trim the performance in line with the country's economic status. In Tanzania for example, students selected to secondary education do not exceed 20% of all primary school leavers (Tuguta, 1992, p. 13). In Indonesia, examination administrators manipulated results in 40 cities as reported by Ahnair (2011). This lends credence to norm-referenced assessment which is manipulated to suit some scientific predictions (Fair Test, 2007). In this case, examination bodies fix grades to conform to what they predict, which must be within two percent of those predictions (Henry, 2010). This explains the yearly consistency of results where the learners' grades are adversely affected by this manipulation of results, which is highly denounced by academicians (Henry, 2010). It is a sensitive matter; somehow, to probe manipulation of examination results is a difficult issue to pursue and any allegation may be termed untrue.

The accuracy and adequacy of examinations have been questioned by the public hence lessening the faith in examinations all over the world, especially in America and Europe (Ongom, 1992, 1). Bogonko (1992, p. 87) confirms this worry by clarifying that what examinations measure is a concern to education stakeholders. According to Bennett (2004, p.55), a common feature of examinations is a mismatch between what is tested and what comes out as the results. This mismatch is evident in the courses learners take at universities in Kenya whereby 85% of them do not do careers of their first choice even after revision of courses (Fwandeh, 2012, Kamande, 2012 and Muiruri, 2011). It is difficult to tell whether examinations focus on past, present or future capabilities (Otieno, 2010, p. 17). The methods used to

measure candidates' potentials are however, manifested in their lived experiences and need to be ascertained to determine whether there is a mismatch or not.

2.6 Norm-referenced assessment

The method used by KNEC to measure candidates' potential is norm-referenced assessment. It compares the performance of learner with others (Linn and Gronlund, 2000). Norm-referenced assessment is different from criterion-referenced assessment which is only possible where the curriculum has been individualized and the learner is tested on their performance on tasks given without comparing them with others. KCSE examinations are not criterion-referenced (KNEC, 1999, p. 29).

Norm-referenced assessment is based on the idea that not everyone passes (Hamachek, 1995, p.395). When KNEC administers assessment, this idea may be implicit. Norm-referenced test-makers according to Fair Test (2007), create exams in which the results end up looking like a bell- shaped curve (normal curve) so that most students score near the middle and only a few will score low (the left side of the curve) or high (the right side of the curve). In order for the norm-referenced assessment to fulfill the given description, test makers must choose questions that sort out candidates along the curve. Questions may be obscure or tricky so as to rank test takers accordingly (Fair Test, 2007). The norm-referenced test is expected to be completed within time limit. However some students do not finish even if they know the material (Fair Test, 2007). The items on the test are only a sample of the whole subject area and this renders the test inaccurate (Fair Test, 2007). The norm-referenced assessment focuses on memorization and routine procedures forcing teachers to over-emphasize memorization and to de-emphasize thinking and

application of knowledge (Fair Test, 2007). Human potential needs to show application of knowledge in solving real problems. The norm-referenced assessment is not comprehensive in determining an individual's potential because it compares the performance of a group with others (Thorndike and Hagen, 1977, p. 5). This assessment is not phenomenological and does not capture the individual's lived experiences.

Norm-referenced assessment measures general intelligence but does not account for other types such as fluid intelligence, crystallized intelligence and tacit intelligence, among others (Fair Test, 2007). Fluid intelligence is the ability to learn or invent strategies to deal with new problems, while crystallized intelligence is the ability to use previously learned skills to solve familiar problems (Lahey, 2003, p.294f). Tacit intelligence or "everyday intelligence" measures practical knowledge and the skills of getting things done. Norm-referenced assessment as reported by Ruto (2000, p.257f), is weak in measuring abilities particularly those of initiative and creativity. When an individual's potential is analyzed through lived experiences all types of intelligence are taken into account.

2.7 Attributes of norm-referenced assessment as depicted by KCSE examinations

Analysis of the KCSE examination results confirms the attributes of norm-referenced assessment. One such attribute is predetermination where the results are determined in advance. Examination systems adjust results to ensure consistency over a period of time (Naidoo, 2010). For example, from the year 2004 to the year 2007 the percentage of KCSE candidates who attained grade C+ and above was

between 26% and 27% (Statistics from Joint Admissions Board, 2009). In the year 2008 and the year 2009, the average percentage that got C+ and above was 24% which is a slight drop in performance (KNEC, 2009). In the year 2010, the percentage increased to 27% (KNEC, 2011, p. 6).

Another attribute of the norm-referenced assessment is that the examination results form or nearly form bell-shaped curves when graphically interpolated. To illustrate this attribute, the tables and graphs below show the KCSE examination results for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 (KNEC, 2009; KNEC, 2010 and KNEC, 2011).

Table 2.1**KCSE Examinations Results for the Year 2008**

GRADE	NO.CANDIDATES (Rounded off to the nearest thousand)	PERCENTAGE % (Rounded off to the nearest significant figure)
A	1000	0
A-	5000	2
B+	9000	3
B	13000	4
B-	20,000	6
C+	26,000	9
C	34,000	11
C-	40,000	14
D+	50,000	16
D	54,000	18
D-	42,000	14
E	7,000	2
TOTAL	292,000	99

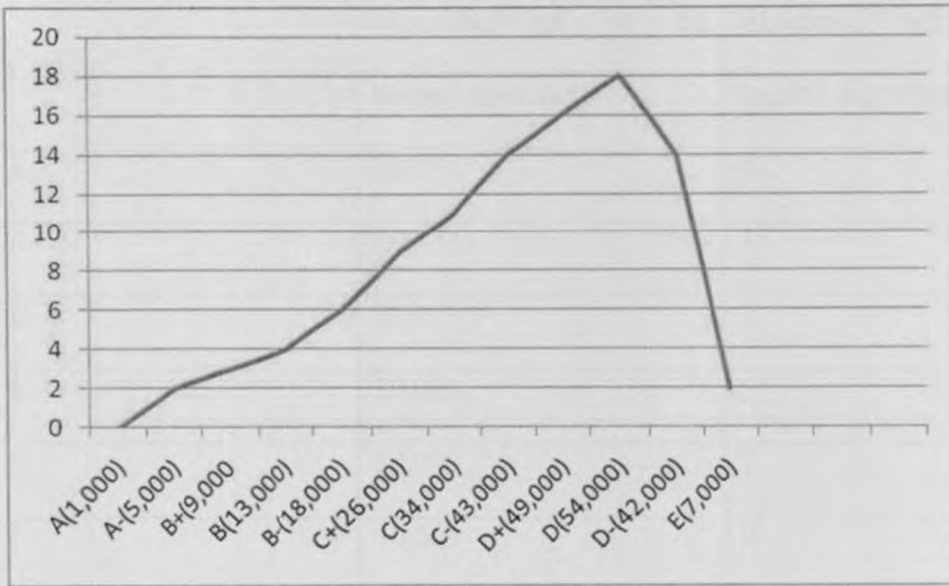
Source: KNEC (2009). The year 2008 KCSE Examination Report p. vii

From the table above, it is evident that 24% of the candidates attained grade C+ and above and were eligible for entry into university education. The same table shows that 50% of the candidates attained grade D+ and below. Kageche (2011) confirms that 50% of the KCSE candidates usually get D+ and below.

Figure 2.1

**KCSE Results 2008: Percentage Pass/Fail Against Candidates and Their Grades
(Nearly Bell-shaped Curve)**

Percentage



In the year 2009, the information is similar to that of the previous year (2008) as shown.

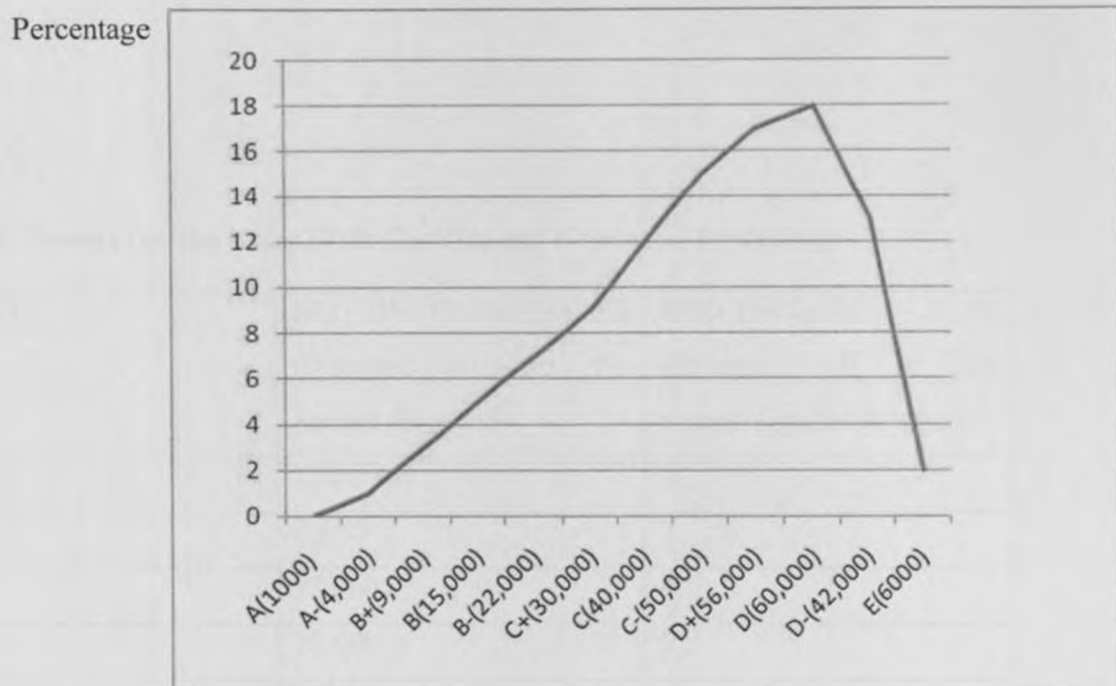
Table 2.2**KCSE Examinations Results for the Year 2009: Candidates' Grades as Percentages**

GRADE	NO. OF CANDIDATES (Rounded off to the nearest thousand)	PERCENTAGE % (Rounded off to the nearest significant figure)
A	1000	0
A-	4000	1
B+	9000	3
B	20,000	5
B-	22,000	7
C+	30,000	9
C	40,000	12
C-	50,000	15
D+	56,000	17
D	60,000	18
D-	40,000	13
E	6,000	2
TOTAL	338,000	102

Source: KNEC (2010). The Year 2009 KCSE Examination Report, p.vii

Figure 2.2

KCSE Results 2009: Percentage Pass/Fail Against Candidates and Their Grades (Nearly Bell-shaped Curve)



Grades/Candidates

The KNEC Report (2010, p.vii), indicates that a total of 337, 488 candidates were registered. The variations in the total number (338,000) and percentage (102) might be attributed to rounding off.

As indicated in the table, 24% of the candidates attained the grade C+ and above, which is the minimum university entry grade, notwithstanding JAB admission requirements. It also shows that 50% of the candidates attained grade D+ and below, indicating a similar pattern.

When the above table is represented graphically, the results nearly form a bell-shaped curve. Indeed, the two graphs (2008 and 2009) are almost similar.

A similar trend is also depicted in the 2010 KCSE results as can be discerned from the table below.

Table 2.3

KCSE Results for the Year 2010: Candidates' Grades as Percentages

GRADE	NO. OF CANDIDATES (Rounded off to the nearest thousand)	PERCENTAGE % (Rounded off to the nearest significant figure)
A	2,000	0
A-	7,000	2
B+	13,000	4
B	18,000	5
B-	25,000	7
C+	33,000	9
C	44,000	12
C-	52,000	15
D+	57,000	16
D	57,000	16
D-	41,000	12
E	6,000	2
TOTAL	355,000	100

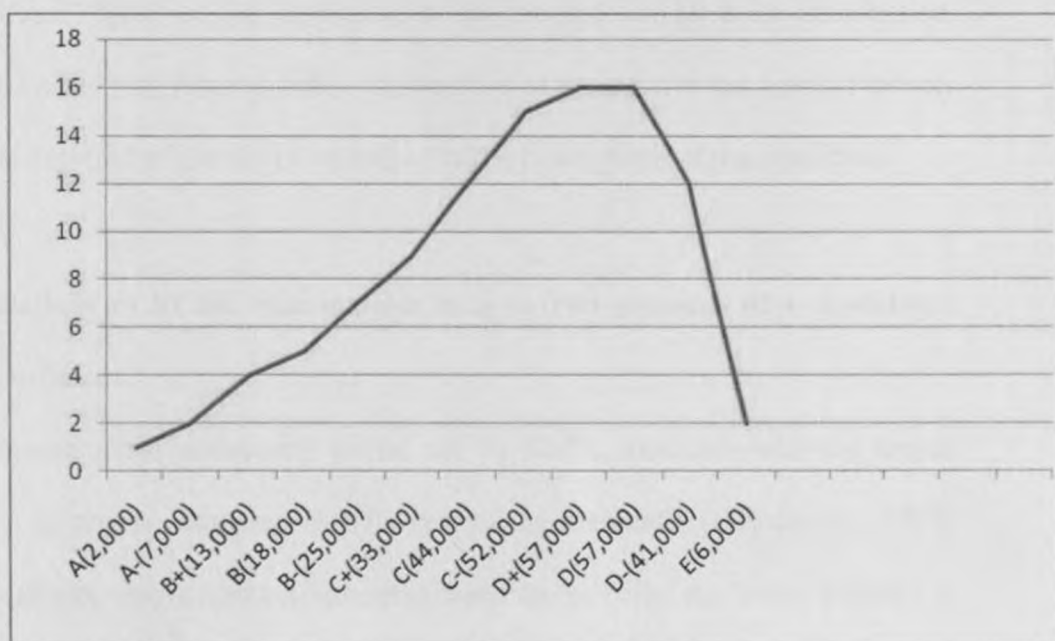
Source: KNEC (2011). The year 2010 Examinations Report, p. vii

The table shows that 27% of the candidates obtained grade C+ grade and above and could gain admission into the Kenyan recognized universities. This performance is higher than the previous years by over 3%. This is a significant increase as compared to other years from 2004, except the year 2007 when the same percentage of candidates attained the C+ grade and above.

Figure 2.3

KCSE Results 2010: Percentage Pass/Fail Against Candidates and Their Grades (Nearly Bell-shaped Curve)

Percentage



Candidates/Grades

Over 40% of the KCSE candidates obtained the D (plain) grade which is the commonest grade in examination results. Kinyanjui (2011, August 8, p. 13) confirms this when it is noted that the KCSE examinations ‘produce grade ‘D’

mindsets' who form a culture of their own. They do not trust the society because it regards them as failures. As reported by Philosophy and Values of Confucianism (n.d.), according to Confucius (551-479 BC), such people may regard themselves as uneducated and have a destructive mind of criminality to the society. A gap coupled with a lot of prejudices may be created in the society between those who succeeded and those who did not succeed in examinations.

Basing the survey on the years 2004 to 2010, the percentage of KCSE examinations candidates who attained the C+ grade and above has been ranging between 24% and 27%. In this regard, there are some phenomenological questions that could be asked. For example, 'What are the experiences of the learners who took these examinations?' 'What are the experiences of the learners who sat these examinations and got admitted into Kenyan public universities as prospective teachers?' Probably the grades depicted might not be according to the descriptions of the candidates.

2.8 Limitations of KCSE examinations as a correct measure of a candidate's lived experiences

The norm-referenced assessment carried out by KNEC measures what the learner has achieved, and is compared with the rest of the candidates (Hamacheck, 1995). But, the criterion-referenced assessment is based on the belief that every student can pass if given time. Hence, it probably has no place in the KNEC regulations. What the learner can do, their will and individual capacity to act as an independent "being" are not taken into account because the assessment is objective and does not consider subjectivity that is a significant component of phenomenology. Indeed, a lived experience is a personal subjective experience.

The power attributed to KNEC to cancel results works against the principles of phenomenology. The cancellation of some candidates' exam results by this examining body does not take into account the lived experiences of candidates. The court ruling against the cancellation of exam results on the basis that such decisions cannot be made unilaterally by the Kenya national examinations council is a step towards the recognition of lived experiences ("Exams Council has no Power to Cancel Results," 2009). In the year 2008 some candidates who were accused of examinations irregularities by KNEC took the matter to court which ruled in their favour ("Exams Council has no Power to Cancel Results", 2009). The sitting judge questioned the efficacy of the KNEC to investigate, make a conviction and mete out a sentence "before some form of hearing takes place during which the suspect is called upon to answer or respond to the charges" ("Exams Council has no Power to Cancel Results", 2009). He further said that it would be absurd to hold that the Kenya National Examinations Council has absolute, arbitrary and unilateral powers and discretion to establish that a suspected candidate is guilty of an irregularity and cancel their examination results without some modicum of due process ("Exams Council has no Power to Cancel Results", 2009). "Such action by the Examinations Council", maintained the judge, "renders studies from kindergarten to secondary school a waste and locks out the candidates from any future careers they would have wished to pursue" ("Exams Council has no Power to Cancel Results", 2009).

Although it is appropriate to punish candidates who do not conform to examinations regulations, culprits should be accorded an opportunity to defend themselves. An individual's self-expression in a court of law can change the ruling or the direction

of a verdict. The KNEC could punish those who involve in exam irregularities but the punishment could be more logical if the culprits were accorded an opportunity to explain themselves. When an individual is given time to have dialogue with the accuser, the potentials of the accused as manifested in lived experiences are exposed. In a dialogue each side advances reasons for their actions and a logical conclusion can be reached. This is the basis of existential phenomenological philosophy which has been successfully applied in other disciplines such as counselling psychology, political science, nursing and literature.

For example, in psychological counselling, existential therapy, like client-centred therapy (person-centred therapy), encourages individual choice (Coon, 1998, p.618f). Therapeutic techniques are based on an individual's conscious thoughts and feelings. This approach values human potential and recognizes lived experiences of an individual. This approach can be applied in education, especially in examinations.

The learners according to Wilmut, Wood and Murphy (1996), should attain deserving grades in examinations, and not one grade lower or higher. If the same examinations are replicated, learners should emerge with the same grades. This is termed the *learner-in-the grade* where the grade and the learner are congruent. Such a scenario is unlikely if norm-referenced assessment is administered to learners because the subjectivity of learners manifested in lived experiences is not addressed.

2.9 Administration and processing of KCSE examinations by KNEC

The administration and processing of KCSE examinations by KNEC follow scientific methodology which is objective.

The administration of examinations according to KNEC Annual Report (2008/2009, p. 22) begins with registration of candidates. Next, examinations are dispatched to schools and centres to be done by candidates. Thereafter, the examination scripts are sent to marking centres. Processing of the examinations begins after marking.

During processing, candidates are ranked and assigned grades, ranging from 'A' to 'E', which designate the highest and lowest, respectively. Thereafter, the processed examination results are sent to respective institutions.

When the KNEC carries out the administration and processing of results, the subjective knowledge of the learners which is manifested in their lived experiences does not form a part of the process. For example, what an individual feels about the examinations is not recorded anywhere in the papers undertaken. Furthermore, the released results as depicted in certificates do not reveal learners' lived experiences.

2.10 Phenomenology and educational research

Phenomenology is derived from two Greek words: *phainomenon* (an appearance) and *logos* (reason), hence phenomenology is interpreted as "reasoned inquiry" (Stewart and Mickunas, n.d., p. 3). It is a reasoned inquiry that discovers the inherent essences of appearance. An appearance is lived experience or anything of which one is conscious. Hence, anything that appears to consciousness is a legitimate area of philosophical investigation (Wrathal and Dreyfus, 2006).

In education, Phenomenology is a paradigm shift that calls for educational change so as to meet the needs of the knowledge society (Mostert, 2002). Phenomenology has gained prominence in educational research because of its emphasis on individual

experiences which have been ignored in scientific studies. According to Curtis and Mays (1978, p. xi), one of the problems in explaining education in terms of natural sciences is understanding what a person is. To understand a person is to understand their consciously-held beliefs, which are subjective. Subjective experience, as noted by Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006, pp. 461-462), is what distinguishes phenomenology from other research approaches. Subjectivity cannot be investigated by science. Phenomenologists assert that the employment of the scientific method to understand human being leads to delusion. Science explains a human being in terms of physiology and anatomy (Curtis and Mays, 1978, p.1).

Phenomenology according to van Manen (2002), as an educational research method tries to uncover the meanings in our everyday life existence with the ultimate aim of fulfilling our human nature. As a method in education, it describes appearances and interprets their meaning by pointing at something and letting that thing show itself. Phenomenology tries to ward off any tendency towards constructing a predetermined set of fixed procedures, techniques and concepts that would rule-govern any educational research project (van Manen 2002). The KNEC uses the dominant scientific norm-referenced assessment methodology in which not everyone can pass examinations (Hamacheck, 1995, p. 395).

In employing the phenomenological approach, an educational inquiry is taken up without any preconceived notion. Phenomena are analyzed as experienced. The experiential world of the learner is explored in order to gain a reflective understanding of the life-world (Li, 2005, p.54). The life-world is the world lived by a person, a whole being, complete with world view, relations and experiences

(Mostert, 2002). Apart from the life-world is the interiority of a human being, which is ontological. The phenomenological approach studies lived experiences which are defined by Mostert (2002) as those which are lived by a person at a given time. It is concerned with life in its totality.

Learners who sit for examinations have inner (ontological) lives that can be revealed by phenomenological studies. When examinations are done they are to reveal the subjective experiences of the learners which are phenomenological in nature. In turn, learners are able to describe vividly their lived experiences of the examinations done. According to Robbins (2006, p. 4), the approach makes learners turn to themselves fully so as to reach the truth making the researcher move from ontics to ontology.

2.11 Phenomenology and educational assessment

Examinations are tools for assessing individual learners and making decisions on what they are capable of doing. In order to arrive at an informed decision about an individual learner, phenomenology is applied so as to recognize human awareness, consciousness and perceptions as lived experiences (Stone, 1979, p. 4). These lived experiences of the learner have direct relationship with examinations. Any decision made by the learner pertaining to examinations is done in a committed manner that becomes the reality or true knowledge (Bailey, 1954, p. 5).

The reality reaches an individual complementarily in existence and essence (Nyasani, 1996, p. 185). In other words, reality is both outside and inside.

Examinations as phenomena expose a learner in this reality. Such reality is achieved through making free choices (Bailey, 1956).

Examinations place an individual in a situation where they have no leeway to make other choices. The KCSE examinations do not allow individual candidates to make free choices culminating into a grade other than the one assigned by the council. Once a grade has been assigned by an examination, it is binding and becomes, somehow, a permanent feature of one's potentiality. If a candidate initially chose subjects and sat for the KCSE examinations according to the best of their knowledge and ability but when results of the examinations are released the candidate finds them contrary to their beliefs and aspirations, then it could be posited that the examinations do not show the true potential of the candidate. In such a scenario the candidate is dissatisfied and may need a forum to express their dissatisfaction yet KNEC does not provide such opportunity. If there is a process through which KNEC could listen to candidate's pleas and adjust accordingly then the examinations system becomes phenomenological in nature because it is the individual who knows themselves better and can choose freely. In the history of philosophy, going back to Socrates (467-399 BC), philosophers advocate the protection of the individuality in an individual (Chaube and Chaube, 1973, p.136). When individuals express their stance, their individuality is displayed.

Generally, phenomenologists maintain a unifying theme that "it is the individual human being who is of central importance. And, it is the lived experience of the individual that is the touchstone (being) of all knowledge" (Charlesworth, 1976, p.9). It is the task of philosophy to rediscover and make explicit that elusive and

primordial realm of experience that underlies the whole of our being in the world. Examinations are expected to show the primordial lived experiences of student. According to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, as quoted by (Charlesworth, 1976), these primordial lived experiences are prior to all reflections, interpretations and constructions. The philosopher's task is to evoke this "pre-reflective" level of experience. Pre-reflective experience or consciousness is an awareness that an individual has before reflecting on their actual experience (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2010). For example, if a learner is aware of examination before sitting that examination then that is pre-reflective experience or awareness. Reflective experience or awareness, in contrast to pre-reflective awareness, is consciousness that comes about when an individual has experienced an event and reflected on it. For reflective experience, if the example of examination is applied, comes about when the individual had experienced or done the examination and reflected on it.

The study employs the phenomenological educational research approach to investigate candidates' potentials and evoke pre-reflective experiences that the KCSE examinations may miss when used in evaluating human potential as depicted by their lived experiences. From prospective teachers' lived experiences of KCSE examinations, it is posited both pre-reflective and reflective experiences of individual, which are subjective, can be revealed.

2.12 Educational assessment: The view of phenomenologists

Philosophers like Socrates have not been fond of discussing assessment and they left it to be decided by students themselves (Strawser, 2009). This has not stopped philosophers from venturing into assessment, especially the phenomenologists as

noted by Strawser (2009), who would like to know the “how” than the “what” of the learner’s experience.

Should there be a non-traditional assessment devoid of phenomenology? The objective assessment so far described is traditional because it fits scientific explanations. Non-traditional or performance or alternative assessment helps educators to get a deeper understanding of the learner with sufficient evidence of learning that can be communicated to parents, employers and the community (Winking, 1997). Alternative assessment can be termed authentic assessment or integrative assessment or holistic assessment (Elsworth, 2013). Alternative assessments comprise projects, essays, demonstrations, exhibitions and portfolios that focus more on the attainment of educational goals that involve use of knowledge in complex and realistic contexts (Reeves, 2000). Portfolio is a purposeful collection a of learner’s work that shows the learner’s efforts on progress and achievements in specific areas of knowledge (Winking, 1997). These assessments require the learner to demonstrate practically their ability and acquisition of skills.

When non-traditional assessments are described they portray the views of phenomenologists. Phenomenological philosophy focuses on an individual’s personhood, ability to choose freely and responsibility for the decisions made. A phenomenological educational assessment takes each candidate as a human being with potentials that are unique. This type of assessment embraces subjectivity which according to Chaube and Chaube (1973, p.138), is fundamental to the existence of an individual. True knowledge arises from subjectivity, while objectivity results in

knowledge postulated as a result of thinking, describing and learning what others are. An objective person only thinks about others but not themselves (Chaube and Chaube, 1973). Most educational assessments according to Bennett (2009, p. 358), Dana and Leech (1974) are based on a philosophy of science that values objectivity but fails to comprehend the subjective values of the person being evaluated. This is the reason why KNEC is objective in its assessment which is specified in its mission statement: “To objectively evaluate learning achievements so as to continually enhance and safeguard nationally and internationally acceptable certification standards” (KNEC, 2008). This statement does not safeguard the ‘individuality’ in an individual learner. It is only concerned with externalities that can be scientifically proven. Nyerere’s ideas about examinations, as quoted by Akinpelu (1981, p. 121), emphasize that examinations focus on some international standards, which are totally unrelated to particular needs and problems. When KNEC focuses on safeguarding nationally and internationally acceptable certification standards, the subjective needs of an individual learner are left out. The following question arises from the above statements. Should KNEC aim at some internationally specified standards at the expense of learners’ lived experiences? If so, is that education?

When a written group examination is to be undertaken, a time break is allowed during the examination. Such breaks allow candidates to reflect on the examination. Individual reflections increase the candidate’s ability to show lived experiences since what one has forgotten is remembered. The services of “amanuensis” can be enlisted during written examinations although this debatable. An amanuensis is an individual who assists a candidate in an examination by writing what the candidate

is unable to write. This is done to ensure that what the candidate knows is not left out.

Phenomenology according to Husserl's dictum is the science of all sciences. In this sense the view of phenomenologists should be the assessment of all assessments, meaning it must accept objectivity demonstrated by objective (traditional) assessment and augment it with subjectivity. This is when the assessment is phenomenologically holistic. Alternative assessments if used alone, the process of assessment is incomplete and hence not holistic or phenomenological. The view of phenomenologists is sanctioning assessment that is complete and incorporates inputs from education stakeholders such as parents. Marrison (2010) recommends that parents are valued sources of assessment information. When KNEC assesses learners, parents do not feature anywhere as a source of invaluable information to the assessment process.

The inputs of individual learners who undergo assessment are to be considered in their totality. Phenomenologists view learners as constructivists, which mean they can construct their own learning from their lived experiences when they have contact with new information and come out with what to learn and how to learn and its outcome (Abdal-Hagg, 1998). The interaction between the ideas already known and new ones results to intentionality, which is to be assessed by examinations. This means from the lived experiences interacting with new knowledge the learners are able to teach themselves by constructing in their minds the contents and selecting what to internalize as true knowledge that can be tested in an examination. The learners teach themselves by using heutagogical principles. Heutagogy is a

philosophy of teaching whereby a learner is holistically enabled to self-determine learning (Blaschke,2012).

Phenomenologists view learners as individuals with self-determined subjective knowledge that examinations may fail to assess if the assessment tool is designed to capture what was objectively transmitted to the learners. Abdal-Hagg (1998) supports this phenomenological view by stating that 'when information is acquired through transmission models, it is not integrated with prior subjective knowledge and it is often accessed and articulated only through formal academic occasions such as examinations'. Internalized knowledge is much deeper and according to the view of phenomenologists it can only be assessed using phenomenological assessment. Phenomenological assessment incorporates lived experiences of the learners with what is objectively observed. This study focuses on the lived experiences and objective observations

2.13 The focus of the research

The grades from 'A' to 'E' that learners score in the KCSE examinations can all be phenomenologically questioned. For example, what is the reason for the annual examination results whereby it is routine to assign each grade almost to the same number of candidates year in year out? What are the lived experiences of those learners who sit for the KCSE examinations? Do they feel contented with the KCSE examination results? Are the learners in agreement with their grades, whereby our description of the *learner-in-the-grade* fits? Is the learner in the grade or outside the grade?

The study focused on those candidates who attained the C+ grade and above and joined public universities as prospective teachers. It is evident that every learner who enrolls into a higher learning institution requires the services of a teacher so as to get education as required in government plans. Teachers are instrumental in achieving Millennium Development Goals and Kenyan Vision 2030.

The study uses a phenomenological method of investigation which accepts scientific facts but goes beyond science into the realm of learners' subjectivity by investigating their lived experiences. What the KCSE examination results portray is scientific but the meaning of the lived experiences of candidates in relation to KCSE examinations had to be determined. This study tried to ascertain if the KCSE examinations are efficacious in describing the lived experiences of the learners. It is maintained by Moustakas (1994, p. 1) that such study should focus on wholeness of experience and a search for meanings and essences of experience rather than measurements and explanations.

The phenomenological approach studies the inside of the learners which is the ontological aspect that makes learners what they are. In phenomenology, ontology is described by Soren Kierkegaard as the essence or the inwardness (Klinger and Rimiru, 2000, p. 7) which focuses on how the learners feel and think. This aspect is subjective and can only be reached through investigating lived experiences, hence the need to employ the phenomenological approach. The approach is suitable for studying issues in education because human beings have consciously-held beliefs that science cannot unravel or make clear (Curtis and May, 1978, p.ix). The phenomenological approach that is applied is phenomenological hermeneutic.

Phenomenology describes while hermeneutics interprets; a method of both description and interpretation

2.14 Conclusion

What is expressed in Tables and Graphs in the first part of this literature review is scientific, and phenomenologists need to go further to examine what cannot be quantified. Phenomenology is science of all sciences, it accepts science and finds out what science expresses thus proceeding into realms of ontology, which is subjective and this formed the second part of the literature review. Subjective experiences are phenomenological, representing true knowledge but are not captured by KNEC when it uses KCSE examinations to assess learners. The next chapter deals with the methodology that was used to capture subjective experiences (lived experiences). The methodology is phenomenological hermeneutic.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the meaning of the phenomenological hermeneutic method, its appropriateness for the study and how it was used to capture the lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to university entry examinations. It also provides anecdotal reports of lived experiences of prospective teachers. The terms phenomenology and hermeneutic are briefly provided before explaining the phenomenological hermeneutic method.

3.2 Phenomenology.

Phenomenology as noted by Mautner (2005, p. 464), is a philosophical method of investigation that directly describes human beings experiences, asserting that all truths are understood through self-awareness. This word is ascribed from two words “phainomenon,” which means an observed occurrence that is understood in our minds and “logos” which refers to human ability to think and express thoughts clearly in words (UK Essays, 2013). Etymologically, it means logical interpretation of a phenomenon. The human being experiences that form the focus of phenomenology are termed “lived experiences” because they arise from the actual persons who experienced the events.

Some analogies can be used to explain how to capture lived experience by using a phenomenological method in layperson’s terms. For example, the experience of what learning entails can better be described by an individual who got education from kindergarten to university than by someone who paid fees for a learner from

kindergarten to university. The learner is the one who underwent the experience of learning and not the one who paid fees. In applying the phenomenological method to capture the lived experience, the person who underwent the experience is the right one to describe the experience and this cannot be better done by any other person.

Another example is the mother who experienced the birth pangs versus the nurse who assisted her in delivering the baby. The mother can describe her experience with deeper vividness than the nurse. The nurse who assisted in the delivery might be a man who only knows birth pangs in theory. When a study strictly uses phenomenological method alone, what is described is not subjected to interpretation.

3.3 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is theological term and it means the interpretation of the spiritual truth of the Bible; a term that philosophers borrowed from theology to mean investigation and interpretation of human behaviour, speech, consciousness, feelings, emotions and imaginations (Flew, 1999). It simply means theory of interpretation. Hermeneutics focuses on interpretation of any idea or material that calls for philosophical scrutiny. In this study it was applied in interpreting lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to university entry examinations in Kenya.

3.4 Meaning of phenomenological hermeneutic method

After explaining phenomenology and hermeneutics, the next concept to be explained is “phenomenological hermeneutic” that forms the methodology for this study. Phenomenological hermeneutic is a compound word that contains adjectives of phenomenology and hermeneutics, respectively. Sometimes nouns and adjectives in the compound word are interchanged: phenomenological hermeneutics or hermeneutic phenomenology. It may be hyphenated as “phenomenological-

hermeneutic” or “hermeneutic-phenomenology.” The study uses the compound word “phenomenological hermeneutic” without hyphen.

Phenomenological hermeneutic is a method of investigation that examines human behaviour as consciously experienced (Li, 2005, p. 67). It is concerned with investigation and interpretation of lived experience, which is reality as it appears to the individual. Lived experience according to Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, is what an individual experiences from the first person point of view (Dall’Alba, 2009, p.8, Scruton, 1995, The’venaz, 1962, p. 7 and Weininger, 1999). It is knowledge that comes through personal involvement (Barnacle,2001); it is that experience lived by a person at a given time and in a given place (Mostert, 2002). It is the starting point of knowledge where sensations and perceptions are revealed within an individual’s consciousness (Gall, M.D., Borg, W.R. and Gall, P.J. (1996, p. 593f). There are very many viewpoints in phenomenology but the point of convergence is the “lived experience” of an individual, which is considered as the touchstone of all knowledge (Charlesworth, 1976, p. 9). Therefore, phenomenological hermeneutic is a reasoned inquiry that attempts to discover what appearance means by studying phenomena and interpreting them. Since phenomena are what appear to human consciousness or what is experienced, the method investigates and interprets whether what appears is actually what is real by investigating lived experience.

The phenomenological hermeneutic method endeavours to get descriptions and interpretations of information from lived experiences. It investigates and interprets what is both inside and outside an individual. What is outside the individual is

within nature. What is inside the individual is what the individual thinks and is conscious of. What appears in consciousness is absolute reality while what appears in nature or to the world is a product of learning. What is inside an individual is based on memory, images, thinking, beliefs and meaning (Moustakas, 1994). The English adage from the Longman Idiom Dictionary (1998, p. 237) & Macmillan English Dictionary (2002, p. 693): to get information “straight from the horse’s mouth” amply captures knowledge that is phenomenological and hermeneutic that can be understood by a layperson. To get information from the horse’s mouth means to get it from someone who was directly involved in the situation. Lived experience is knowledge that comes through personal involvement (Barnacle, 2001).

Some authorities like Byrne (2002) consider phenomenological method to be similar to hermeneutic method. This similarity is implied throughout the study and this is why the title of the thesis is “A phenomenological investigation...” Phenomenological investigation encompasses many ways of reflecting on reality and the method has been used without mentioning the term “phenomenology” in both Occidental (Western) and Oriental (Eastern) philosophies. For example, when the Buddha reflected on the Eightfold Path that leads to Nirvana (calmness of the mind), he was using phenomenology. In the same way, when Western philosophers analysed issues in philosophy (analytic philosophy), they were using phenomenology, which is both method and theory (Larrabee, 1990 and Smith, 2008). The statement made by Protagoras (485-415 BC), the Greek sophist, that “man is the measure of everything” is sometimes considered a precursor to phenomenology (Lavatt, 2001).

Heidegger (2005), Lindseth & Norberg (2004, p. 147) and Ricoeur (200) assert that phenomenology must be *phenomenological hermeneutic*. What is described must be subjected to interpretation. This the form the study took whereby the lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to university entry examinations in Kenya were described and interpreted.

3.3 The appropriateness of the phenomenological hermeneutic method for the study

The first reason why this method was applied to this study was that it enabled the researcher to critically compare the findings with what current researchers in education conceive about issues in education when phenomenological method of investigation is used. The researcher wanted to ascertain the authenticity of the relevant literature reviewed on phenomenology in chapter two. As noted by Trotman (2005, p. 61), phenomenological hermeneutic method is an emerging educational practice that orientates researchers to the imaginative *life-world* of the learners. The world lived by a person is the life-world (Chaffee, 2005 and Sartre, 1956). It is within the life-world that a person has lived experience. The presence of the things in the life-world is acknowledged by consciousness. The individuals like prospective teachers live in the world and they are conscious of the world. They conceive the world with their minds which constitute their imaginations, thinking and beliefs. The learners as individual human beings have personal and subjective experiences which can only be reached and interpreted by using a phenomenological hermeneutic method. The prospective teachers' imaginative life-world is the world lived and imagined by them and they can genuinely describe their experiences of the world.

The researcher believes that education is a pragmatic phenomenon upon which issues keep on changing with time and it is appropriate to approach examinations in education as dynamic phenomena and see how they compare with past educational practices and at the time envisage what the future portends for education as a discipline, which has issues that pure science alone cannot fully address. Phenomenological method of investigation heralds a paradigm shift in education research. Educational change according to Mostert (2002), calls for the need to meet the needs of the knowledge to society. Bonnet (2009, p. 358) concurs: "It is difficult to understand education without reference to individual experience". The problem facing natural scientists in explaining education according to Curtis and Mays (1978, p. Xi), is understanding what a person is without understanding their consciously held beliefs. Consciously held beliefs are ambiguous, multifaceted and variegated and this calls for phenomenological hermeneutic method because it holistically looks for understanding and meaning (Churchill and Wertz, 1985).

The second reason for using phenomenological hermeneutic method is that the researcher wanted to explicate information from both descriptions and interpretations of the lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to university entry examinations in Kenya. If information was not explicated from both, then it could be difficult to get a holistic knowledge of prospective teachers' lived experiences concerning university entry examinations. This stance is supported by phenomenologists such as Paul Ricoeur who contended that to study human reality; it is prudent to combine phenomenological description with hermeneutic interpretation (Geanellos, 2000, p. 112, Smith, 2008 and Ricoeur, 2002, pp. 575-

599). Interpretation provided meaning and understanding of the lived experiences of prospective teachers.

What to be described and interpreted is usually supposed to be in the form of text (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004, p. 147). Text means written or verbal message, paintings, sculpture, pictures or music. In this study, prospective teachers were provided with semi open-ended questionnaire for describing their experiences, which were later subjected to phenomenological hermeneutic interpretation to bring about more understanding. The essence of interpretation according to Eliade (1987, p. 281), is to grasp the author's subjectivity in a way that the interpreter comes to understand the author than the author understands themselves. McLean (2003, p. 5) supports the same view by saying that interpretation is transmitting wholly to human understanding what is beyond human intelligence. The researcher chose the method to explicate information with full meaning.

The third reason for using the phenomenological hermeneutic method was that it is comprehensive, valid and reliable. It also give the researcher leeway of interacting with the co-researchers several times where adjustments to the investigation are made accordingly thus making the information obtained to be holistic. In phenomenological hermeneutic research, the researcher must have several sessions with the co-researchers so as to empower them to describe their lived experiences by filling blanks in the semi-structured questionnaire, using their own words that form anecdotal report (Stone, 1979, pp. 216-221). The sessions were interviews, but not interview per se but inter-view, which means an exchange of views between two or

more people on an issue of mutual interest, which was examination in this case (Groenewald, 2004, p. 47).

The holistic nature of the information obtained was easily enhanced through several dialogues with the supervisors who critiqued the semi-structured questionnaire so that the information gained from the study was reliable and valid. The comprehensiveness of the method was augmented with memoing, which is defined as jotting down relevant notes by the researcher as the investigation progressed (Groenewald, 2004, p. 48 and Trochim, 2006). The researcher sought for this holistic nature of information and therefore chose this method.

For the comprehensiveness of the information, the researcher wanted to confirm whether descriptions of lived experience were genuine and this method provided a procedure whereby summary of all the information from the co-researchers was relayed back to them to ensure if it represented what they actually intended and necessary adjustments made accordingly thus making the findings of the research to be from within and not from without and hence authentic.

The fourth reason of using phenomenological hermeneutic method is that it enabled the researcher to be precise through using appropriate philosophical terms for the study and to explore the information accurately. The terms applied are unique to phenomenology and their use, apart from making the information accurate; they provide ground for easy reading and understanding. Examples of the terms include epoche, noema, noesis ontology, ontics and intentionality, among others.

The term epoche as defined (Kemerling, 2011 and Mautner, 2005, p. 196). is the “bracketing off” of preconceived notions. It implies freedom from suppositions whereupon judgment is suspended until all the information pertaining to an issue has been arrived at. When investigation is done with preconceived notions, the reality becomes distorted. Epoche is a process of analysing data that incorporates validity and reliability throughout. The application of the concept of epoche in this study was quite restricted because the method in phenomenological hermeneutic that made it tricky to bracket off information.

When interpretation is brought up in a phenomenological study some people may not see the sense of bracketing off suppositions but in this study the researcher and the co-researcher first suspended all their assumptions about examinations and described the situation without displaying any prejudices. The researcher did memoing as the lived experiences of examinations were described by the co-researchers. The experiences of the co-researchers revealed themselves naturally without coercion or intimidation. As explained by Heidegger (2002, pp. 243-288 and Smith & Osborn, 2006, p. 57f) and Smith (2008), phenomenological method is the art of “letting things show themselves.” In exactly Heideggerian term, the phenomenological method allows

“that which shows itself to be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.” This is the natural flow of information which is facilitated by the friendliness and good feelings among co-researchers and also between the researcher and the co-researchers. This is one of the reasons why the term co-researcher rather than research participant or research assistant is preferred in a phenomenological

research. A co-researcher is someone the researcher, with all due respects, treats as an equal. The humane treatment coupled good feelings and understanding enhanced the flow of information devoid of hindrances and the co-researchers, known as prospective teachers described sincerely their lived experiences of university entry examinations.

Epoche made it possible to investigate subjective knowledge by attending to two poles of prospective teachers' experiences of university entry examinations: *noema* and *noesis*. Noema is that which is perceived and noesis is the act of perceiving (Robbins, 2006). What was perceived was what came from the inner feelings of prospective teachers. The inner feelings were the lived experiences of the examinations, the ontology. Ontology is defined as hidden essences or the inwardness of things (The Great Soviet encyclopedia, 2010). The act of perceiving was accomplished by thinking and reasoning which were continuous processes.

What was perceived, noema, was subjected to phenomenological reduction (*eidetic*). Phenomenological reduction is a process of reducing noema to its essential meanings and this enhances validity and reliability (Robbins, 2006). Essential meanings are the "essences." The focus of phenomenological hermeneutic investigation is to reach essences which are the ideal forms of phenomena, almost similar to forms or ideas in Plato's idealistic philosophy (Robbins, 2006). Selivanov (n.d.) notes that essences are similarly termed phenomenology or ontology or being or reality. The essences arrived at are phenomena of knowledge or consciousness. The phenomena of knowledge are not of the world but of the spirit and this why

Hegel entitles his work “The phenomenology of spirit” (Selivanov, n.d.). Essences are inner knowledge which is spiritual.

After everything has been bracketed it is advantageous to the researcher because the mind is able to come into contact with the phenomenon. The mind intuitively holds the phenomenon (Churchil & Wertz, 1985 and Durgee, 1987) as an object to grapple with for understanding. When the mind intuitively holds the phenomenon, the qualities or the characteristics of the phenomenon such as choosing a wrong career, failure of the examinations to properly evaluate an individual’s knowledge claims are realised. These qualities are realised by an individual and it is difficult to share it with any other person (Mautner, 2005, p. 510). The felt qualities and characteristics are termed *qualia* (singular=*quale*) (Audi, 1999, p. 762, Blackburn, 1996), and are unique to each and every individual. When these qualities are felt, the individual approaches the essence of meaning of their experience.

The method enabled the researcher to make it possible to reach essences through the interplay of the outward and inward evidences thus accepting objectivity and investigating subjectivity. The objectivity referred to the actual grades obtained by the co-researchers in KCSE examinations while the subjectivity concerned with the meanings and understanding of the grades. The grades are the outward evidences whereas the meanings and understanding attached to these grades by the co-researchers (prospective teachers) are the inner evidences.

The outer and inner awareness or evidences have been debated throughout the history of philosophy. Inner awareness according to Gadamer (1975) and Smith

(2008), is postulated by Plato as being the concept of forms; Descartes creates the idea of sense consciousness, Locke introduces self-consciousness and Hegel names it spirit, all referring to ontology or the hidden or a priori attributes of a being. Outward evidences are the examination grades achieved by prospective teachers. These outward evidences are objective and are called *ontics* or *etic* evidences. Ontic or etic evidences could be described objectively by other people because they can be observed. The inner evidences were prospective teachers' subjective experiences that included feelings, thinking, imaginations, expectations and emotions which they were conscious of. The subjective experiences are known as the *interiority of ontics* or *emic* evidences or *ontology* (Wrathal and Dreyfus, 2006). The study prefers the terms ontics and ontology to refer to outward and inward evidences, respectively. So, the interplay of ontology and ontics became the core of investigating the lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations in Kenya.

The inside and outside, according to Merleau-Ponty, as noted by Smith (2005, p. 556), are inseparable. There is no sharp distinction between the inner and the outer self. This means ontology and ontics are inseparable. Both ontology and ontics of prospective teachers on their experiences of university entry examinations are intertwined. It must be noted, however, the body is a representation of a certain absence, whether separate or inseparable from that absence (Vallor, 2009).

Descartes, as reported by Shand (2003, p. 236), considers mind and body, or ontology and ontics, to be distinct and separate and any issue which is ontological cannot be accommodated by science. In phenomenology, the body and mind are seamlessly woven. This is why a phenomenological method of investigation accepts

scientific knowledge and then goes into the realms of subjectivity (Giorgi, 2008, p.2 & Ary et al., 2006, p. 461f). Campbell (n.d.) explains that the phenomenological method deals with the description of human feelings, emotions and experiences, which are subjective. Kundert (2000) also explains that the method enables an investigator to gain direct subjective experience independent of and prior to intellectual postulations. The first step in capturing lived experiences, as explained by Bas (2006, p. 455), is subjectivity. Phenomenology as a research method according to Merleau-Ponty, as reported by van Manen (2002), describes consciousness as embodied awareness of primordial experience. Consciousness is felt in and towards the body. An individual is inwardly and outwardly conscious. The awareness of the outward and the inward leads to a principle in phenomenology known as *intentionality*.

Intentionality is generally defined as “aboutness” (Silby, 1998, Moltmann, n.d. and Lycan, n.d.). The mind expresses intentionality when it is directed upon or about something. That something can be real or imagined. The most controversial issue with this definition, as noted by Lycan (n.d.), is whether the imagined object that cannot be observed corresponds to reality. The study focuses on things of reality that correspond to examinations as described by co-researchers, including their imaginations on the examinations. The study takes co-researchers imaginations as real when they are directed towards the examinations.

The relationship between the inward and outward is the core of phenomenological method of investigation. Intentionality is a thought that is enduring and it is persistently manifested in an individual’s work and actions (Smith, 2008). The

central structure of an experience is its intentionality, which is the way it is directed through its content or meaning towards a certain object in the world (Smith, 2008). Intentional experience is a combination of the outward appearance of something and how it looks like “inside our heads” (Moustakas, 1994). For example, when one looks at the results of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), the mind perception and the objective reality of what is observed are not the same. The examination results given in grades and figures and perceived outwardly are objective reality. The mind perception that forms the fundamental principles of true knowledge, which is subjective, is different. It involves feelings, emotions, thinking and imaginations. The blend of the objective reality and the mind perception results to intentionality.

Intentionality is the merging principle of what is in the mind and what is objectively observed. What is in the mind is influenced by experiences and it is purely subjective, yet it is the root of knowledge and the ultimate reality. Reality for an individual according to Stone (1979, p. 13f) is formed when what one is conscious of has been internalised. That is internalisation of outward appearance and what is inside our head to form a synthesis. The method allowed reality of university entry examinations to form a synthesis of outward and inward experiences of prospective teachers of the examinations. The intentionality which is directed outside is called *volition* which implies that an individual is able to choose and decide according to their wish in line with the influence of nature. Every domain of human consciousness exhibits dialectic of inner and outer directed dynamics (Stone, 1979, p. 13). It is this dialectic which results to a synthesis known as intentionality, which is enduring and persistently manifests itself.

Phenomenological hermeneutic method of investigation is accomplished through juxtaposed descriptions and interpretations of inner and outer evidences Stone (1979, pp.16-18). Intentionality is the test that confirms whether what is observed is actually the reality or not.

The fifth reason for using the phenomenological method was to make it possible for co-researchers to compare and contrast their experiences. This sharing of experiences is termed *eidetic variation*. Husserl called it *solitary imagination of a philosopher*, while Merleau-Ponty called it *common opinion* (Kwant, 1999, p. 167f). Eidetic variation results in eidetic images in the mind in which the mind has vividness of sense data (Flew, 1999, p. 102). Eidetic variation made the prospective teachers deepen their understanding and hence achieved the truth of their lived experiences. Comparing and contrasting experiences led to dialogue which is viewed as enhanced inter-subjectivity. This is a situation where a prospective teacher uses their own thoughts to make sense of others' thoughts (Bas, 2006, p. 459). It is the mind sharing information to reach common principles. This sharing was accomplished through dialogue. A prospective teacher dialogued within their own mind and with the fellow prospective teachers together with the researcher.

The dialogue incorporated also triologue - a situation whereby an individual takes into account their past, present and future experiences (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p.379). For example, the prospective teachers were asked to indicate whether they would be teachers for ever; whether they felt the already done examinations captured their knowledge, and also their feelings about the grades they received.

The sixth reason for using the phenomenological hermeneutic method is that it enabled the investigation to focus on meanings and interpretation of essences rather than their measurements. Natural scientists according to Lindseth and Norberg (2004, p. 146) get preoccupied with explaining natural objects or events but the understandable meaning of these events are taken for granted.

While seeking for meaning and understanding, qualitative explication of data is achieved by focusing on lived experiences, which are phenomenological. Emphasis is laid on meanings of essences of experiences rather than measurements (Moustakas, 1994). Lived experiences are obtained from first-person accounts in informal and formal conversations and interviews. Meaning is obtained when an object as it appears in our consciousness mingles with the object in nature (Moustakas, 1994).

Meanings are the fundamental principles that a phenomenologist uses to construct reality on a firmer footing that emphasizes personal knowledge and interpretation (Berrios, 1989, p. 425 and Lester, 1999, p. 1). The method is applied to investigate experiences that result in understanding before the mind is distorted with assumptions, prejudices and theories about an issue. It focuses on investigating first-person experiences; what an individual has experienced prior to any knowledge.

The investigation of meanings of essences by the researcher, according to Husserl's dictum, goes "back to the things themselves" which means emphasising knowledge that is rooted in meanings rather than in analysis of physical objects (Boeree, 2001,

Laverty, 2003 and Moustakas, 1994). It involves focusing on essence of a thing, which, as described by Mostert (2002), is its essential meaning before social and cultural meanings are attached to it. It is the true “being”. The meaning of essence, which is also known as the lived experience is more than what is known (Churchill and Wertz, 1985). The phenomenological hermeneutic method strives to unravel the unknown from what is objectively known. The investigation of the lived experiences of prospective teachers attempted to reach what was unknown from what the examination grades portrayed.

The seventh reason for using the method is that it allowed the researcher to interact on a person-to-person basis with the co-researchers, whereby relevant issues could be discussed and irrelevant issues discarded. This procedure of personal interaction facilitated researcher’s grasp of deeper descriptions and interpretations of the co-researcher’s lived experiences. It also enabled the researcher to consider non-verbal communication that formed an integral part of the overall description and interpretation.

3.4 Strategies used in collecting lived experiences of university entry examinations from prospective teachers in Kenyan public universities

All the six Kenyan public universities (Egerton, Kenyatta, Masinde Muliro, Maseno, Moi, and the University of Nairobi) that offer education course were incorporated in the study and each was visited. The visits were made between January and March, 2012. A minimum of two and a maximum of four visits were made. By using these universities, it was easier to triangulate the lived experiences. Triangulation is

defined as contrasting the data and validating the data if they yield similar findings (Groenewald, 2004, p. 46).

After obtaining permission from universities' authorities, appropriate strategies were used to reach the students (co-researchers), although the exercise was time consuming and bureaucratic. The universities nevertheless, provided necessary assistance that facilitated the collection of data for the research.

The first strategy employed was getting the target population and the sample size although these are not demanding in a phenomenological piece of research. Here, there is no general rule on the sample size, which is the number of participants or co-researchers to be involved in the study, although some authorities recommend various sample sizes. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006, p. 472), Anderson (1998, p. 123), and Cohen and Manion (1989, p. 104) consider a sample size of 30 to be appropriate. McMillan (2008, p. 292) recommends a sample size of between five and 25. Groenewald (2004, p. 46) supports a sample size of ten to be appropriate so as not to reach a saturation. Saturation is reached when the interviewees introduced no new perspectives on the topic of study (Groenewald, 2004, p. 46).

The target population was described as all first year students in Kenyan public universities who take the Bachelor of Education (Science and Arts) as their degree course and are sponsored by the Kenya government.

In this study, a random sample size of 48 co-researchers was selected to ensure that each of the Kenyan six public universities that offer bachelor of education as one of their courses participated in the study. Eight students-four male and four-female were randomly selected from each of the six public universities. The eight students were balanced between sciences and arts, whereby four students were taking B Ed (Science) and the other four were taking B Ed (Arts). The four students for both B Ed (Science) and B Ed (Arts) were each gender balanced.

The second strategy dealt with designing the research to capture the prospective teachers' lived experiences of KCSE examinations. Descriptive design was adopted since prospective teachers were to describe their experiences of KCSE examinations. Descriptive research according to Kombo and Tromp (2006, p. 71) describes the state of affairs as it exists. Phenomenological research thus, describes lived experiences as they are.

The third phenomenological strategy was developing a semi-open-ended questionnaire to capture the lived experiences of examinations of prospective teachers. The questionnaire was phenomenological in orientation because it enabled co-researchers to provide their subjective experiences. This is why the questionnaire was ascertained valid and reliable through supervisors' appraisals and constantly visiting of the co-researchers. The concept of validity as noted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003, p. 95), ensures that the questionnaire, which is the instrument, describes what is intended. The procedure for ascertaining reliability in a phenomenological investigation is going over the instruments several times with the co-researchers, adjusting the instruments to measure what is intended and relaying

back to the co-researchers the information that has been gathered so that they can confirm their truthfulness (Groenewald, 2004).

The co-researchers were visited more than once and this necessitated the adjustment of the items on the questionnaire to accurately capture the lived experiences of prospective teachers on university entry examinations. Discussion with co-researchers in a series of visits to six public universities and the critical appraisals of the supervisors made the instruments reliable and valid. All these made piloting untenable. In a phenomenological research, as pointed out by Fraenkel and Wallen (2006, p. 472), piloting is not very essential since a researcher spends several sessions with the co-researchers and is able to make some adjustments to the instruments as the study progresses.

The environment for the phenomenological investigation was made conducive for the co-researchers to vividly describe their experiences. The sitting arrangement was circular so as to encourage discussion on equal footing. The open-ended questionnaire was issued to each co-researcher who was encouraged to ask as many questions as possible and to provide any appropriate additional information. Further communication with the co-researchers was done via mobile phones so as to clarify some information that posed difficulties when organising the data by the researcher.

In order to obtain accurate information, the prospective teachers, known as the co-researchers, anecdotally reported their lived experiences. These co-researchers were only selected from the learners who were admitted through JAB and did receive the government scholarship. This cadre of learners is what the government budgets for

and incorporates in her national planning. Two visits were made to each university, specifically to interact with the co-researchers which enabled them to describe their lived experiences of university entry examinations. Apart from using the semi-structured questionnaire, memoing as a qualitative data collection method was utilized to record information from first hand experiences so as to describe each phenomenon accurately (Groenewald, 2004). This was done by the principal researcher when he took notes as the phenomenological investigation progressed. In this way, lived experiences of the co-researchers were augmented thus clarifying some issues especially when co-researchers seemed to be contradicting themselves. But, during personal interaction with the co-researchers, an open ended interview schedule with 20 items (Appendix A) was filled-up. After completing the schedule, there was further talk on the items whereby co-researchers raised a number of issues which arose during an in-depth group discussion.

3.5 Anecdotal reports

The descriptions that follow are anecdotal reports on lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations in Kenya, extracted from APPENDIX A. The anecdotal reports summarize the experiences of 48 first year Bachelor of Education students from six Kenyan public universities. The anecdotal reports that were distinct and relevant to the study were noted. An attempt was made to discard repetitions.

The co-researchers who were principally prospective teachers comprised two categories. The first category consisted of prospective teachers who chose B Ed (teaching) as their first choice before KCSE examination results were released. The

second were prospective teachers who chose teaching after they had received their KCSE results. Those who chose teaching after the results did so during revision of courses or during inter-faculty transfers. The anecdotal reports indicate how the two categories of prospective teachers responded to the twenty items of the structured questionnaire which was open-ended and the co-researchers were free to add further information.

After filling the questionnaire, further discussion was done with the co-researchers on the items contained therein. Each co-researcher indicated their mobile phone number on the questionnaire which facilitated further discussion on issues that needed more clarification, making the questionnaire valid and reliable. Telephonic conversation was done after the researcher had left the field; it was not the chief instrument for gathering data but it supplemented where uncertainty arose after fieldwork and this is supported in a phenomenological research where the number of interactions with co-researchers can be as many as possible.

3.5.1 Examinations for university entry in Kenya

All the 48 co-researchers who were involved in the research sat KCSE examinations. Although some students who join Kenyan public universities come from other countries and are admitted through other examinations, it was not possible to incorporate such students in the research. The grades through which they were admitted ranged from B- to B+. The grades were all Bs that is, B-, B and B+.

3.5.2 Degree preferences before KCSE examination results

Surprisingly, only one of the 48 co-researchers chose B Ed as their first choice. Further discussion and later telephonic conversations confirmed that the prospective teacher chose B Ed out of passion. The prospective teacher was fictitiously named “Efen.” The second choice was Bachelor of commerce, which they hoped could enable them join business if the career in teaching failed. None of the co-researchers had education as the second choice before KCSE results.

3.5.3 Degree preferences after KCSE examination results

Out of the total of 48 co-researchers, 47 became prospective teachers after the KCSE examinations results through either revision of courses or inter-faculty transfers. Some co-researchers chose bachelor of education as either first or second. Some co-researchers applied for inter-faculty transfer and then joined bachelor of education degree programme after they had realized that they could not cope with the courses they were admitted to.

3.5.4 Co-researchers’ lived experiences on missed degree choices

Forty seven out 48 co-researchers who were sampled for the research missed their preferred degree choices. Nevertheless, they met the university admission cut-off points for government sponsorship. Their initial choice was not bachelor of education degree and hence they had no lived experiences about this.

The co-researchers’ feelings about the degree choices that they had initially applied for and missed were very diverse. The following degree choices were chosen by the

47 co-researchers: electrical engineering, computer science, commerce, nursing, nutrition and dietetics, law medicine and surgery.

The co-researchers described their feelings showing how happy they would be if they were to get university admission on the basis of the first degree choices they made without undergoing the revision of courses after the announcement of KCSE results. The following are some of the anecdotal reports from the co-researchers. The names given are fictitious.

Co-researcher, Aku:

“Had it been that I did not change my degree course after KCSE results, I would be happier than now”.

Aku’s ambition was to do Electrical Engineering. They could not do this course despite the fact that they met the university admission criteria.

Co-researcher, Afi:

“I would be very happy and joyous if at all the admission was based on the first degree choice. Otherwise, I also felt good for the reason that I was able to join university”.

Afi’s first choice was computer science.

Co-researcher, Adifu:

“I would be very happy and proud for having achieved my dream.”

Adifu wanted to study commerce. Their dream was shattered and was not happy to take the degree of bachelor of education.

Co-researcher, Bifu:

“I would feel very good since I could be sure I will meet the career of my dream and be prepared to achieve my goals in the career.”

Bifu wanted to do a degree in nursing. Bachelor of Education was not a dream career. Bifu had goals in life that they wanted to achieve through nursing. It was revealed through further probing that they wanted to set up a nursing home later in their career.

Co-researcher, Goghu:

“It would be good because I would have done what I loved and had a passion for.”

Goghu’s choice was Food Nutrition and Dietetics. Goghu did not have passion for teaching and this was further confirmed through discussion.

Co-researcher, Kofuyo:

“I would be very happy for I really feel that that was my interest i.e. business related career.”

Kofuyo wanted to do Bachelor of Commerce degree where he had interest. From memoing and telephonic conversation, it became clear that Kofuyo intended to use their commercial skills to venture into business.

Co-researcher, Lipo:

"This would have been my greatest happiness bearing in mind that my first degree (ComputerScience) was highly preferred."

Through memoing and further discussion it was realized that Lipo never imagined studying for Bachelor of Education degree since their sole interest was in computer science.

Co-researcher, Biliawu:

"I would be very glad and work hard to see that my dreams come true."

Biliawu's choice was medicine.

Co-researcher, Zepho:

"I would be very, very happy if admitted on the first degree choice for that is what my heart yearned for."

Zepho's first degree choice was Bachelor of Arts.

Co-researcher, Chelu:

"I think it would be much better as I would also wish that they consider all the students with the entry points as qualifiers of the courses they applied for."

Chelu's first choice was bachelor of law. Chelu felt that one should be admitted into university to study degree of their choice once admission requirement had been met.

Co-researcher, Potesi:

"I would have felt very good and happy to be in the profession of my choice."

Potesi's choice was Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery.

Co-researcher, Disku:

"I would be very happy because I would be studying a course of my choice, which I chose out of passion."

Disku's career choice was medicine.

Co-researcher, Quono:

"I would feel very good because my first degree choice (Bachelor of Medicine) was what I had been admiring since childhood."

Telephonic conversation revealed that Quono was attracted to medicine through watching doctors and they never thought of joining teaching as a profession.

Co-researcher, Kozi:

"It would be enthusiastic because it would show that I passed and qualified for the course of my choice".

Kozi's first choice was medicine. Kozi was disappointed because they could not prove that they qualified for the degree course they wanted to pursue.

From memoing and further probing, it was evident that the co-researchers were quite sincere in expressing their feelings about the missed degree courses they had initially applied for.

3.5.5 Co-researchers' lived experiences on the merits and demerits of revising the choice of degree courses after the KCSE examination results.

The merits and demerits described below represented the lived experiences of the 48 co-researchers.

Table 4.1

Merits and Demerits of Revising Degree Choice

researcher Name)	Co- (fictitious	Merits	Demerits
Potesi		Course is matched with performance.	The student gets confused about which course to choose.
Disku		It gives one opportunity to revisit one's choices based on the results.	People are denied opportunity to study courses of their choice.
Pesto		Achievement is matched with one's ability.	It makes one choose a career on the basis of performance rather than passion.
Dinko		One is given a second chance.	It leads one to do a course an individual does not have a calling for.
Kozi		It gives one a chance to get university admission.	One may choose a course one is not willing to do.
Chuba		It gives one a degree course that matches cluster points.	It prevents one from pursuing the ideal course.
Zegi		It makes you choose a course according to your cluster points.	One may choose a non-challenging course, which is below their ability.
Adifu		It gives the student opportunity to change degree	The dream of the student is shattered.

	choice after making an informed decision.	
Bifu	The degree is matched with the grade achieved according to cluster points	The degree chosen is according to grades attained but not interest.
Goghu	It makes one make informed and realistic choice according to results.	It forces one to take a course which one does not like

3.5.6 Co-researchers' lived experiences on preparations for examinations

Individual candidates and schools were fully prepared for the examinations. The co-researchers indicated the completion of the syllabus and thorough revision before the examinations as testimonies that they were fully prepared.

3.5.7 Co-researchers' lived experiences on being teachers forever

The co-researchers imagined their lived experiences in the light of the fact that they will be professional teachers. Most of them did not intend to be teachers forever. Some said they wished to be teachers at university level. Others said they wished to pursue careers of their dreams after completing bachelor of education because that will find when they are financially stable. Other co-researchers said they like teaching because there would be no time to pursue other careers.

Here below are some of the anecdotal reports from the co-researchers in response to what teaching as a career portended for them.

Some of the co-researchers who did not want to be teachers for ever put it as follows:

Kofuyu :

“No. I will use teaching as a stepping stone and then I shall embark on my dream career, which is business.”

The co-researcher turned to education during revision of courses. Their first choice was commerce and the second choice was business administration.

Lipo:

“No. teaching is not a profession and teachers are not accorded respect in society. The degree in education will be used just as a stepping stone for any future good career.”

The co-researcher's first choice was computer science and the second was business administration. It was noted that during the revision of courses, the co-researcher chose Bachelor of Arts (Kiswahili) and economics as first and second choices, respectively. The co-researcher turned to bachelor of education through inter-faculty transfer.

Timbo:

“No. After few years' teaching experience, I will join politics or serve in other fields.”

The co-researcher's first choice was Bachelor of Science (Mathematics) and the second was Bachelor of Arts. The co-researcher turned to education during revision of courses.

Biliawu:

"No. I wish to be a military cadet after graduation. I will study Military Science as soon as I complete my first degree in education."

The co-researcher chose medicine as first choice and the second choice was environmental science. Education was chosen during the revision of courses.

Zepho:

"Not really. I intend to venture into other professions since this profession of being a teacher will only serve as a gateway to other professions."

The co-researcher chose Bachelor of Arts as first choice and Bachelor of Commerce as the second choice. During the revision of courses, they chose education.

Chelu:

"I would like not to be a teacher for ever but advance and become somebody of more value unlike just a teacher."

The co-researcher's first choice was law and the second was engineering. They chose education during the revision of courses.

Pesto:

"No. My dream was to be a chemical engineer. After bachelor of education, I will advance it."

The co-researcher's first choice was Chemical Engineering and the second was Pharmacy. They turned to education during revision of courses.

Disku:

"No. This is because teaching profession has been overlooked with teachers being paid peanuts."

Disku's first choice was medicine and the second was economics. Disku turned to education during the revision of courses whereby the first choice was economics and the second was education.

The co-researchers who wished to be teachers for ever put it this way:

Efen: *"I like teaching. I like sharing a lot with students and working with them."*

The first choice was education and the second was commerce. This was consistent even when revision of degree courses was being done. This was the one co-researcher out of the 48 whose first choice was education. The choice was authenticated by the researcher's telephonic communication with them.

"Adifu":

"Yes, in a broader dimension, for example, a teacher of teachers."

Their first choice was Bachelor of Commerce and the second was Bachelor of Education (Science). During revision of courses the same choices were repeated.

Bifu:

“Yes. After my degree course I wish to advance in my studies and finally be a teacher in higher educational institutions e.g. university and college”.

The first choice was nursing and the second was civil engineering. During revision of courses, the first choice was education and the second was nutrition.

Aku:

“Yes. I wish to remain a teacher or even a lecturer (after higher education) in the rest of my life. This is because I like the profession.”

The first choice was electrical engineering and the second choice was Bachelor of Education (Science) and during revision of courses Bachelor of Education (Science) was first and Bachelor of Commerce was second choice.

Adiku:

“Yes. I like teaching and interacting with people.”

Education was second choice after medicine and during revision of courses, education was first and biochemistry was second.

Goghu:

“Yes, as a teacher it will enable me to help the people that really need my help academically and also help them achieve their dreams and aspirations and make them leaders of tomorrow who can think critically.”

Goghu’s first choice was nutrition and the second was law. During the revision of courses, education was for both first and second choices, B Ed (Early Childhood) and B Ed (Arts), respectively.

Potesi:

“Yes. I would like to work with the young people, helping and preparing them for the future, just as I was helped.”

The first choice was medicine and during revision of courses the first choice was economics and the second was education.

Quono:

“Yes, because I have interest in teaching and I would like to pass knowledge to students.”

The first choice was medicine, which they had admired since childhood. During revision of courses, education was second choice.

For the co-researchers who wished to be teachers throughout their lives, more information was elicited from them through telephone conversations that focused on certain questions as indicated below.

How come you now like teaching though it was not your first degree choice?

The answer that most co-researchers gave was that teaching was more appropriate if someone could not get their dream career. Some stated that teaching can prevent frustration because one can easily get employed in schools that are found everywhere.

Would you opt out of teaching if you got your dream career?

They maintained that if there could be chance of pursuing their dream career, they would leave teaching profession.

Memoing revealed that those who said they liked teaching, which was not their first career choice, were actually conditioned by circumstances whereby they had no alternatives but to join the teaching profession since that was what was available.

3.5.8 Co-researchers' lived experiences on their abilities being captured by KCSE examinations

The co-researchers described their experiences as not being fully captured by the KCSE examinations. Others felt that in certain subjects, especially those passed with grade As, they had their experiences well captured

The co-researchers complained that the examinations did not focus on some areas of the syllabus that they knew very well. They explained that the examinations were not balanced since the questions set were not a fair representation of the whole syllabus.

Some co-researchers gave further experiences. They said that the examinations were very easy and required brief answers but they knew a lot that they wanted to explain further and so their ability to elaborate on issues was not captured.

The co-researchers described different areas, which they considered the examinations would have assessed. They mentioned dealing with learners, co-curricular activities, how to cope with life situations, application of the knowledge acquired, knowledge of the subjects to be taught after graduation, practical skills like teaching methodology, how to identify learners with special educational needs, communication skills, and qualities of a good teacher.

A co-researcher put it this way: “The examinations did not distinguish a prospective teacher from a prospective doctor.”

On whether their fellow school candidates got the right grades in the examinations, co-researchers had different views. Some felt most candidates did not get what they expected. One co-researcher said:

“Most students did not get the grades they deserved. I do not know why, but something was amiss.”

Other students opted to repeat the examinations and this showed that they did not get what they expected. In comparing their schools’ performance with other schools that they had contact with, the co-researchers said that in some schools, every candidate was disappointed because of getting grades which were below their expectations. However, some schools performed better with improved performance indices as compared to previous year(s), whereas others dropped in performance. In other schools the performance was generally average and almost similar to other years. Some schools’ performance was below expectations, though they managed to take some students to universities.

The reasons attributed to good performance were early completion of the syllabus and thorough revision but poor performance resulted mainly from examination phobia.

3.5.9 Co-researchers lived experiences on their greatest joys and disappointments after getting the KCSE examination results

The greatest joy that co-researchers expressed after getting the examination results, was the realization that they were going to join university and would be sponsored by the government. This was also the joy of family members and friends, notwithstanding the degree course that was to be undertaken.

A co-researcher noted:

“My former teacher rang and informed me that my cut-off points met the JAB requirement. Immediately I became a recognized fellow in my village and beyond yet previously I was an unknown person.”

One co-researcher’s most memorable experience was the celebration that followed as a result of realizing that they would join university.

Co-researchers reflected on their teachers who worked hard and made them realize good results. They answered some questions in the examinations whose concepts had been thoroughly revised by their teachers during revisions.

As described by co-researchers, some questions were tough and vague and so they got confused, nevertheless they managed to do their best. Some did not get the grades they had envisioned either overall or in particular subjects.

According to some co-researchers, passing examinations instilled confidence in them. A co-researcher stated:

“Passing examinations enabled me to get into the university and this assured me of having confidence in whatever I do. The payment one gets from good and hard work is confidence. We experienced no cheating in the examinations in our school.”

Co-researchers were happy since examinations had to be done during morning hours, which gave them enough time for revision and to be ready the following day.

What caused great disappointment to co-researchers was lack of cluster points to pursue causes of their dreams.

On further discussion with them and memoing, they questioned why the Kenyan education system could not produce intellectuals who matched their professions.

One co-researcher was emphatic and stated:

“People study medicine but their heart is not in medicine and they can end up doing other things leaving patients suffering; people study education but their heart is not in helping the learners learn and this is why learners fail examinations, sometimes resulting to teachers being beaten or chased away by irate patients.”

On further reflection about the examinations, a co-researcher had this to say:

“The examinations enabled me to join a teaching course but I am worried because I am pursuing profession that people think is for the poor.”

The co-researchers described numerous bad experiences of examinations that they passed, which included separation, failure to pursue dream career, setting few topics that do not cover the whole syllabus, university selection based on what one scored

but not according to one's interest, vague questions. They further described their experiences touching on the examinations that focused on certain topics that were over-tested, failure caused by fear of examinations, questions being theoretical rather than practical, limited time for some subjects and lack of apparatus and instruments. The prospective teachers also described their experiences on examinations that focus on academic ability rather than practical skills, coupled with recycled questions thus making examinations easy if a candidate can revise the past papers.

After examinations, students got separated whereby those who pass join universities and others who could not make it deviate to different fields. This caused a break-up in friendships. A co-searcher asserted: *"The gap between those who passed and those who failed the examinations is unbridgeable."*

3.5.10 Views on any other lived experiences of KCSE examinations

These are the additional lived experiences of KCSE examinations the co-researchers gave when asked to give any information they felt important about KCSE examinations. Some of the lived experiences were new while others further strengthened what had been previously stated.

Co-researchers mentioned examination leakage and stated:

"Big schools lead in examination leakage and this is reported to us by our university colleagues who were formerly students of the so called big schools. Examination leakages discourage hard working students."

Another co-researcher wondered why KNEC is unable to curb examination irregularities. Some co-researchers suggested that examinations should have undisputed instruments to ascertain their fairness and relevance because some people fail as a result of badly set examinations.

Drilling of learners by teachers was pointed out by the co-researchers as one of the causes of poor performance in examinations since the learners drilled with the sole aim of passing do not sufficiently apply knowledge in a critical and creative way to handle questions. When a student gets a question in an examination that is not similar to the ones they had been drilled upon, confusion arises thus leading to failure.

Better relationship between teachers and students was cited by some co-researchers as a determining contributor to good examination performance. When there is good rapport between teachers and students, as explained by the co-researchers, the students are motivated to work hard and they are happy to take instructions from teachers whom they respect.

Some co-researchers suggested that, compulsory subjects such mathematics; English and Kiswahili that affect candidates' overall grades need to be allocated more time by KNEC.

Other co-researchers repeated what had been previously stated namely that, failure in examinations caused by examination phobia, lack of comprehensive assessment

that covers the whole syllabus from form one to four and examinations omitting some areas of knowledge from the syllabus.

3.6 Conclusion

The Phenomenological hermeneutic method is described as the most appropriate method because both description and interpretation are vital components of investigating lived experiences. Prejudices that could arise as a result of using hermeneutic method are counterbalanced by phenomenological method thus resulting in a holistic experience. The anecdotal reports of co-researchers' lived experiences of university entry examinations are provided. The lived experiences of co-researchers indicated that most students who join universities as prospective teachers do not have interest in the teaching profession, and moreover the initial degree choice was not Bachelor of Education.

The next chapter deals with data presentation and explication.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA EXPLICATION AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises three sections. In the first section, data is explicated through description and interpretation data using phenomenological hermeneutic method. The term “data explication” is preferred to data analysis in a phenomenological study (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996 and Groenewald, 2004). The term explication is derived from the Latin word *explicatus*, meaning to unfold. It is the process of unfolding data and providing understanding (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). While in analysis, the data is broken down into units thus interfering with the meaning. In this study, the unfolded data are considered as wholes leaving the meaning. In this process, the data is clustered and explicated under three themes: the relationship between lived experiences and the relevant literature reviewed, phenomenology of the teaching profession, and lived experiences of examinations as trialogic phenomena.

The second section presents the findings of the study by addressing the research objectives and the research questions. The first objective investigated how KCSE examinations show the lived experiences of prospective teachers. This objective was further guided by two questions: are examinations administered by KNEC phenomenological and how do KNEC examinations show lived experiences? The second objective was to examine implications of using KCSE examinations as a basic instrument for measuring prospective teachers’ lived experiences. The objective had a three-compound question asking, “What implications are there for

learners, Kenya as a society and the teaching profession, respectively, when KCSE examinations are used to assess learners?" The three questions examined implications on learners, Kenya as a society and the teaching profession.

The relationship between the perceived academic potential and the results of university entry examinations was investigated under objective number (iii). The questions addressed under this objective were: are the grades shown by KCSE examinations for university entry portraying prospective teachers' knowledge accurately and do prospective teachers accept their potentials as authenticated by KCSE examinations?

The third section provides suggestions on how best a phenomenological approach could be applied to give a comprehensive and, somehow, holistic assessment of a learner.

4.2 Data explication

The data are explicated under three themes that include the relationship between lived experiences and the relevant literature reviewed phenomenology of the teaching profession and lived experiences of examinations as trialogic phenomena. The themes emerged from the descriptions of the lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to university entry examinations.

4.2.1 The relationship between lived experiences and literature reviewed

The lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations in Kenya related to what was reviewed in the literature above, especially in chapters

one and two. This subsection examines what people believed in or said about examinations as demonstrated by the background to the study and the relevant literature reviewed. It interprets and explicates the lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations against what is in the background of the study and the literature reviewed. It is a convergence of the literature review with lived experiences. It shows how lived experiences may or may not authenticate people's beliefs.

4.2.1.1 Norm-Referenced assessment

The shortcomings of norm-referenced assessment, which forms the basis KCSE examinations although this is debatable, were demonstrated by lived experiences of prospective teachers. Their descriptions expressed easy questions that are set by KNEC whereby a candidate can easily pass so long as past papers are revised. They described KNEC questions that do not cover the syllabus from form one to four. These descriptions coincide with principles under which norm-referenced assessments are constructed. As noted in the literature review, the construction of norm-referenced assessment is premised on selected questions that do not cover the whole syllabus and do not allow everyone to pass so that when results are graphically interpolated a bell-shaped or nearly bell-shaped curve is formed (Hamacheck, 1995, pp. 391-393, Li, 2005, p. 226, and Fair Test, 2007). The results of KCSE examinations from 2004 to 2010, which were analyzed in the literature show nearly bell-shaped curves. These curves are indicative of similar patterns, year in year out and are characteristic of norm-referenced assessments.

Examinations form patterns in terms of the number of learners who are allowed to continue along the educational ladder. For example, in Tanzania, learners who proceed to secondary school are hardly less than 20% of those graduating from primary school (Tuguta, 1992). In Kenya, between 24% and 28% of school leavers get grade C+ and above and can join university. The figures have been consistent as exemplified from the year 2004 to 2010. Examination systems do ensure consistency over periods of time and they achieve this by adjusting the results (Naidoo, 2010).

An examination that is made to form a pattern is not ontological. Phenomenological hermeneutic shows it does not capture the essences of the learner since each and every learner is a unique individual, and, therefore, stereotypic assessment leaves out their essences. Human beings are not statistical data. They do not behave in the same way that can form a definite pattern. Norm-referenced assessment as noted by Kellaghan and Greaney (1992), does not show the level of a learner's knowledge but the assessment leads to grading that bears little resemblance to educational realities.

What are the educational realities if the same numbers of learners are to get the same grades in the examinations? The grades attained by the learners may not show their educational capabilities. If a learner gets grade E it shows that the learner was not in school because the grade can be achieved by any person who knows how to write their name and index number. The grades and the knowledge gained are far apart.

The learners may fail to show their full potential because the questions are not challenging to their intellect. Some prospective teachers described the questions as "not challenging." Murthy (2011) observed that test setters are usually the same

people and they do not go over the syllabi so as to think and get different questions but instead set the same questions.

A pattern that results from KNEC examinations is rather statistical and not phenomenological. Human nature is unique and variegated and their feelings, imaginations and thoughts cannot fit a pattern. The feelings and imaginations of candidates regarding one examination cannot be described in the form of bell-shaped curves. One of the definitions of philosophy that applies to this scenario is that it is the evaluation of people's beliefs to determine if they are reasonable (Shipka and Minton, 2004, p. 2). Belief in bell-shaped curves is not reasonable as far as examinations are concerned.

Literature reviewed in this study reveals that the Kenya National Examinations Council may not adequately assess the potentials of learners and this is reported by Caplan (2009), Hassan (2012) and Siringi (2009). Description of examination experiences concurs with this assertion. The cardinal description given by prospective teachers is "most students did not get the good grades they deserved. Actually something was amiss."

What actually was amiss? Phenomenological hermeneutic examines the interiority of the ontics, which is ontology or essence, with a view to interpreting it. The learner to whom the examinations are administered is knowledgeable and the examinations are to capture this knowledge to the satisfaction of the learner. Failure by the examinations to reach the essence of the learner is described as being amiss which is experienced by the general public and the candidates alike. What is amiss is

interpreted in the light of lived experiences given by prospective teachers. For example, the prospective teachers were sure that the gap between their potentials and what the university entry examinations revealed was quite wide. Their performance did not reveal their true potentials.

When the learner's examination performance does not reveal their inherent potential, it means the examinations left out candidate's essences that form the true knowledge. Examinations are tools which are supposed to reveal one's true knowledge. If examinations reveal a discrepancy between ontics and ontology, then the learner assessed is not in-the-grade but of-the-grade. The grade is incongruent with the learner. What the learner is as an individual disagrees with the grade.

The grade and the potential of the learner need to be seamless. There should be no boundary between them. As revealed by prospective teachers' lived experiences, the university entry examinations do not ascertain the learner's ontology. The examinations are to make ontology and ontics seamless but they do not. This resulted in prospective teachers complaining and feeling amiss in their knowledge after receiving the results of the examinations.

4.2.1.2 Single versus many examinations for university entry

The national examinations on which university entry in Kenya is premised are Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations. Various universities in the world do not peg their admissions to a single examination (Helmes, 2008). For example, most American universities administer Scholastic

Achievement Tests (SAT) to students joining undergraduate courses. This happens after the candidates have completed their secondary education.

The lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations revealed that candidates wished to be given a second chance to do relevant examinations and then join the careers of their choices. Their lived experiences on revision of degree courses after KCSE results and examination irregularity confirmed the wish.

Prospective teachers lived experiences on revision of degree courses described both their acceptance and non-acceptance of the second chance to choose university courses. They accepted it because it provided them with the opportunity to select courses that matched their cluster points but they did not accept it because it led to courses that they had no interest in. This could be interpreted in such a way that if they could get opportunity to do examinations, especially after form four examinations which, were relevant to the courses they intended to pursue, they would make use of the opportunity.

A single set of examinations may be a contributing factor to examination irregularities because the attention is focused on a single set of examinations. Prospective teachers were perplexed that KNEC was unable to eradicate examination irregularity. Some prospective teachers described their experiences of university entry examinations as an exercise fraught with irregularities spearheaded by some supposedly respected schools. A deeper meaning of examination irregularity may be lack of alternative examinations to enter university. When it is

not possible through other examinations other than the single one administered by KNEC, then it becomes tempting to use even unorthodox method to enter university. A candidate knows that KCSE examinations are the only gateway and other people use crooked methods to succeed. If other people use crooked methods to succeed, a candidate may ask, "Why not me"? Is the genesis of exam irregularity the examinations system or the candidates or those involved in administering examinations? An analogy can be drawn from the provision of food. If food comes from one source and those who are supposed to get it are aware that sometimes they may either get it or miss out on it, what actually is the conscious experience of the ones to get the food?

The imaginations, feelings and thinking of the people to get food are inward. The same applies to imaginations, feelings and thinking of the candidates to pass university entry examinations. The ontological consciousness is intentionality or aboutness towards examinations which is an ontic experience. When ontics and ontology are seamless, the outcome or intentionality may be examination irregularity. The irregularity becomes the essence rather than the superficial appearance.

When it is evident to a candidate that they have various examinations that could be considered for university entry, they would not strain themselves to pass by using unorthodox methods. This is because they are sure in their minds that their potentials for education will be ascertained. In the analogy of food provision, when an individual is certain that their hunger will be satisfied they may not wish to steal food. It means the system used in giving food is efficacious enough to satisfy

hunger. In the same way, if the examinations system guarantees university entry based on the fairness of examinations, no one may probably wish to get involved in exam irregularity.

Philosophy does not support examination irregularity. It supports discipline and hard work but would be interested in unravelling the meaning and understanding behind irregularity, nevertheless this came out from the lived experiences but it is not the focus of the study.

In the case of university entry examinations in Kenya, the candidates, parents, teachers and all those people involved in the examinations are aware that it is a single set of examinations that determines university admission. The anxiety imposed by the examinations as experienced by parents, guardians, teachers and all those dealing with examinations is definitely heaped on the candidates. It is the candidates who are urged to work hard and pass since the only gateway to university is this single set of examinations. Urging candidates to work hard and pass may interfere with their consciousness.

When consciousness is disrupted, intentionality or essence which is a synthesis of ontics and ontology may change from good to worse. Intentionality is dynamic, that is, it changes with circumstances. Pressure piled on candidates to work hard and pass may at the same time make them perform below expectations in the university entry examinations as result of examination phobia. The prospective teachers described examination phobia as one of the dreaded phenomena in examinations. Since there is only one examination to enter university, the examination phobia may be so intense that the candidate may fail.

4.2.1.3 The KCSE examinations and university entry

The lived experiences of prospective teachers showed that examinations as prescribed in the Kenyan education system cannot be scrapped. Authorities such as Li (2005) say examination is entrenched in education system for good and it can only be modified to meet the prevailing circumstances.

Passing KCSE examinations is a sign of academic ability, which is respected by humanity. A prospective teacher remarked: "After passing my KCSE examinations my former teacher rang to congratulate me and I became somebody within my village and beyond." One who has passed KCSE examinations is recognized as an academic who is able to pursue further education and later be a leader in any field of endeavour. Getting admission into a Kenyan public university after passing KSCE examinations is a confirmation of individual student's worthiness.

One of the most memorable experiences noted by prospective teachers was the celebration that followed after they had passed the KCSE examinations, confirming that the cut-off points had been achieved. This makes the examinations genuine instruments to ascertain those to join the public universities and even get government's sponsorship. Celebrations that one underwent affirm the genuine procedure of entering university, notwithstanding the courses to be undertaken.

No lived experiences disputed examinations. In describing their lived experiences of university entry examinations, no prospective teacher's description could be interpreted to mean abandonment of examinations. Although some universities in

America like the University of Oklahoma and Arizona State University admit their students for degree courses on the basis of no examinations (Helmes, 2008), the lived experiences of prospective teachers did not support this. Examinations are the right procedures for university admission in Kenya.

4.2.1.4 Phenomenology of KCSE examinations and the Kenya society

This part deals with the experiences that can be discerned on KCSE examinations in relation to the entire Kenya society.

The experiences of joining or missing to secure entry into the university through KCSE examinations as expressed by prospective teachers do not favour the cohesiveness of Kenya as a society. Those who passed and met the cut-off points for government sponsorship are feted by their friends, relatives and the community yet those who could not meet that target were probably disgusted and sad.

Joining a university by an individual learner, not necessarily a prospective teacher can be interpreted as a path that leads to some sort of arrogance and some people think that university students should rethink the purpose of education (Lekishon, 2011). University students get alienated from the society whereupon they form a class of their own. They may end up looking down upon those who did not go to university. This is why a co-researcher noted that the gap between those who joined university and those who did not could not be bridged. What role do institutions within Kenyan society play in bridging the gap?

It could be interpreted that the most important institution in Kenya is the state, which should play a leading role in narrowing the gap between those who acquired university education and those who did not. By offering scholarship to some selected few, it could be interpreted that the state is playing a role in dividing Kenyans. What if the government sets aside funds for those who had done KCSE examinations to pursue education up to the highest level they could reach? Why must the state discriminate in allocating education funds which are meant for the overall development of the nation?

Education is better promoted through the indiscriminate allocation of state resources. Those who cannot manage to join university have equally important economic roles to play in the development of Kenya. It is for the state to recognize this. If this is not recognized, it may be common to hear members of the society claiming that they can only financially support the education of learners who are academically able. For the cohesiveness of Kenya as a society no one should feel discriminated against.

The majority of KCSE candidates, as indicated on graphs in chapter two, are of grade Ds and the society may be branded “grade D mindset” (Kinyanjui, 2011). Why must the examinations consign learners to grade D? The cause might not be the difficulty of the tests set but it might lie in predictability of what the tests should portray. Prediction does not take into consideration the consciousness of the people assigned the grades.

4.2.2 Phenomenology of the teaching profession

The descriptions of lived experiences of most of the prospective teachers indicated that the examinations were general. No examination focused on the teaching profession. A prospective teacher noted that “the examinations did not distinguish a prospective teacher from a prospective doctor.” Although the university entry examinations are used to select people for the teaching profession, none aims at identifying a teacher.

For the examinations to identify a teacher for the profession, the determining factor should be the lived experience of the prospective teacher. When an individual nurses an ambition to be a teacher during their education, the idea is embedded in their consciousness. The nursed ambition forms the primordial knowledge of the individual, the essence. This ontological experience forms the foundation of the teaching profession. The teacher becomes a *teacher-in-the-profession* not a *teacher-of-the-profession*. A teacher-in-the-profession is one who is deeply involved in the profession, their thinking and actions are focused on the profession. They dream the profession, talk the profession, improve the profession and are prepared to die for the profession. When prospective teachers described how their life would be in the teaching profession they described their interest not to be in the teaching profession, and in case, they could get careers of their dreams, they would, with immediate effect, quit.

A teacher-of-the-profession deals with teaching in a superficial way. They are theoretical about teaching. They can give their descriptions and explanations of what the profession is all about but can leave it at will. Their commitment is not to the profession. Such a teacher is the one mostly described through the lived experiences

of prospective teachers. As described by some prospective teachers: “Teaching is not a profession; after working for some few years we shall embark on a worthwhile profession and not just mere teaching. Moreover teaching is not a respected job and teachers are paid peanuts.”

Selecting someone who is not committed to teaching can be interpreted as a disservice to learners. Such a person is unlikely to stimulate learners to attain the necessary educational goals. Such a teacher is outwardly a teacher but inwardly a human being of quite different profession or could, somehow, be described as a professional migrant; one who is continuously moving from profession to profession and has not settled on any desired profession.

When one joins the teaching profession because they could not meet the requirements of a job of their dream then teaching becomes a place for procuring employment for professional misfits. This does not augur well for the profession when people join it because they do not have alternative careers. For example, when a prospective teacher says they join the profession so as to avoid frustration that could result due to lack of employment, their focus is on employment and the benefits that accrue to it but not the profession itself. Why must the teaching profession be the one for professional misfits?

When university entry examinations produce professional misfits who can only dump themselves in teaching then the examinations can be described as being at fault. Without proper screening, the examinations allow individuals who lack teaching aptitude to join the profession. Such teachers may be habitual absentees or

latecomers to schools. They do not feel disturbed in their minds even if they are absent from or late in coming to school.

4.2.3 Lived experiences of examinations as trialogic phenomena

The prospective teachers' lived experiences of examinations depicted a trialogic essence because the living experiences were factors of the three dimensions of time: the past, present and future which were within the prospective teachers' lived experiences.

Before the examinations were done, the prospective teachers had their hopes, imaginations, thoughts about the examinations. Their lived experiences before the examinations moved into the actual examinations and lastly out of the examinations. The three phases of their experiences are analogous to three phases of an initiation ceremony in African context whereby one first prepares for an initiation and then the second stage is the actual initiation, and lastly is the initiated individual.

The prospective teachers described their lived experiences before they sat the examinations and their descriptions showed that they were thoroughly prepared for the examinations as a result of completion of the syllabus and adequate revision. The descriptions applied to individual co-researchers and their examination schools. This can be interpreted as commitment of the teachers who taught them.

Through such preparations it could be interpreted that their imaginations, beliefs and thoughts focused on certain grades and careers which formed their essence; their inwardness that is subjective or ontological. It was evident from their descriptions of

lived experiences that some wanted to be medical doctors, computer scientists, lawyers and electrical engineers. The students had this form of consciousness as they prepared for themselves examinations. This indeed forms the first phase of the trialogic experience.

Each prospective teacher had a dialogue with their inner and outer consciousness on what the examinations they were preparing for portended. The intentionality of the dialogue, which is the synthesis of the inner and outer consciousness produced essence in each and every individual prospective teacher. This form of essence which is pragmatic became the subjective reality of every prospective teacher indicating that change is inevitable and not static depending on the prevailing circumstances.

The prospective teacher entered the examinations with this essence.

When sitting the examinations, the prospective teacher entered into a dialogue with the examinations' real experiences. The ontic and ontological feelings interacted and produced a synthesis. The ontic and ontological consciousness forms a unique experience known as *quale* to the prospective teacher. *Quale* (plural=*qualia*) is unmediated knowledge of consciousness that leads to reality (Mautner, 2005, p.510). The prospective teacher became acquainted with the synthesis of meaning and got full experiences of the examinations' realities which are unique. The uniqueness of these experiences was portrayed in their descriptions, which were particular to each and every individual prospective teacher. Some co-researchers or example, found out that certain questions were vaguely worded; other questions had appeared in previous examinations; candidates had examination phobia; apparatus and

instruments were lacking; subjects that affect overall grades such as Mathematics, English and Kiswahili had limited time. Their descriptions also revealed it was not possible to answer questions well because the candidates got confused to answer even on the topics they had been drilled.

These lived experiences of the examinations during the examinations had an impact on each prospective teacher. The vaguely worded questions could be interpreted as a route to failure since a candidate may provide what the examiner does not want. Sometimes, a candidate may have more facts about the question and an attempt to answer them well could lead to irrelevant responses. On the other hand, a candidate who knows a lot about a question might fail to be detected by the examination because their true knowledge is not captured.

The question set, which was vaguely worded, was the ontic or the etic evidence. The individual candidate's inner consciousness (ontology) was the discernment of vagueness and its aftermath which was a synchronization of the ontics and ontology that is referred to as essence. This is personal and subjective to every individual candidate. The essence resulted from the dialogue the candidate entered into in their mind with the vaguely worded question. This was not only dynamic but was probably differently influenced by the individual candidate's consciousness. A candidate may lose hope of cherished ideals of their education or may attempt to recover lost hope. The outcome of the result may swing the mind on what to be pursued depending on the prevailing situation.

When similar questions appear in examinations every year they may fail to challenge the intellect of the candidates, as discussed above, thus making the examinations unreliable and invalid tools for ascertaining the potentials of the learners. Suppose a candidate opted not to read many topics as prescribed by the school syllabus but focused on past papers and fortunately got similar questions being tested in the examinations thus passing very well, then the question arises whether the examination is a reliable and valid tool of sifting out learners who did not learn much of what the syllabus prescribed.

Examination phobia was described by prospective teachers as one of their lived experiences during the actual examinations. This lived experience which comes before examinations persists up to the examination room and affects the candidates. Fear inhibits the thinking process and makes a candidate helpless (Creme, 2005). It could even make an individual candidate fail to write what they know. Here, the ontic evidences are characterized by behavioural undertones that impede dialogical interactions between ontics and ontology. Examinations that do not consider the emotional aspect of a learner are not worth undertaking and they debase humanity. Phenomenology considers a learner as being an individual who has emotional dispositions which are aspects of individuality. This is why philosophers as far back as Socrates (467-399) advocate for the protection of this individuality that defines the “being” or the essences (Chaube and Chaube, 1973, p. 136). A learner’s failure in examinations due to examination phobia could be construed as being failure of the examination system.

The third and the last phase of the dialogue are the descriptions of lived experiences of university entry examinations given by prospective teachers after they had received the results of the examinations. When the candidates had actually received the results as the objective reality, they tried to come to terms with their past and what the future portended for the grades attained. After obtaining results the prospective teachers described their lived experiences in various ways. Some depicted disappointment, encouragement, while others accused the examination system.

Those prospective teachers with lived experiences of university entry examinations which described disappointment were manifested in emotional and physical separation from their former classmates. This was because; a bleak future was imminent which did not allow them to pursue careers of their dreams. They even believed that university selection was based on what one scores and not what one knows. The description of lived experience that elicited the greatest encouragement was premised on the realization that the learners could join public universities under government sponsorship. The other lived experience that was encouraging was the rapport that existed between the teachers and the learners that resulted in good examination performance. The prospective teachers lived experience that levelled accusations against the examinations system included the impact of examination irregularity and failure by the examinations body (KNEC) to measure individual learner's potentials, especially practical skills and talent in games and athletics.

After receiving the results of the Kenya Certificate Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations, which is referred to as university entry examinations, prospective

teachers realized that they were going to part away from some of their former friends and classmates. They realized that the camaraderie that had been established would be disrupted forever. A prospective teacher remarked: "The gap between those who failed and those who passed can never be bridged."

One of the goals for the Kenyan education is promotion of national unity. If the gap between those who failed and those who passed was unbridgeable, what about the gap between those who went to school and those who did not go to school? Are examinations divisive elements? Are university entry examinations efficacious enough to determine the fulfillment of Kenyan goals of education?

The emotional and physical separations produced essences of their own. An individual may be within the group physically but outside the group in thoughts and actions.

A prospective teacher enters into a dialogue with the realities that are associated with the university entry examinations. These are objective since they can be described empirically but the individual prospective teachers' lived experiences of examinations or essences are subjective. Essences and the objective reality of examinations are not separated but seamlessly woven. The dialogue is to project intentionality that is the synthesis of ontics and essences.

The prospective teachers described their lived experiences of university entry examinations as harbingers of bleak future since they could not pursue careers of their choice. The conscious mind of the prospective teacher had to make reconciliation with their ontic experiences to come to a resolution, which is

intentionality. The intentional object could be interpreted to be the new career path to be undertaken which is teaching, but the ontics and the essences were not seamless. This means there was no reconciliation between ontics and essences and, therefore, intentionality was a farce. This interpretation is demonstrated by prospective teachers maintaining their stance that they were neither teachers forever and were not going to be teachers of the profession nor teachers for the profession. In their lived experiences they expressed a persistent desire to join professions they considered worthwhile in the future. The worthwhile future profession is the essence and not the teaching career they enrolled for. This clearly demonstrates that the university entry examinations did not capture the prospective teachers' essences.

It was noted that the description of lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations was encouraging. The prospective teachers were encouraged by the good relationship that existed between them and their teachers as one of the cardinal factors that resulted to their good performance that ultimately enabled them to join universities. The good relationship between a teacher and a learner is an asset cherished in Oriental philosophy whereby the teacher is regarded as a guru or the destroyer of darkness and the learner is to submit to them.

The lived experiences reflecting on good relationship can be interpreted to lend credence to examination systems as reliable and valid measures of what the learners have gone through. The teachers are evaluated as devoted to their teaching duties. This devotion to teaching by teachers may have further interpretations. Who actually are these devoted teachers? If prospective teachers who joined the universities to be teachers are not willing to be in the profession, how did these devoted teachers come

to the profession? One may join the teaching profession unwillingly but later come to appreciate it. This could be a focus of another study which is concerned with those who liked teaching from the onset.

The encouragement experienced by prospective teachers was joining the universities and getting government scholarships. A prospective teacher remarked: "After passing I got a call from my former teacher congratulating me for passing and meeting the cut-off points for university entry. This made many people to recognize me and I became somebody in my village and beyond." Even many could not pursue their dream careers, they were, somehow, consoled that they were joining the public universities.

The desire to join public university is ontic evidence which is perceived by the society, it is objective but the conscious feeling of an individual that forms the essence is left out. An individual may be happy to conform to what the society demands at that particular time but this is not the reality. It is analogous to soldiers who salute when a king is passing but their heart are not with the king and they even desire to kill him when an opportunity to do so. A soldier salutes ontically but ontologically they are sworn enemy of the king.

The reality is the dream career, which cannot be achieved because of the cluster points. The interpretation of this is that the university entry examinations were not efficacious enough to determine the right people for the teaching profession. The examinations are designed to measure general academic performance and using it to

decide on those to be teachers can be construed to mean lack of relevant examinations for selecting teachers to join necessary education and training.

4.3 Data presentation

The focus of data presentation is to present the findings of the study by addressing the objectives and the questions of the study.

4.3.1 Major findings of the study

The study attempted to elucidate the efficacy of university entry examinations in ascertaining the lived experiences of prospective teachers. Objective (i) intended to find out how KCSE examinations, which is university entry examinations, show the lived experiences of prospective teachers. Pertinent questions to this objective are: are examinations administered by KNEC phenomenological and how do they show the lived experiences of learners? The objective and the questions are ontological, that is, they deal with the inwardness of the learner or the interiority of ontics. The objective grades shown by KNEC refer to ontics but the meanings and understanding of these grades refer to ontology.

4.3.1.1 Ontology and university entry examinations in Kenya

Ontology is the interiority of ontics which is the subjective experiences or the essences of an individual that were investigated through lived experiences. Ontology and ontics are seamlessly woven. They do not have any clear-cut boundary but one fits into the other. The ontic experiences, which are objective in nature, are related to ontological experiences, which is subjective.

The Kenya National examinations Council (KNEC), which administers university entry examinations in Kenya is not concerned with ontology. This is clearly stated in their mission statement that the assessment they carry out is “objective” and should “safeguard nationally and internationally acceptable certification standards” (KNEC Newsletter, 2008). Ontological experiences are left out unless the examinations captured them by accident as it happened to the only one of the prospective teachers, fictitiously named Efen who chose teaching as the first degree choice.

As long as the examinations are objective and safeguard both national and international standards, the ontological experiences of the learner are subservient. A very important component of knowledge is left out when KNEC assesses learning outcomes. It is concluded that the KCSE examinations rarely portray lived experiences of prospective teachers and this attempts to answer objective number (i) of the research.

4.3.1.2 Implications for using KCSE examinations for university entry in Kenya

When KCSE examinations are used to assess learners there are implications for the learners themselves, the Kenyan society and the teaching profession and this is the theme of objective number (ii).

4.3.1.2.1 Examinations as hindrances to individual career paths

The implication of using KCSE examinations for education and career advancement to an individual learner, was questionable. This is why, descriptions of lived experiences of prospective teachers of university entry examinations reflected on how the examinations blocked individual career paths and ambitions. Prospective

teachers whose passion was to do medicine, business related degree, military science, chemical engineering and computer science could not pursue those courses because they did not get the required grades culminating into the required cluster points. Individual learners did not benefit from KCSE examinations because they could not pursue their dream careers. Their true being or ontology did not rhyme with the B Ed they enrolled for. If KCSE examinations can hinder the career paths of those who join teaching, then it could equally do the same to other professions. This answers the first question of objective number (ii).

4.3.1.2.2 Implications for using the university entry (KCSE) examinations for the teaching profession

The teaching profession is disadvantaged when KCSE examinations are used to select individuals who are supposed to train as teachers because the majority of those selected to join the profession are not truly teachers since they did not have interest in the profession. From the descriptions of lived experiences of prospective teachers, teaching is hardly preferred by those undergoing teacher education programmes in Kenyan public universities. The dislike of the profession as demonstrated by description of lived experiences by the prospective teachers is a testimony that the society's expectations from teachers might be abysmally realized. The profession might have the right quantity of teachers but of low quality. If either quantity or quality is lacking, the few dedicated teachers will be overworked and the services offered will be wanting.

4.3.1.2.3 Implications for using the university entry examinations and the Kenya society

The KCSE examinations, which are used for university entry, as noted by the co-researchers, stratifies the society and generates the gap in Kenyan society between those who passed to join the universities and those who aimed at joining the universities but could not make it. This division is discriminative because the national resources are allocated to some few individuals who will get better education, get employed and ultimately access more resources. Learners who failed to join universities may harbour destructive attitudes in their minds towards those who succeeded, leading to more social problems in the society.

The public perception is that, those people who got university education perceive those who did not get it as less important (Lekishon, 2011). Education should be grounded in philosophy of life that respects individuality regardless of academic status. People who fail to get university education can still work performing other tasks which are equally important. It is not possible for every learner to achieve university education but what is important is respect and recognition of each and every individual human being. Once one has done an important national examination like KCSE examination, they should be recognized and accorded an enabling environment which allows them to pursue education up to the highest level of their academic ability, no matter the grade attained.

The implications of using KCSE examinations as a basic instrument for measuring prospective teachers' lived experiences impact on the teaching profession and Kenya as a society in diverse ways which do not make maximum use of opportunities for human development. This is the focus of objective (ii) of the study.

Ambition is not only ontological, it a person's essence or inwardness of the individual because the appearance of grades is not the reality of what an individual is. The grades are ontics, or the objective reality while true knowledge is the essence, primordial knowledge which has not been diluted by theories and postulations. It is the inwardness of an individual and it is purely subjective.

When grades achieved in the examinations are incompatible with individual essences then the examinations are not a true measure of learner's potential. Examinations may end up directing the learners to professions that are not of their choice. When learners take up professions which are not of their choice, then it could be interpreted that their productivity would be abysmal since they may be marking time in those professions with a view to eventually migrating to the right ones. The prospective teachers, described that; "Teaching will just be a stepping stone for other good careers, which are better paid and esteemed in the society." Can a teacher who is marking time in the teaching profession help in achieving the Eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Kenya Vision 2030? Can such a teacher provide education to learners in the true sense of the word? Competent teachers with a different mind-set according to the Republic of Kenya (2012) are required for the achievement of national and international goals of education.

4.3.1.2.3.1 Passing examinations and education

The passing of examinations and getting education within Kenya and even globally, are not always the same. This is why those who pass university entry examinations are respected and valued in society without considering how educated they are. Learners who had mastered the techniques of passing examinations like revising

past papers, focusing on frequently set topics can pass more easily than those who focused on understanding the concepts covered by the syllabus.

Someone who is educated does not only pass examinations but also relates well with fellow human beings when applying the knowledge acquired. This aspect of education of relating with one another is not measured by university entry examinations. Even if one passes very well and they cannot integrate fully with other human beings, they would be valued than one who integrates well.

This is confirmed by the celebrations that followed after passing examinations whereby teachers and students who posted better grades were rewarded. This may lead to devising methods of passing examinations rather than ensuring that learners have proper grounding in knowledge and understanding that results to true education.

This sub-section together with its main sub-section “University entry examinations and the Kenya society” answers part of objective number (ii).

4.3.1.3 Examinations as incomprehensive benchmarks for determining potentials of prospective teachers

This sub-section focuses on objective (iii) and it is intertwined with the next subsection. Teaching career entails both curricular and co-curricular activities. It also includes practical work. The university entry examinations focus on curricular activities, which are mainly academic. Co-curricular activities such as games and sports are left out. The descriptions of lived experiences showed that potentials in

co-curricular activities bear no relationship to academics and are not considered by examinations.

By leaving out co-curricular activities, the university entry examinations became inaccurate benchmarks for determining the potentials of prospective teachers. This phenomenon can be interpreted to mean inadequacy in the teachers to prepare the learners for overall development resulting in a healthy mind in a healthy body. Games and sports form an integral part of education. A prospective teacher with ontological inclination for these activities needs to be identified by examinations. Such a teacher is the one that can nurture co-curricular talents in the learners.

Suppose the examinations for selecting teachers are dichotomized into two: curricular and co-curricular examinations, whereby each area is to have specific prospective teachers. It could be interpreted that some prospective teachers would choose Bachelor of Education (Sports) and some would go in for Bachelor of Education (Academics). Currently some learners are admitted for Bachelor of Education Sports but the criteria for admission are not based on performances related to sports subjects.

Learners skillfulness in practical work like artisanship and farming are not examined because such practical activities are important for the learners and teachers who are conversant with them are an asset to the learners. The prospective teachers described their examinations as not being focused on practical skills. Interpretation can be drawn on the difference between a teacher who has practical skills and the one who has none. A teacher with practical skills will help the learners to be more overall

developed than the one without practical skills. For example, a teacher who knows sculpture and has some works of their own can have positive impact on learners in such areas as environmental conservation, maximum use of leisure time, career guidance and counselling. Learners who may fail to get better grades in school may focus on the practical activities their teachers used to engage in so as to earn a living.

4.3.1.4 Incongruity of grades for university entry examinations with individual prospective teachers' potential

Objective (iii) investigated whether the perceived academic potential of prospective teachers relate to the results of university entry examinations. The guiding questions to this objective were: Are grades assigned by KNEC in KCSE examinations for university entry portraying prospective teachers' knowledge accurately and do prospective teachers accept their potentials as authenticated by KCSE examinations?

The grades manifested in university entry examinations are incongruent with prospective teachers' potentials. This is because the prospective teachers were confident that they would pass very well and were not going to join the teaching profession. Only one of the prospective teachers wished to be a teacher. The rest joined Bachelor of Education degree programme because that was the easiest way they could get government sponsorship and pursue coveted university education. In case opportunity availed itself, they were prepared to leave teaching after graduation and then join professions of their liking.

When the examination grades are incongruent with the learner's potentials, we say the learner and the grades are incompatible, or the learner and the grade are discordant, or the learner is outside the grade. When the examination grades are congruent with the learner's potential, we say the learner is inside the grade (learner-in-the-grade). The aim of the examination should be to put the learner inside the grade, hence confirming the learner's potential. The congruence of examination grades and the learner's potential is to result in the learner-in-the-grade, but this is not focused in KNEC assessments. The examination grades do not agree with the learner and therefore the learner is outside the grade. It is concluded that the perceived academic potential manifested KCSE results in letter grades, as stipulated in objective (iii), does not always match the knowledge of prospective teachers. The ontics and ontology are not seamless and there is no intentionality.

4.3.1.5 Lack of university faculty/school admission examinations in Kenya

Faculties or schools in Kenyan public universities lack admission examinations. Admission to universities is premised on the KCSE, which is done at the end of four years secondary education. The examinations are not designed to identify individuals with aptitude for teaching. The faculty or the school of education in a university could be the best administrative unit in a university to set examinations for learners wishing to join teaching profession, which is to be done after passing secondary school leaving examinations.

This does not augur well for the education and training of teachers if we are to spur the county's development to achieve the Kenya Vision 2030 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since those responsible for nurturing the talent of the

youth are not teachers-in-the-profession but teachers-of-the-profession. A teacher-in-the-profession is one committed to the ideals of the profession and strives to achieve the goals of the profession while a teacher-of-the-profession is not committed to the ideals of the profession and might easily migrate to other professions when there is an opportunity.

It is summarized that the KCSE examinations, referred to as university entry examinations, do not comprehensively assess learners since subjective knowledge is left out yet it is the foundation of true knowledge and it is greater than what is objectively assessed. True assessment of a learner should be both subjective and objective. An assessment which delves in both subjectivity and objectivity is phenomenological.

4.4 Suggestion for a phenomenological assessment of learners

Assessment means reflections on invaluable decisions an individual learner makes about their potential coupled with other observations by players in the education process. A learner is a human being who is aware of their abilities and they reflect on these abilities and make decisions themselves before any other person attempted to make decisions for or about them. Such a person is first and foremost an assessor of their potential. One is an independent entity that makes decisions and would wish to be responsible for the decisions made. Other players in the education process whose observations can be used to supplement the learners' decisions are parents, teachers, or the society (examination council or an agent of a recognized body like UNESCO). A phenomenological assessment regards the learner as the core of the

assessment and the chief decision maker and the role of other players in the education process is just subsidiary.

A phenomenological assessment is one which is both subjective and objective. It is not an alternative assessment since the word alternative connotes abandoning all previous ideas and starting anew and phenomenology does not accept such a stance. It is not even holistic assessment because in holistic assessment the idea is to do comprehensive assessment of the learner in an objective way. It is not continuous assessment in the sense objectivity but in the sense of both subjectivity and objectivity. It uses all principles of holistic and continuous assessments but from the vantage point of phenomenology. Phenomenology accepts facts as expressed by science but goes beyond into subjectivity. The founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, supports this view when he says phenomenology is the science of all sciences which implies it is comprehensive enough to cover all branches of knowledge. This is why subjective and objective realities are not distinct and separate but seamlessly woven, which means both fit into each other without any noticeable boundary.

Phenomenological assessment is posited to have four contributors: the learner, parent, teacher and society. A learner can have more than one parent or teacher. The most important contributor is the learner and the contributions from the parent, teacher and society are just to augment the greater contribution the learner has. The thinking, imaginations, beliefs and actions are the guiding principles of the subjective knowledge of the learner. What the learner knows that can be objectively known by the parent, teacher and society is just the “tip of the ice-berg,” just to use

Sigmund Freud's analogy of the "unconscious" and "conscious" mind in which the latter is the tip of the ice-berg and contains very little of what is in the unconscious. What the learner knows subjectively is more than what is known objectively about the learner.

The learner is a unique individual whose subjective knowledge is immense. It is just a small portion of that subjective knowledge that can be objectively described as objective knowledge, which can be empirically studied. In the philosophy of constructivism supported by heutagogical techniques, meaning self-teaching techniques, the learner is able to create their own knowledge. Constructivism is a philosophy which maintains that an individual determines their learning and this is why open, distance and e-learning are possible. The individual learner is first and foremost a learner; secondly, the individual learner acts as their own teacher. When an individual learns and teaches themselves, they have products of their education which can be tangible or intangible. The individual learner assesses and evaluates their performance in knowledge acquisition and they assign grades to their activities. The grades are internalized in their subjectivity and their wish is that the examinations should confirm this. The education system that confirms this is described as phenomenological because it makes subjectivity congruent with objective tests, that is, it reaches the learner's ontology.

Since the learner is usually supported in their education by parent, teacher and the society. The role of these three players in phenomenological assessment is to observe and reach consensus. A parent is defined in this context as a person or persons or institution from which a learner emerged. A learner can emerge from

biological or foster parent(s), or guardian(s) or institution such as a church or children's home. A parent is simply any entity responsible for a learner's parental obligations. A teacher is any person responsible for teaching the learner. The society is wider and comprises the immediate community of the school, the government with its attendant regulations or the international community. It is what is supported by KNEC policy statement that the "assessment must meet international standards." (what is the evidence of this quote?)The parents, teachers and the society as players in the assessment are to focus on the learner and the learner is to give them leads for formulating assessment to assess them.

In the philosophy of existentialism where the dictum is *existence precedes essence*, meaning any theory about an individual is put aside and it is the individual person who is important. Since the theoretical framework is phenomenology that consequently gives existential phenomenology or phenomenological existentialism, both the existentialist individual and the phenomenological individual are equally important. Existential and phenomenological attributes are the ontics and ontology, respectively.

What are the attributes of the learner that the parent, the teacher and the society are to observe so as to reach consensus in assessing the learner's potential? When a learner is left on their own they learn; they construct their own leaning as long as they are normal and in good health. What the learner does while left on their own is what parent, teacher and the society should observe. After the learning environment has been provided by the parents, teachers and the society, the first thing to be observed and noted is how individual learners construct their learning. The activities

the learner engages in arise from their imaginations, thinking and beliefs and they reflect true knowledge. The learner engaged in such activities on their own volition. For example, the parent, teacher and society may notice a learner who reads books and topics which are quite useful but not stipulated in the syllabus or a learner who is concerned with producing a piece of music that might not account for the tests administered at the end of secondary education. These are the leads the learner shows that are to incorporated either formally or informally in their assessment

When a learner has displayed their unique reflections on their knowledge, it is the role of other players in the education process to take note and devise assessment tool that can capture what they have observed. When a learner is thwarted from expressing their inner feelings and knowledge because of what has been stipulated to be learned for national assessment then the assessment controls education but not vice versa. What the learner does during their free time is an indicator of what to be assessed. Another important attribute is what the learner says.

What an individual learner says must conform to what other players in the education process can confirm. If what an individual learner says does not rhyme with what they do, then other players in the education process are to guide the learner to see the reality by trying to understand the learner so that subjective knowledge is made seamless with objective reality. The learner should never be condemned as an unrealistic entity by other players in the education process. Players in the education process are to hold a dialogue with the learner with a view to reaching a consensus. It is the consensus that captures the learner's conscious beliefs as demonstrated by the objective nature of their activities. For example, the activities of a learner who says

they would be teachers are to conform to the attributes of a teacher such as taking active part in peer tutoring, helping fellow learners to acquire knowledge and skills.

Phenomenological assessment is a process that culminates into consensus and it is best achieved in a secondary school where learners are able to choose their careers. Careers involve both subjective and objective knowledge. For example, a learner who wishes to be a teacher probably started nurturing that idea in childhood and other players in the education process might have contributed immensely towards the nurturance of the same. This is professional ideal that the individual certificate must contain. The ideal is termed career prognosis, which is an aspect of form four certificate showing preferred career. The aspect should be what the student aspires to do in their career. After showing grades attained in the subjects of the examinations, the prognosis of the learner's career should be an integral part of the facts shown in the certificate.

What the learner intends to pursue as a career should arise from cumulative reports in a secondary school spanning four years. The report should take into account the interest and ability of the learner as demonstrated throughout their performance in the school as vouched by teachers as school assessors. The performance should be comprehensive enough to cover both curricular and co-curricular activities. The wish of the parents or guardians should not be left out. To arrive at a learner's career prognosis should be a process of consensus whereby the learner is the lead. The career prognosis should be brief. For example, if the learner intends to be a teacher, the part of the certificate showing this should be as in the Appendix B, which shows KCSE examinations certificate grades together with teaching as the preferred career.

When an individual appears with such a certificate before a panel of interviewers for a course or a job in education, it could be construed that they are genuine candidate for the interview because the idea of working in education sector had been nursed for four or more years of education as verified by the certificate. This procedure can definitely screen out those who are not serious. By having the idea to be a teacher by the learner for about four years in a secondary school is a phenomenological undertaking. The learner internalizes in their mind what teaching is and this forms the basis of their ontology; their lived experience. In an interview for job placement or further education, the learners whose career prognoses show particular professions should be given first priority in those professions.

How can a phenomenological assessment be designed? The first aspect of a phenomenological assessment, which is considered the most important, is that where the individual learner assesses their knowledge by themselves, with themselves and for themselves. The individual learner must have dialogue with themselves and by themselves about their knowledge for their own independent decision making for themselves. This aspect of assessment must be prominent in the assessment design because it is the individual who is important in the assessment. When the individual learner is relegated to the periphery in the assessment whereupon other players in the education process are to decide what to assess and how to assess it then the assessment does not target the individual learner but the thinking and imaginations of others which can be objectified. The parents and teachers who are the immediate players in the education process are to vouch this aspect of assessment design.

The second aspect of a phenomenological assessment is that, society as a player in the education process demands certain behavioural attributes from the individual who has undergone some sort of education. The society, like an examination council, has its standards for gauging the ability of the learner. It is contended that the ability of the learner as gauged by the society will definitely correspond with the learner's assessment of their ability, unless education did not take place.

The first part of the design should show the ability of the individual learner in what they themselves know. The individual learner should stipulate areas of their ability that the society may not assess. For example, they can stipulate their abilities in volley ball, net ball, music composition, drama, invention and any other outstanding achievement realized during their secondary education. Projects that learners get involved in like farming, making gadgets like radios from odd materials, participation in science congresses or composition writings should all be incorporated. All these should culminate in career prognosis.

The process of individual assessment should not be strenuous but must be gradual as the biological growth of a human being. The individual learner is to be made aware of the open opportunities for individual assessment and should not be hurried. For example, schools can report each term any noteworthy individual learner's achievement of knowledge. Such reports can be adjusted and kept as the years in secondary school progress thus facilitating the opinion of the learner to form a vital component of their education. The societal assessment can also be adjusted as the society feels.

These two aspects of the design are to be reflected in the school leaving certificate as indicated in Appendix B. The importance of this design is that the individual learner has contributed to their school certificate. Even if what the learner's assessment reveals does not rhyme with the demands of the society, the learner has emphatically spoken and it is the responsibility of the society to correct the shortcomings in the education process that make individual learner's knowledge incongruent with societal demands.

The next chapter provides a summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The background to the study was laid in chapter one. A brief history of school examinations was given whereby China is regarded as the place where the idea of examinations originated. From China, examinations spread to different parts of the world. Kenya was introduced to the concept of school examinations from the British which colonized her.

The problem that many scholars cite about examinations is whether they assess what they are intended to assess. Once the KNEC has issued a certificate to an individual learner, the certificate becomes a permanent document portraying a learner's features that may not be easily altered. Strangely, some people can succeed in life without examinations. Although what examinations measure is an issue of concern, doing away with examinations in education system is not supported. Many people feel that rather than eliminate examinations in education system, attempts should be made to address their pertinent issues and shortcomings.

The KNEC is sanctioned by the Kenya laws to objectively assess learners in institutions below university. One of the most important examinations that KNEC administers is KCSE examinations, which are termed university entry examinations. The examinations are critical in the lives of the learners because selection for careers and university education are based on their performance. Less than 10% of learners who sit KCSE examinations get admission into Kenyan public universities. In other

countries like USA, 86% of those who pass join universities, while South Korea takes 56% and India takes about 55%.

When the examinations is looked from the perspectives of individual learner, it is realized that the learner is a human being with thought, emotions, imaginations and beliefs which are subjective and do not form the core of objective assessment. The learner as individual human being has both subjective and objective consciousness. The subjective knowledge according to phenomenologists is greater than what is objectively known. In order to investigate the subjective consciousness, a phenomenological approach is applied. The approach is based on personal knowledge and subjectivity, which is termed "lived experience." It is the experience an individual has from the first person point of view. The focus of lived experience was on prospective teachers, university teacher-trainees who had joined public universities to train as secondary school teachers in Kenya.

The focus of the problem statement was the failure of KNEC to assess lived experiences of the learners which are subjective. The KCSE examinations are objectively administered and there is no room for subjectivity. This leaves out a greater part of an individual's knowledge and hence phenomenology as a theory was used to situate the study and phenomenology as a method was used to investigate the lived experiences of prospective teachers. Prospective teachers were first year students of Bachelor of Education in Kenyan public universities. The purpose of the study was to find out whether the KCSE examination results as portrayed KNEC are acceptable to prospective teachers.

It was envisaged that if prospective teachers could accept the KCSE examination results as a true measure of their potential then the examinations are efficacious enough to ascertain the lived experiences. The study was confined to learners who joined public universities and were sponsored by the Kenya government to pursue Bachelor of Education Degree programmes. It left out all other learners who pursued different courses at universities or institutions below university education.

In chapter two, relevant literature to the study was reviewed in three perspectives. In the first perspective a global overview of examinations for university entry was discussed. The second perspective viewed the merits and demerits of examinations with a focus on KCSE examinations which are used for university entry in Kenya. The third perspective discussed phenomenology as it relates to examinations.

In the global scene, university entry examinations vary considerably. Some universities use national examinations like KCSE examinations for university entry while others use aptitude tests coupled with application dossiers or specific entrance examinations. In certain universities in USA, admission is not pegged to any examination. It was noted that by using different examinations for university entry, universities try to allow each individual learner to reveal their abilities in a much more comprehensive way thus making the assessment phenomenological.

Examinations as educational tools for assessment of learners have merits and demerits. It was argued that the merits of examinations far outweigh their demerits. It was realized that without examinations it would be difficult to select learners to

the next educational level or to place competent and able people in employment. The demerits of examinations can be ameliorated through relevant research. The demerit noted in KCSE examinations is a situation whereby year in year out the examinations form a pattern whereby when results are graphically interpolated a similarity is realized. Why must the same number of learners be assigned the same grades whenever KCSE examination results are released? For example, the numbers of candidates who get grade A are almost the same every year.

In phenomenology, human beings' behaviour cannot form a pattern because they think, imagine and act differently. It was posited that when examinations form patterns, they aim to achieve some predictions which might be irrelevant to human needs and aspirations. The needs and aspirations form subjective experiences that might be missed out when objective assessment for learners is done. For this reason, the study focused on the subjective experiences of the learner but did not altogether avoid objective ones.

Chapter three dealt with the methodology of the study, which is phenomenological hermeneutic that examines human behaviour as consciously experienced. What is consciously experienced is the lived experience. The researcher considered phenomenological hermeneutic appropriate for the study because it allowed the prospective teachers to describe their lived experiences, which were then subjected to interpretation. The method facilitated description and interpretation of phenomena. The prospective teachers described their lived experiences of examinations which they had already done. The prospective teachers were referred

to as co-researchers because they participated fully in the research by describing and interpreting the experiences just as the researcher did.

The theme of chapter four was data explication and presentation. The data presented was the descriptions of lived experiences of prospective teachers in relation to university entry examinations. The descriptions were on the efficacy of university entry examinations to capture the potentials of KCSE examinations' candidates. Data explicated from descriptions and interpretations of lived experiences showed that the majority of learners who sat KCSE examinations and entered Kenyan public universities as prospective teachers did not wish to be teachers. It revealed that the examinations they did and which formed the basis of their admission into universities was not designed to identify prospective teachers or any other professionals.

The summary of the major findings were provided. The KNEC did not consider the ontological experiences of the learner and thus impacting negatively on the learner, the teaching profession and Kenya as a society. The learners' career paths were blocked because the examinations were not designed to identify them as professional teachers to be and many did not wish to be teachers yet they were undergoing teacher education programme. The teaching profession was likely to have teachers who could not be committed to the education of the learner because the so called prospective teachers were thinking of joining other professions. The Kenya society at large could probably have few teachers devoted to educational goals to enable the country achieve socio-economic growth.

It was also found that the grades assigned to individual candidates were incongruent with their potentials. The grades did not match the potentials of the learners. It was also revealed that public universities in Kenya lacked entry examinations that can lock out those who join teaching but are not serious. As a result of these findings, a phenomenological assessment was suggested as a way out of the scenario.

The theme of phenomenological assessment is to provide knowledge assessment by the learner themselves in the first place. In the second place or aspect, the assessment must prove the learner's as per the society's demands. Both the assessments must be seamlessly woven and if not so then the education process is faulty and should be corrected.

5.2 Conclusion

Doubts as to whether the KCSE examinations are efficacious to measure learners' potentials have been addressed throughout this study. The doubts have been expressed by the general public and scholars alike, who see the KCSE examinations as a system that consigns many learners to waste since very few join universities or proceed with further education and get satisfying professions in the end.

Learner's potentials that are subjective are not the focus of scientific investigation but they are equally important. Phenomenological investigation accepts objectivity as postulated by science and delves further into subjectivity thus making any study undertaken comprehensive. Most studies in education are currently phenomenological since education concerns human beings who have thoughts, aspirations, imaginations and feelings that science cannot investigate. Investigating these issues using phenomenological approaches is considered to have heralded a

paradigm shift in educational studies that can have impact on selection to universities and other course or moving to the next educational level.

Many universities worldwide do not peg their admissions on a single set of examinations. The universities administer their own entrance examinations for admissions to candidates after their secondary school leaving examination. For example, in Great Britain application dossiers are used. Many tests and application dossiers contain phenomenological aspects. In China, admission into universities is the responsibility of respective faculties and schools that are actually conversant with the nature of the students they require for various courses. The setting of admission examinations by faculties and schools of universities has been suggested by this study as a better indicator of learner's knowledge.

From the lived experiences of prospective teachers, the university entry examinations that they passed did not, however, identify their teaching potentials. The examinations did not distinguish them as potential teachers. They joined teaching because it was the only gateway to coveted university education and also they could use teaching profession to venture into careers of their interest.

The university entry examinations in Kenya are not efficacious enough to ascertain the potentials of prospective teachers. Most learners who are admitted into Bachelor of Education Degree programmes in Kenyan public universities to get educated as teachers do not have much interest in the teaching profession. This does not auger well for the achievement of educational goals.

The study proposed the use of phenomenological assessment in examinations whereby subjective knowledge of the learner is assessed. This assessment is a process that should start from the first year of secondary education or prior up to end of secondary schooling. The assessment should take into account the feelings, thinking and imaginations of the learner. Decisions pertaining to the assessment are to be made by players in the education process. The players include the learner, parent, teacher and society. The learner is the chief decision maker and what other players in the education process decide is only to supplement what the learner has decided. The assessment is phenomenological because it accepts objectivity but at the same time deeply delves into subjectivity. The secondary school certification is to show the subjective aspect of the learner, apart from indicating what the learner objectively attained. A very important aspect of phenomenological assessment that has to be clearly stipulated in the certificate is career prognosis, which indicates the preferred future career of the learner. The study proposes a phenomenological approach to examinations which is an important contribution to knowledge.

5.3 Recommendations

The study has three recommendations that include phenomenological assessment, which is the main contribution of the thesis and the other two are examinations court and examinations for university admissions.

5.3.1 Phenomenological assessment

This study recommends a phenomenological assessment that considers both subjective and objective knowledge of a learner. The certificate a learner gets at the end of secondary education must indicate knowledge in its entirety, both subjective

and objective. For example, a learner's career prognosis must be stipulated in the certificate (Appendix B). This is considered the study's main contribution to knowledge.

5.3.2 Examination courts

Kenya needs to set up courts that deal with examination irregularities. We have industrial courts that deal with labour matters; constitution courts that deal with constitutional issues; courts that deal with crimes against children. In the same way, we need to have examination courts to deal with examination matters.

Magistrates and advocates in examination courts will have ample time to focus on issues of examinations with a view to arriving at the most appropriate verdict for those involved in examination irregularities. Stiffer penalties for those who involved in examination irregularities are not always helpful. Education should be both proactive and retroactive leading to knowledge and understanding that cannot be repressed by penalties.

5.3.3 Examinations for university admissions

Examinations for university admissions need to be conducted by respective faculties or schools because they are better placed to ascertain the potentials of the learners they require for various courses. If one's career prognosis is stipulated in one's certificate as education, it would be appropriate for a university to admit such a person for a degree in education even if they do not meet the cluster points but they meet the admission requirement. Interviews can also be conducted to ascertain the candidate's aptitude for the course.

5.4 Suggestions for further study

The study recommends more phenomenological studies in education so that subjective knowledge is clarified and made use of in education. This will support the paradigm shift in educational researches that advocates for phenomenological studies. The studies could focus on examination irregularities, teachers-of-the-profession and grading of candidates.

5.4.1 Examination irregularities

Examination irregularities need to be studied phenomenologically, though this was not one of the objectives of the study. This will enable responsible authorities to institute phenomenological rules and regulations that take cognizance of individuals that get involved in examination irregularities. The idea of meting out stiffer penalties by courts of law to those who get involved in examination irregularities misses out the educative process of examinations.

Some scholars like Makokha (2009) contended that people who get involved in examination irregularities deserve reward not reproach since the skills used are the same actual skills the world needs. Cheating in examinations is an indicator of what the entire society is. The study does not support any form of examination irregularity but the meaning and understanding of cheating in examinations require a phenomenological approach so as to institute correct measures. What is the interiority of ontics of examination cheats? Studies done on examination irregularities are done from scientific point of view that leaves out ontological experiences that also contribute to human behaviour.

5.4.2 Teachers-of-the-profession

Teachers-of-the-profession are the ones who joined teaching because they had no alternative. A phenomenological study needs to be undertaken on these teachers to ascertain the following:

- i) Do they like teaching despite the fact that they did not choose the profession.
- ii) How do they describe their lived experiences in relation to services they offer to the profession?

5.4.3 Grading of candidates in examinations

Phenomenological research needs to be done to find out the best methods to grade candidates in examinations. The grading should take into account education attained. How does one describe the education of a learner that gets grade E in examinations?

REFERENCES

- Abagi, O. (1998). *National legal frameworks in domesticating education as a human right in Kenya: Where to begin: Special study paper No. 2*, September. Nairobi: Institute of Policy Analysis and Research.
- Abdal-Hagg, I. (1998). *Constructivism in teacher education: Considerations for those who would link practice to theory*. Washington DC: ERIC Clearing House on Teaching and Teacher Education.
- Ahniar, F.N. (2011, February 18). Fourty cities found manipulating exam results. *Jum'at*, pp. 15-18.
- Amada, K. (n.d.). Alternatives to traditional grading methods. Retrieved from <http://www.blog.lerningtoday/blog/bid/28343/5-Alternative-to> on June 10, 2012.
- American heritage dictionary of the English language*. (2009). Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Akinpelu, J.A. (1981). *An introduction to philosophy of education*. London: Macmillan Publishers.
- Amadala, B. and Yonga, B. (2012, Wednesday, January 4). Parents rough up teachers over KCPE. *Daily Nation*, p. 9.
- Anderson, G. (1998). *Fundamentals of educational research* (2nded.). London: Routledge.

Ary, D, Jacobs, L.C., Razavieh, A. and Sorensen, C. (2006). *Introduction to research in*

education (7th ed.). Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth.

Asthana, A. (2007). Call to ban all school exams for under 16s. *The Observer*, Sunday 10th June

Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/jun/10/sats.schools> on November 8, 2011.

Audi, R. (Ed.) (1999). *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bailey, R. (1954). *What is Existentialism? A creed of commitment and action*. London: S.P.C.K.

Barnacle, R. (2004). Reflection on lived experience in educational research. *Educational*

Philosophy and Theory, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 57-67.

Barnacle, R. (2001). *Phenomenology and educational research*. Royal Melbourne Institute of

Technology (RMIT). Retrieved from

<http://www.aare.edu.au/01pap/bar060.htm>. on July 3, 2010.

Bas, L. (2006). Epistemological issues in phenomenological research: How authoritative are

people's accounts of their own perceptions? *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 16, Issue 1, March 2005, pp. 61-72.

Bennet, S.W. (2004). Assessment in chemistry and the role of examinations. *Royal Society of Chemistry Journal*, Vol. 8.

- Berrois, G.E. (1989). What is phenomenology? A review. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, Vol. 82, July 1989. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1292211/pdf> on November 20, 2011.
- Blackburn, S. (1996). *Oxford dictionary of philosophy*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Blaschke, L.M. (2012). Heutagogy and life long learning: A review of heutagogy practice and self-determined learning. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, Vol 13, No. 1, January, 2012.
- Boeree, G.C. (2001). *A phenomenologist looks at ontology*. Retrieved from <http://www.webspaceship.edu/cgboer/ontology.html> on March 20, 2010.
- Bogonko, S.N. (1992). *Reflections on education in East Africa*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Bonnet, W. (2009). Education and selfhood: A phenomenological investigation. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 2009.
- Bundu, H. and Nyaga, M. (2010). The impact of examination analysis on the management of public examinations: The KNEC experience. *Journal for Educational Assessment in Africa*, Vol. 4.
- Britannica Concise encyclopedia* (2010).
- Byrne, M. (2001). Understanding life experiences through a phenomenological approach to

research, Association of Registered Nurses (*AORN Journal*, Aril, 2001.

Caplan, B. (2009, Wednesday, March18). Education reform: Ministry must explore better ways

of examining Candidates. *Daily Nation*, p. 10.

Chaffee, J. (2005). *The philosopher's way: Thinking critically about profound issues*.

New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Charlesworth, M. (1976). *The existentialists and Jean-Paul Sartre*. London: George Prior

Publishers.

Chaube, S.P. and Chaube, A. (1973). *Foundations of Education*. New Delhi: Vikas

Publishing House PVT Ltd.

Churchill, S. D. and Wertz, F. (2003). An introduction to phenomenological psychology for

consumer research: Historical, conceptual and methodical foundations.

Association for Consumer Research Vol. 12. Retrieved from

<http://www.acrwebsite.org/research/view-conference-proceedings> on

October 12, 2011.

Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research*

strategies. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4thed.). London:

Routledge.

Cohen, L and Manion, L. (1989). *Research methods in education* (3rded.).

London: Routledge.

- Coon, D. (1998). *Introduction to psychology: Exploration and application*. London: Books/Cole Publishing Company
- Copleston, F.C. (1953). *A history of philosophy Vol. III: Ockham to Sua'rez*. New York: Paulist Press.
- Crozier, J. (2002). A unique experiment. *China in Focus Magazine*. Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU). Retrieved from <http://www.sacu.org/examinations.html> on June 3, 2010.
- Curtis, B. and Mays, W. (Eds) (1978). *Phenomenology and education: Self-consciousness and its development*. London: Methuen and Co Ltd.
- Daily Nation. (2012, Friday, June). Drastic measures as students sit exams. *Daily Nation*, p. 22.
- Daily Nation. (2011, January 5). Headmaster killed himself due to poor results. *Daily Nation*, pp. 1, 4-5.
- Dall'Alba, G. (2009). Phenomenology and education: An introduction. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 41, No. 1, 2009.
- Dana, R.H. and Leech, S. (1974). Existentialist assessment. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 38, 5, 428-35, October.
- Durgee, J.F. (1987). Phenomenology: New methods for asking questions and interpreting results. *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol. 14, 1987. Retrieved from

<http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/display.asp?id=6767>.

Eliade, M. (Ed). (1987). *The encyclopedia of religion*, Vol. 6. New York: Macmillan Publishing

Company.

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol.4 (1979). Chicago: William and Benton

Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 6 (1979). Chicago: William and Benton.

Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol.10 (1979), Chicago: William and Benton.

Encyclopedia Britannica (1979), Vol. 14. Chicago: William Benton.

Eshiwani, G.S. (1993). *Education in Kenya since independence*. Nairobi: East

African Educational Publishers.

Exam council has no power to cancel results, rules court. (2009, May 23). *Saturday*

Nation, p. 5.

Existential-phenomenology. Retrieved from <http://family.jrank.org/pages/1272/> on

March

7, 2011.

Fair test (August 17, 2007): The National Centre for Fair and Open Testing.

Retrieved from

<http://www.fairtest.org/norm-referenced-achievement-tests> on August 20,

2011.

Flew, A. (1999). *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Gramercy Books, Random

House.

Fraenkel, J.R., and Wallen, N.E. (2006). *How to design and evaluate research in*

education (6th ed.). Boston: McGrawHill.

Fwandeh, M. (2012, December 15). Admission policy dashes young students' dreams. *Saturday*

Nation, p. 16.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg (1975). *Truth and method*. London: Sheed and Ward.

Gall, M.D., Borg, W.R., Gall, P.J. (1996). *Educational research: An introduction*.
New York:

Longman Publishers.

Gathura, G. (2008, January 17). Night work may cause cancer. *Daily Nation*,
Horizon, pp

1f.

Geanellos, W. (2000). Exploring Ricoeur's theory of interpretation as a method of
analyzing

research texts. *Nursing Inquiry*, 2000, 7: 112-119.

Goirgi, A. (2008). Difficulties encountered in the application of phenomenological
method in the

social sciences. *The Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, May 2008,
Vol. 8, Edition 1, pp1-9.

Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated.

*International Journal of Qualitative Methods*3(1) April.

Hamachek, D. (1995). *Psychology in teaching, learning and growth*. Boston: Allyn
and Bacon.

Hassan, A. (2012, Monday, January 16). Our exam-centric education system
urgently needs a complete overhaul. *Daily Nation*.

Heidegger, M. (1927). *The basic problems of phenomenology: Introduction*.

Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Heidegger, M. (2002). *Hermeneutical phenomenology and fundamental ontology*. In

- Moran, D. and Mooney, T. (Eds). *The phenomenology reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Helms, R.M. (2008). *University admission worldwide*. Washington D.C.: International Bank for Reconstruction and development/World Bank.
- Henry, J. (2010, May 30). Exam regulator to 'fix' A-level results. *The telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/7782848/Exam-regulator-to-A-results.html> on 8th August, 2011.
- Holistic education network (2003). Retrieved from <http://www.hent.org/intro2.htm> on January 12, 2012.
- Jeffels, S. (2008). What is the meaning of conceptual framework in research? Demand Media Inc. Retrieved from ehow.com on January 4, 2010.
- Kageche, J. (2011, February 4). Jobs. *Daily Nation* p. 1.
- Kellaghan, T. (2004). Public examinations, national and international assessments, and educational policy. Dublin: Educational Research Centre.
- Kellaghan, T. and Creaney, V. (1992). Using examinations to improve education: A study in fourteen African countries: Synthesis Report Vol. 1: Washington DC: World Bank.
- Kamande, M. (2012, December 12). Jitters over varsity admission system. Retrieved from <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000072659> on December 30, 2012.
- Kenya National Examinations Council Newsletter (2008). *About Us*. Nairobi: KNEC.
- Kemerling G. (2011). *Phenomenology: Bracketing experience*. Retrieved from <http://www.phenomenologypages.com/6i.htm> on January 13, 2012.
- Khan, E. (2008). Defining ideal or "holistic" education. Retrieved from

- <http://www.helium.com/items/9222079-defining-ideal-or-holistic> on January 12, 2010.
- Kigotho, W. (2008, September 17). Why it is untimely to burn public examinations. Retrieved from <http://multimedia.marsgroupkenya.org> on 9th September, 2011.
- Kinyanjui, M.N. (2011, August 8). Education: Why we are producing grade 'D' mindsets. *Daily Nation* p. 13.
- Kithuka, M. (2004). *Educational measurement and evaluation: A guide to teachers*. Egerton University.
- Kituyi, M. (2012, January 8). KCPE protests speak volumes to those who care to listen. *Sunday Nation*, p. 9.
- Klinger, I and Rimiru, C. (2000). *Philosophy, Science and God*. Nairobi: Consolata Institute of Philosophy.
- KNEC (1999). Issues on psychometrics: Senior staff seminar, Travellers Beach Hotel, Mombasa.
- KNEC (2010). *The year 2009 KCSE Examination Report*.
- KNEC (2010). *Essential KCSE examination statistics given during the release of 2010 KCSE examination results* on February 28, 2011 by the minister for education.
- KNEC (2010). *Annual Report 2008/2009*.
- Kombo, D.K. and Tromp, D.L.A. (2006). *Proposal and thesis writing: An introduction*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Kundert, M.P. (2000). *Phenomenological-Existentialism and the metaphysics of quality*.

- Kwant, R.M. (1996). *From phenomenology to metaphysics*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.
- Lahey, B.B. (2003). *Psychology: An introduction*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Larrabee, M.J. (1990). The contexts of phenomenology as theory. In *Human Studies* 13: 195-208, Vol 13, Number 3: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Laverty, S.M. (2003). Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: A comparison of historical and methodological considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2 (3), September, 2003. Retrieved from http://www.ualberta.ca/iqmq/backissues/2_3final/pdf/laverty.pdf on March 20, 2012.
- Lekishon, L. (2011, July). Our university students have to rethink the purpose of education. *Saturday Nation*, p. 16.
- Lester, S. (1999). *An introduction to phenomenological research*. Tauton: Stan Lester Developments. Retrieved from www.sld.demon.co.uk/resmethy.pdf on June 6, 2011.
- Li, S. (2005). *Pedagogy of examinations: A phenomenological inquiry into the pedagogical significance of Chinese students' lived experiences of examinations* (PhD Thesis). University of Alberta.
- Lindseth, A. and Norberg, A. (2004). A phenomenological hermeneutical method for researching lived experience. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Science*, 2004, 18, 145-153.
- Lycan, W. (n.d.). Intentionality and propositional attitudes. Retrieved from <http://www.unc.edu/~ujanel/DesireBackground.pdf> on March 20, 2012.
- Lynching teachers futile (2012, Friday, January 6). *Daily Nation*, p.12.
- Macmillan English dictionary for advanced learners* (2002). Oxford: Bloomsbury

Publishing Plc.

Makokha, K. (2009, November 4). Exam cheats deserve reward not reproach.

Saturday Nation, p.12.

Marrison, G.S. (2010). Why is assessment important? Retrieved from

<http://www.education.com> on May 3, 2012.

Marvin, F. (1966). *The aims of phenomenology: The motives, methods and impact of Husserl's thought*. New York: Harper Torchbooks.

Mautner, T. (2005). *Dictionary of philosophy*. London: Penguin

Melissa, K. (n.d.). Holistic grading. Retrieved from

<http://www.712educators.about.com/od/gradingsystems/g/holistic> on June 10, 2012.

Meserani project.(2013). Tanzania national examination results. Retrieved from

<http://www.meseraniproject.co.uk> on June 3, 2013.

McLean, G. (2003). *Hermeneutics, faith and relations between cultures: Cultural heritage and cultural change*. Series 11 A, Islam, Vol. 17: Lecture in QOM, . Washington D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

McMillan, J. H. (2008). *Educational research: Fundamentals for the consumer*.

Boston: Pearson.

Miruka, K. (2011, Thursday, January 5). Poor performance: Residents attempt to eject head teachers. *Daily Nation*, p. 12.

Muthuri, P. (2011, Thursday, January 5). Parents withdraw pupils from school.

Daily Nation, p. 21.

Moltmann, F. (n.d.). Intentional objects as abstractions from referential acts.

Retrieved from <http://www.semantics.univ-paris1.fr/.../intentional%20objects> on May 20, 2012.

- Mostert, W. (n.d.). *Phenomenology: Discovering new meanings of pedagogy within the lived experience*. Retrieved from <http://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/mos02453-htm> on 10th July, 2011.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. California: Sage Publications.
- Mugenda, O.M. and Mugenda, A.G. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: ACTS Press.
- Muiruri, B. (2011, Monday, August 8). The springboard: Misplaced careers. *Daily Nation*, p. 5.
- Murthy, S.D. (2011). Examination system: Reforms, needs of the hour. Retrieved from <http://www.similima.com/examination-system-reforms-need-of-the> on March 3, 2012.
- Mutai, E. (2012, August 31). Examination council has seven days to remark KCSE exams. Retrieved from <http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/Examination-council-has-seven-days-to-re-mark-KCSE-exams/-/539546/1491566/-/q4awakz/-/index.html> on October 10, 2010.
- Mwamwenda, T.S. (1995). *Educational psychology: An African perspective*. Durban: Butterworths.
- Naidoo, V. (2010). Maintaining the standards in the national senior certificate examinations. *Journal of Educational Assessment in Africa*, Vol. 4, Published by the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa.
- National sleep foundation (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.sleepfoundation.org> on June 12, 2012

CC Chairman Department of Mathematics

Chairman Department of Surveying

Chairman Department of Chemistry

Chairman Department of Physics

Chairman Department of Architecture

Chairman Department of computer Science

Dean, BCUC

Dean , SoE

- Njung'e, C. (2011, March 6). You can still have a great life without that 'perfect' grade. *Sunday Nation, People* p.2.
- Njung'e, C. (2012, January 1). Failing exams should not kill you. *Sunday Nation*.
- Nyarora, H. and Mbithi, M. (2012, Monday, January 2). Teachers plan to sue KNEC over tests. *Daily Nation*.
- Nyasani, J.M. (1996). *The metaphysics of the cosmos and related current issues of metaphysics*. Nairobi: School of Journalism, University of Nairobi.
- Nyichomba, B.B. and Mkilaha, I. (1992, September 28th-30th). *Evaluating Professional competencies in technical education and training*. Paper presented at the 10th Sub-Regional Conference of the Association of Heads of Institutes Responsible for Examinations and Educational Assessment in Eastern and Southern Africa, Arusha International Conference Centre, Tanzania
- Ochieng, P. (2010, January 17). Is our education geared towards solving problems? *Daily Nation*, p. 13.
- Ochieng, P. (2011, September 11). Without enough teachers vision 2030 is a big lie. *Daily Nation*, p. 13.
- Ocholla, N.D. and Roux L.J. (2010). *Conceptions and misconceptions of theoretical framework in library and information science research*. Accessed from [http://www.lis.uzulu.ac.za/2011/Ocholla and le Roux](http://www.lis.uzulu.ac.za/2011/Ocholla%20and%20le%20Roux), on 7th May, 2011.
- O'Conner, J.J. and Robertson, E.F. (1997). *Albert Einstein*. Retrieved from <http://www.history.mcs.st.andrews.ac.uk/Biographies/Einstein.html> on June 6, 2011.
- Olwenya, G. (2011, Thursday, January 5). Parents invade schools, disrupt learning. *Daily Nation*, p. 20.

CC Chairman Department of Mathematics
Chairman Department of Surveying

Chairman Department of Chemistry

Chairman Department of Physics

Chairman Department of Architecture

Chairman Department of computer Science

Dean, BCUC

Dean , SoE

Ongom, D.L. (1992, September 28th-30th). *Issues in public examinations*. Paper presented at the 10th Sub-regional Conference of the Association of Heads of Institutes Responsible for Examinations and Educational Assessment in Eastern and Southern Africa, Arusha International Conference Centre, Tanzania.

Onyango-Obbo, C. (2012, January 19). Students who commit suicide over poor grades great in their own way. *Daily Nation*, p. 12.

Oriang' L. (2010, January 1). Good grades are fine, but at what cost to children? *Daily Nation*, p. 12.

Otieno, D.C. (2010). Contemporary assessment tools and methods in public examinations in Kenya. *Journal of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa*, Vol. 3

Ouma, O. (2009, Monday, July 13). School not the end-all of existence. *Daily Nation*, p.11.

Pratt, D. (1999). *Curriculum planning: A handbook for professionals*. New York: Harcourt Brace Publishers.

Reeves, C.T. (2000). Alternative assessment approaches for online learning environments in higher education. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, Volume 23, Issue, pp. 101-111.

Republic of Kenya. (2012). *A framework policy for education and training: Task force on the re-alignment of education sector to the constitution of Kenya 2010 and Kenya vision 2030 and beyond*. Nairobi: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from http://www.vision2030.go.ke/cms/vds/Task_Force_Final_Report_Feb2012.pdf on June 10, 2012.

- Republic of Kenya.(2008). *Kenya vision 2030*. Retrieved from <http://vision2030.go.ke/index.php/pillars> on January 20, 2012.
- Robbins, B .D. (2006) (a).*What is existential-phenomenology?*Myth and Logos Website.
- Robbins, B.D. (2006) (b). The delicate empiricism of Goethe: Phenomenology as a rigorous science of nature. *The Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 6, np. Retrieved from <http://www.ipjp.org> on 4th July, 2009.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul (1956), Translated by Hazel E. Barnes (1966). *Being and nothingness*. New York:Pocket Books.
- Saturday Nation (2010, September 11). Chancellor throws weight behind affiliate colleges, p. 29.

Secondary school examination systems in countries in the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) region (August 15, 2001). Retrieved <http://www.seameo.org/v/library/dlwelcome/publications/ebook/exam/2ndintro.htm> on 8th November, 2011.

Selivanov, Y. (n.d.). *Two methods of phenomenological investigation, Hegel versus Marx and Husserl*. Moscow State University. Retrieved from <http://www.yuriselivanov.narod.ru/texts/twomethods.htm>.

Scruton, R. (1995). *A short history of modern philosophy: From Descartes to Wittgenstein* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Shand, J. (Ed). (2003). *Fundamentals of philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Silby, B. (1998). Dennet's reduction of Brentano's intentionality. Retrieved from <http://www.def-logic.com/articles/silby015.html>.

Siringi, S. (a) (2009, Monday, March 29). School heads root for change: Teachers propose less emphasis on exams and an end to the quota system. *Daily Nation*, p.54.

Siringi, S. (b) (2009, Wednesday, July 2). Report exposes how 8-4-4 ruins the youth: Education bosses block teachers from discussing explosive exam failure dossier. *Daily Nation*, pp.1&9.

Smith, D. W. (2008). *Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology> on October 7, 2009.

Smith, J. (2005). Merleau-Ponty and the phenomenological reduction. *Inquiry*, Vol. 48, No. 6, 553-571, December, 2005.

Smith, J.A., Flower, P. and Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretive phenomenological*

- analysis: Theory, method and research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Smith, J .A. and Osborn, M. (2006). Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). *Qualitative Psychology*. Retrieved from http://www.research.familymed.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/IPA_smith_Osbc January 11, 2012. on July 13, 2012.
- Steinberg, B. and Birkett-Smith, R. (2008). *How have school examinations changed over the years?* Retrieved from www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk on 30th November, 2009.
- Stewart, D. and Mickunas, A. (n.d.). *Exploring phenomenology: A guide to the field and its literature*. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com/David-Stewart/e/B0011TRRBM/ref> on July 13, 2012.
- Stone, F.A. (1979). *Philosophical phenomenology: A methodology for holistic educational research, Multicultural Research Guides Series, No. 4*. Connecticut: World Education Centre.
- Strawser, M. (2009). Assessing assessment: Toward hermeneutic-phenomenological perspective. *InSight: A Journal of Scholarly Teaching*, Volume 4.
- Talking point. (2012, January 7). Obsession with high grades the cause of exam related deaths. *Saturday Nation*.
- The'venaz, P. (Ed.). (1962). *What is phenomenology and other essays*. Chicago: Quodrange Books.
- The Great Soviet encyclopedia*, 3rd edition (2010). The Gale Group Inc.
- The importance of examinations* (2009). Retrieved from <http://bachlongbff.wordpress.com/2009/07/13/the-importance-of-examinations/> on 8th November, 2011.
- The philosophy and values of Confucianism for value education*. Retrieved from

<http://www.china.review.com/sao.asp?id=2082> on 10th August, 2011

- Thomson, C.J., Locander, W.B. and Pollio, H.R. (1989). Putting consumer Experience back into consumer research: The philosophy and method of existential phenomenology. *JSTOR: The Journal of Consumer Research* 16 (2), 133-146 Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/pss/24893213> on May 6, 2011.
- Thorndike, L.R. and Hagen, P.E. (1977). *Measurement in Psychology and education*. New York: John Wiley & Sons
- Trochim, W. M. (2006). *Qualitative approaches*. Retrieved from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/bk/qualapp.php> on June 10, 2010.
- Trotman, D. (2005). Looking for sparks: A phenomenological study of educational practice and the imaginative lifeworld in primary schools. *Teaching Education*, Vol. 16, Issue 1, March 2005, pp. 61-72.
- Tuguta, M.Y. (1992, September 28th-30th). *The role and purpose of practical examinations*. A paper presented at the 10th sub-regional conference of the Association of Heads of Institutes Responsible for Examinations and Educational Assessment in Eastern and Southern Africa, Arusha International Conference Centre, Tanzania.
- Vallor, S. (2009). The pregnancy of the real: A phenomenological defense of experimental realism. *Inquiry*, Vol. 52, No. 1, 1-25, February, 2009.
- UK essays (2013). Phenomenology. Retrieved from <http://www.easybank.ukessays.com> on January 2, 2013.
- Van Manen, M. (2002). *Phenomenology online*. Retrieved from <http://www.phenomenologyonline.com> on January 22, 2010.
- Van Manen (1999). Retrieved from <http://www.phenomenologyonline.com> on June

20, 2009.

Wasanga, M.P. and Ramani, K. (2010). Examinations crisis and management: The role of media and the Kenya National Examinations Council experience. *Journal of Educational Assessment in Africa*, Vol. 4.

Watson, A. (2013). Types of assessment used in education: An exploration of the different types of assessment used in education and their importance. Retrieved from <http://www.suite101.com> on January 3, 2013.

Weaver, B. (n.d.). The importance of assessment. Retrieved from <http://www.scholastic.com> on December 13, 2012.

Wesonga, M. and Oduor, A. (2012, March, 19). Ministry vows to deal firmly with exam cheats. Retrieved from www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000054369&pageNo=1 on August 10, 2012.

Weininger, D. (1999). Phenomenology. Retrieved from <http://www.people.bu.edu/wwildman/weirdwildweb/courses/wphil/lectures> on May 9.

WikiAnswers (2011). Retrieved from <http://wiki.answers.com/importance-of-test-and-examination-at-school-level> on 8th November, 2011.

Wilmot, J.; Wood, R. and Murphy, R. (1996). *A review of research into the reliability of examinations*: A discussion paper prepared for the school curriculum and assessment authority.

Winking, D. (1997). Critical issue: Ensuring equity with alternative assessments. Retrieved from <http://www.ncrel.org> on June 19, 2012.

Wrathal, M.A. and Dreyfus, H.L. (2006). *A companion to phenomenology and*

APPENDIX A

SEMI-OPEN ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RECORDING CO-RESEARCHERS LIVED EXPERIENCES (ANECDOTAL RECORDS)

Instructions:

- i) Please fill this form by writing your real experiences of the examinations that enabled you join the University as a prospective teacher.
- ii) Do not write your name or registration number on this form.
- iii) Use foolscaps if the blank spaces provided are not enough.
- iv) All information given will be confidential and will be used for the purpose of the research only.

1. Indicate the examinations that you passed to join the University.....

E.g. KCSE/GCE

2. Put a circle around one of the bracketed grades that you achieved in the examinations. (A, B+, B, B-, C+). Other(s) ----- (Please specify).

3. Indicate in order of preference the degree courses that you chose before the examinations results were out. 1st choice----- 2nd choice-----

4. Indicate the degree courses that you made during the revision of courses that happened after the release of KCSE results. 1st choice----- 2nd choice-----

5. Describe how your feelings would be if you were to be admitted into the University on the basis of the first degree choices without undergoing revision of the courses after the KCSE results-----

6. Give the advantages and disadvantages of revising the choice of degree courses by candidates after the KCSE results-----

7. Were you fully prepared for the examinations? Explain-----

8. Was your school fully prepared for examinations? Explain-----

9. Do you wish to be a teacher forever? Explain-----

10. Describe how the examinations showed your true knowledge of the subject content.

11. Explain what you consider the examinations missed to assess in you?

12. State and explain what you consider the examinations could have assessed in a prospective teacher like you.-----

13. Did the examinations fully capture your ability? Explain -----

14. Explain about the overall examinations performance of your school -----

15. Explain whether your fellow school candidates got the right grades in the examinations.-----

16. State what resulted to your joys and disappointments after getting the examination results.

17. Cite your most memorable experience that is related to the examinations that you passed.

18. Mention some good experiences that you realized about the examinations that you passed to join the university as a prospective teacher.

19. Describe the bad experiences that you realized about the examinations that you passed to join the university as a prospective teacher.

20. Provide any other experiences of the examinations that are not covered in items 1-19 above.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX B

THE KENYA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR PHENOMENOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

This is to certify that the candidate named below was a student of the stated school. The candidate underwent a phenomenological assessment and qualified for the award of

Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

The certificate contains the records of the learner's own assessment of their knowledge and the society's assessment of the same.

JOHANNES LIJUNG KENKO *MALE* INDEX NO. 908976546754/2012

MARIWA SECONDARY SCHOOL

LEVEL
OF
ACHIEVEMENT

RECORD OF LEARNER'S ASSESSMENT OF OWN KNOWLEDGE

Innovation-----
Assembled a radio
Music-----
Composed a song
Volley Ball-----
Participated up to
national level
Language-----Won in
County
Composition
Writing
Teaching-----Class peer
tutored

CAREER PROGNOSIS-----TEACHING

RECORD OF SOCIETY'S ASSESSMENT OF LEARNER'S KNOWLEDGE

English-----
PASS
Mathematics-----
PASS
Geography-----
PASS
French-----
PASS

(Other subjects can be added by either the learner or the society as deemed fit)

EXAMINATIONS FOR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2012

Signed-----

Authorized Secretary

Authorized Chairman

Phenomenological Examinations 123486543098

Adapted from KNEC certificate(KCSE)