

**CHEATING IN NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN KENYA: ARISTOTELIAN  
AKRATIC ANALYSIS OF CAUSES AND REMEDIES**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this research project is my original work, and has not been presented for the award of any degree of this or any other University or College.

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## **DEDICATION**

With love to you Dorcas Nyanchama my loving granny and Angey Gloria, Angel Dorcas and Angela Rehema my trio.

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## **EPIGRAPH**

But when I looked into the mirror I cried out, and my heart was shaken; for I did not see myself there, but a devil's grimace and scornful laughter. Indeed, all too well I understand the dream's sign and warning: my teaching is in danger, weeds want to be wheat! My enemies have become powerful and have distorted the image of my teaching, so that those dearest to me must be ashamed of the gifts I gave them.

(Friedrich Nietzsche – 1844-1900).

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

ADM. No – Admission number

C.A.Ts – Continuous Assessment Tests

ID No - Identity card number

K.C.P.E – Kenya Certificate of Primary Education

K.C.S.E – Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

KNEC - The Kenya National Examinations Council

PF No– Personal File number

PP No – Passport number

USA - United States of America

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## ABSTRACT

*Examinations across the world play a vital role in the education system. Unfortunately, the process of examinations is greatly affected by the act of cheating hence giving a wrong impression on the results. This study has analysed cheating in two national examinations done in Kenya in relation to the Aristotelian concept of akrasia. Akrasia is a theory propounded by Aristotle that explains how human beings in their very nature are affected by a weak will whereby one does the opposite of what they know is right. Therefore, this study has in detail discussed the causes of cheating in two main national examinations- KCPE and KCSE- relating them to akrasia. The causes responsible for cheating in national examinations as discussed include societal factors, education system and personal characteristics. Further the researcher has discussed in detail the possible causes of akrasia. The following factors were identified as possible causes of akrasia: Baconian idols of the mind, fallacies and the will to power. Remedies that KNEC has employed in an attempt to curb this vice were also evaluated. It was noted that KNEC has employed the deterrence theory of punishment in an attempt to curb cheating. It penalizes those who get involved in cheating by getting them prosecuted in courts of law and sentenced to jail terms and hefty fines. It also cancels results of those students who get involved in the vice. This study employed two main methods of philosophical research. These were the critical analysis method and the prescriptive method. The critical analysis method tried to analyse the causes of cheating in national examinations and to analyse the remedies employed by KNEC. The prescriptive method on the other hand was used to recommend the possible solution to this problem. The researcher has suggested a possible solution to the problem of cheating where five aspects of development are to be examined. This aspects include intellectual development, spiritual/ moral development, physical development, emotional development and psychological development. Finally the researcher has given some recommendations in respect to the study. The study recommends that the learner's interests should be left to prevail and also the education system to adopt a holistic evaluation and grading system.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study

Examinations across the world play a cardinal role in formal education system. It is from them that decisions are made on placement of the citizenry in careers and the job market (Wanyande, 1988). As explained by Muchai (2014), it is through examinations that learners are evaluated as to whether they have acquired the right knowledge or not. They are also used as instruments of assessing the progress of learners in the education system and to promote them to the next level of study (Akaranga & Ongong'a, 2013).

Unfortunately, the examination process as a whole seems not to give a clear reflection of the learner's ability and as such its effectiveness is questionable as all forms of cheating are used during examinations and this gives a wrong picture of the results (Omemu, 2015). Studies have shown that cheating in examinations is a worldwide phenomenon. It has become an issue of concern the world over (Strom & Strom, 2007). Akaranga and Ongong'a (2013) observe, that cheating in examinations is a contemporary problem affecting systems of education all over the world, where many countries have been reported to have been affected, Kenya included. The effectiveness and the efficiency of a country's education system get reduced as the cheater is assigned higher grades/scores than they deserve (Magnus, Polteravich, Danilov & Savvateev, 2002). Cheating as explained by Blankenship and Whitley (2000), is an act of one trying to acquire or helping one to obtain high grades in an examination by the use of deceptive means.

In India, about 600 Indian high school students were expelled from school for cheating in examinations done in March 2015 (Singh, 2015). A lot of pressure is put on students by the system of education to pass or else they will not proceed to the next level, and as such, they attempt to smuggle materials into the examination room with the help of their parents and friends who want them to perform well so as to move to the next level. Singh (2015) also reports that four examination centres had their results cancelled in India as they had large numbers of cases of cheating. Students who were caught cheating in this instance could be barred from taking the examination for a period of up to three years, pay a fine or face a jail term. Kolker (2012) reports that students at the New York State High School cheated in examinations using phones where one student who is good in a subject helps the rest in answering the questions by sending them answers by phone.

As explained by Ramires (2008), cheating is getting worse each year in Los Angeles. 64% of students in Los Angeles admitted having cheated at least once in the year 2008. In China 83% of students were caught and reported cheating in examinations in the year 2005 (Strom & Strom, 2007). The Chinese examination law penalizes those who participate in this phenomenon by a jail term of up to seven years (Dongdong, 2005). With such a penalty, why do students still cheat in examinations?

In Nigeria too, reports show that this phenomenon exists. Parents, some teachers and students participate actively in examination malpractices. Incidences of cheating are very high especially at Secondary School level (Olatunbosun, 2009). Ghana is not left out either. Incidences of cheating are experienced where students cheat in both national and regional examinations (Folson & Awuah, 2014)

There are two major examinations administered countrywide in Kenya, that are of concern in this study, that is, the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations and the

Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations. These examinations are administered by the Kenya National Examinations Council (Kenya National Examinations Council Act, 2012).

Cases of cheating in both KCPE and KCSE are rampant in Kenya. Gicobi (2013) reports that cheating in the examinations done in the year 2012 had gone hi-tech. University students, teachers and invigilators were involved in the act. Mobile phones were used to send examination questions and answers to the candidates.

The K.C.S.E examination that was done in the year 2013 left 36 national and county schools with cancelled results. This was because the schools did not report the cheating cases to the Kenya National Examinations Council (Wanzala, 2014). In the subsequent year, results of 2975 candidates were cancelled with 2410 being as a result of cheating. This affected schools at all levels right from National schools to Sub-County schools. Chavakali High School and Kisii High School recorded the highest cheats of 307 and 145 respectively (Wanzala, 2015).

Oduor (2015) reports that a director of a secondary school, two teachers and some university students were arrested for being involved in examination irregularities. Njagi and Wanzala (2015) note that examination papers were available for sale hours before they were done. Unscrupulous people use mobile phones to send examination questions to interested buyers a day before the examinations are administered. Cases of examination malpractices in Kenya have become so widespread to the extent that examination materials leak to students through the social media especially WhatsApp a day or more before the actual day of examinations (Opana, 2015). All that an interested person needs to get examination papers yet to be done is Khs 1000 per paper and a smart phone. After a mutual agreement with the seller the examination papers were sent through WhatsApp to the buyer's mobile phone. It has been

confirmed that papers in circulation are the exact papers that were done when the right time came for them to be administered (Amadala & Kaluoch, 2015).

As seen from the observations above, cheating in examinations is an issue of concern throughout the world. Despite tough laws being put in place by systems of education all over the world, one wonders why students with the aid of parents and teachers cheat in national examinations.

This study employed the Aristotelian theory of *Akrasia* to analyse the causes of cheating and to suggest possible remedies. This concept originated from Aristotle (384-322 BC). *Akrasia*, as explained by Mautner (2005) means the weakness of the will or the lack of self-control. When one sees and approves something to be right but ends up acting in the contrary, then this is referred to as *akrasia*. For example, students, teachers and parents know that cheating in examinations is morally wrong and yet they go ahead to get involved in it. When one loses control over actions that they have already judged to be right, then there arises the problem of *akrasia* (Pakaluk, 2005). Here one succumbs to pleasure, pain or emotions rather than reason making them act against their better judgement. Mele (2009) argues that when one is exposed to a temptation, they are likely to intentionally behave or act against their best or better judgement.

Aristotle thought that an akratic person has some knowledge of what is universally good but this knowledge in the moment the person is affected by the weak-will, is not enough to stop them from doing that which they know is wrong. It is as a result of some sort of weakness that makes one to act against their better or best judgement (Clanton, 2015).

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Cheating in examinations is a phenomenon that is affecting education systems across the world. This malpractice is reported across all the levels of learning. Cases of cheating in examinations especially national examinations have been reported in Kenya severally. The KNEC has put in place stiff penalties including cancellation of examinations and jail terms for individuals convicted of examination irregularities. However, KNEC has not completely eradicated examination irregularities. Given that KNEC has policies governing the examinations, why then does the phenomenon persist? This study seeks to analyse the causes of cheating in examinations and the remedies to this phenomenon using the Aristotelian theory of *akrasia*.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study are to:

- i) analyse the causes of cheating in national examinations in Kenya;
- ii) analyse the remedies used by KNEC in fighting cheating in examinations, and
- iii) propose a possible solution to the problem of cheating in examinations.

## **1.4 Research questions**

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

- i) What are the causes of cheating in national examinations in Kenya?
- ii) What are the remedies used by KNEC in fighting cheating in national examinations in Kenya?
- iii) What is the possible solution to the problem of cheating in examinations?



## **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study is intended to benefit stakeholders in education in Kenya in the following ways:

- i. Illuminate to parents, teachers, Kenya National examinations Council officials, Security agencies and students the long term effects of cheating, and thereby hopefully help them to appreciate the true value of honesty, thus motivating them to desist from cheating.
- ii. Challenge educational curriculum developers to research and develop a comprehensive evaluation system that captures a wide range of aspects of development of the human person.

## **1.6 Limitations of the study**

The study was limited by the following factors:

- i.) Lack of sufficient time and resources to analyse cheating in the entire education system in Kenya.
- ii.) There may be other explanations for the phenomenon of cheating besides the Aristotelian *akrasia*, but those will not be dealt with in this study.

## **1.7 Delimitations of the study**

The study is delimited by the following:

- i) The study is delimited to cheating in examinations at KCPE and KCSE levels in Kenya.

- ii) Since there may be other approaches to cheating in examinations, this study was delimited to the philosophical aspect of *akrasia* in analysing causes of cheating and remedies employed by KNEC to address this problem.

## **1.8 Theoretical framework**

This study was based on the Aristotelian theory of *Akrasia*. Aristotle (384-322 BC) is a major contributor to the realm of knowledge. He is a key figure in ancient Greek philosophy alongside his predecessors: Socrates and Plato. Aristotle was an authority in many fields of knowledge such as physics, logic, theology, politics, psychology and ethics among others (Collinson, 1987). He was passionately driven by the desire for knowledge throughout his life and this led him to classify knowledge into several disciplines of which ethics is (Barnes, 2000). Although Aristotle lived many years ago, his thought and writings have a great influence on educational theory today (Collinson, 1987).

*Akrasia* as explained by Mautner (2005), means the weakness of the will or the lack of self-control. When one sees and approves something to be right but ends up acting in a contrary manner, then this is referred to as *akrasia* (Mateiescu, 2011). The opposite of *akrasia* is a Greek word *enkrateia* that means strength of will or self-control (Pakaluk, 2005). When someone in their rationality has been overcome by the desires over what their sound judgement perceives to be wrong and goes ahead to do it, then this person becomes akratic (Mateiescu, 2011). Aristotle thought that when someone does things that they persistently desire to do but are against their better judgement, they would have *akrasia* and those that control themselves from doing what they desire that is against their better judgement would have *enkrateia* (Pakaluk, 2005).

When one loses control over actions that they have already judged to be right, then there arises the problem of *akrasia* (Pakaluk, 2005). When one acts irrationally as per their emotions rather than acting by applying reason then the problem of *akrasia* has arisen and in the event where reason overpowers emotions, then *enkrateia* is in operation (Pakaluk, 2005). Mele (2009) argues that when one is exposed to a temptation, they are likely to intentionally behave or act against their best or better judgement.

Aristotle observed that a person may have knowledge of what is universally good but due to *akrasia*, that knowledge is not enough to stop them from doing a wrong action. It is a result of some sort of weakness that one acts against their better or best judgement (Clanton, 2015). Aristotle also thought that a person who is fully knowledgeable, acts in accordance with what they know is right and an akratic person acts against that.

The following characteristics therefore depict the behaviour of an akratic person:

- i) They act against their better judgement.
- ii) The act must be done knowingly / intentionally and not accidentally
- iii) The action must be done freely and not under pressure or compulsion

This theory is relevant to this study, as it enables the researcher to understand how the weak will of humans and the lack of knowledge lead to instances of cheating in examinations.

## 1.9 Conceptual framework

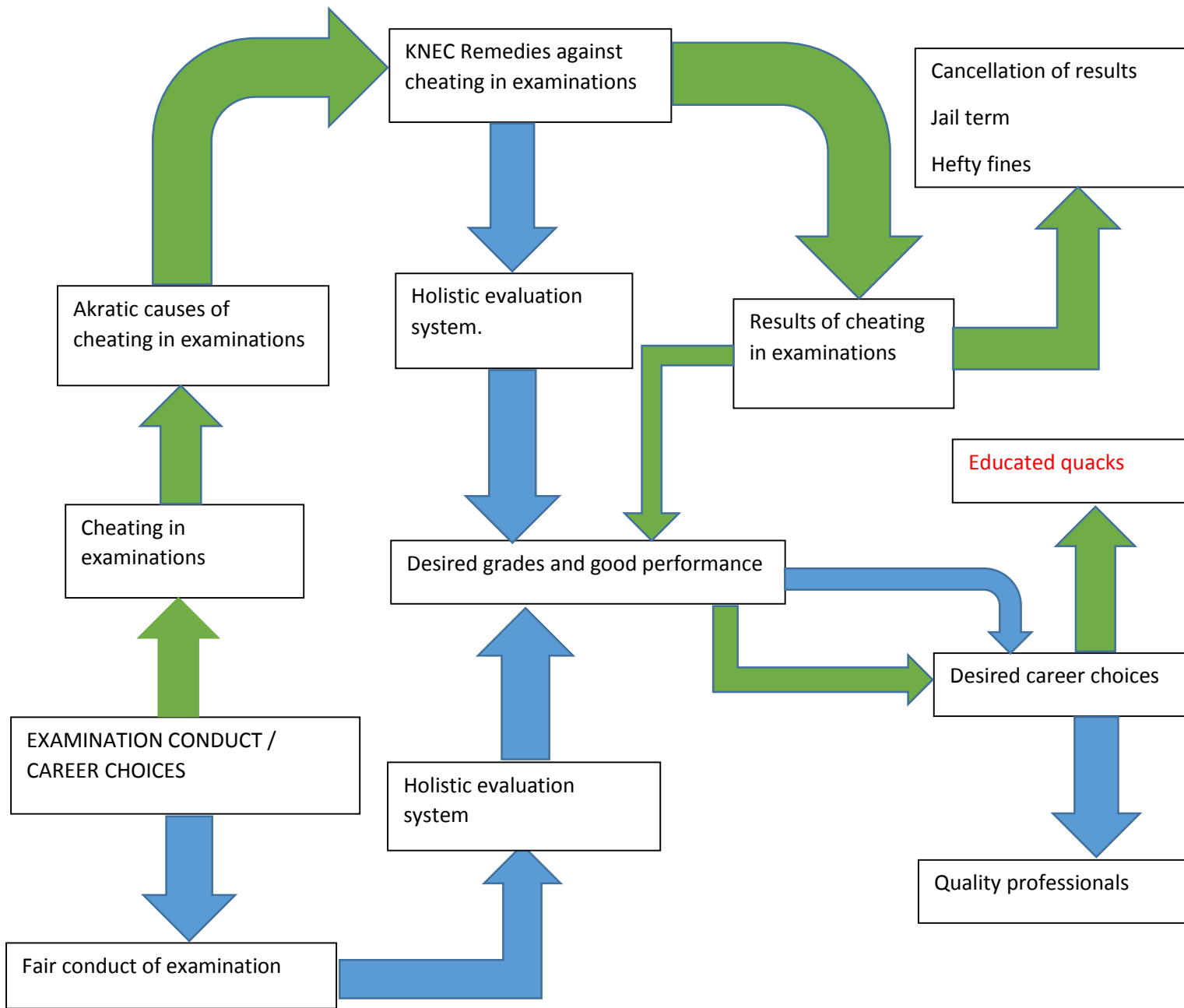
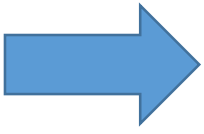


Fig 1

## Key



These arrows represent the pathway that is postulated to contribute to quality education and the resultant careers. This will facilitate the development of a highly qualified workforce attributed to fair conduct of examination and the holistic evaluation system.



These arrows represent the pathway that is postulated to contribute to poor quality education and the resultant wrong career choices and poor quality professional attributed to *akrasia*.

## **1.10 Definition of operational terms**

*Akrasia* – weakness of will that makes one to act against their better judgement

*Enkrateia* – strength of the will that makes one to act against their desires and emotions

*Akratic agent* – a person who is weak willed

*Akratic action* – an action that is done as a result of weakness of will

**Examinations** – a formal test given to students to evaluate their knowledge in a given subject

**Remedies** - means of countering an undesirable act

**Cheating** – an act of dishonesty in examinations in order to gain good grades

## **1.11 Research methodology**

This study employed both the critical analysis method and the prescriptive method. The critical method is a careful analysis of a position to identify issues that have been overlooked and the assumptions that underlie the argument (Rosen & Behrens, 1982). This method questions currently held positions, the assumptions made and it challenges the already laid down principles (Gray, 2014). In this study the critical analysis method sought to examine the causes of cheating in national examinations in Kenya and remedies put in place to counter it.

The prescriptive method was used to give direction and akratic remedies concerning cheating in examinations in Kenya. The prescriptive method tends to explain what ought to be. It proceeds from the assumption that people are imperfect in their current state and therefore give a guideline on how people and the society ought to behave (Fieser, 2009). The study sought to find out what might be the problem with our examination system and to suggest ways through which we might arrive at solutions to this problem.

## **1.12 Organization of the study**

This research is organized in six chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction of the research that was undertaken on the topic: Cheating in national examinations in Kenya: Aristotelian akratic analysis of causes and remedies. In this section the following have been discussed: the background to the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, theoretical and conceptual frameworks to the study and the research methodology.

Chapter two of this research deals with the causes of cheating in national examinations in Kenya i.e. K.C.P.E and K.C.S.E. It is in this section that the researcher analyses how important

examinations are in the education system and how they are administered. Akritic causes of cheating are analysed in this chapter. Chapter three discusses the concept of *akrasia*. The possible causes of *akrasia* are here identified as the Baconian idols of the mind, fallacies and the Nietzschean will to power.

Chapter four analyses the remedies used by KNEC in an attempt to curb this vice. In chapter five, the researcher proposes a possible remedy to this problem of cheating in Kenyan National Examinations. Finally, chapter six gives the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.



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## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **CAUSES OF CHEATING IN NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN KENYA**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Cheating in national examinations as discussed in the background section of the previous chapter, has become an issue of concern in the education sector in Kenya. This chapter analyses the concept of examinations, laying emphasis on the nature of examinations, forms of national examinations in Kenya, and the rationale for using examinations to evaluate learners. Akritic causes of cheating are examined thereafter, where societal factors, educational factors and personal characteristics have been identified in relation to the weak will of the human soul.

#### **2.2 The concept of examination**

Scholars view evaluation in education as a means of providing reliable information for decision making, investigating how worth an object is and as an act of collecting information concerning the quality and nature of educational objects (Nevo, 1995). Evaluation can be done in form of examinations (Naliaka, Odera & Moses, 2015). Examinations are formal tests administered to a learner to evaluate his or her knowledge and ability in a particular subject (Anzene, 2014). Chaminuka & Ndudzo (2014) explain that an examination is a test that is formal which is given to a learner to evaluate their skills, knowledge or / and ability in a particular subject by oral or written questions or practical exercises. Liman (1996) defines examination as a means of testing students' knowledge and competence.

Examinations have been undertaken throughout the world to measure the students' individual progress in the education process. The quality of individual schools and the effectiveness of an

education system are also measured by the outcome of examinations (Braun, Kanjee, Bettinger & Kremer 2006). Examinations are used as a tool to assess student achievements and aptitudes, make predictions on the success of the learner in future and help in making informed decisions about the curriculum (Boit, Njoki & Chang'ach, 2012).

Examinations help in evaluating the quantity and quality of knowledge a learner has acquired within a given period of time (Anzene, 2014). All over the world, examinations remain the preferred tool of assessment of the learner's achievement after scholarly work (Chaminuko & Ndudzo, 2014). Examinations are done for purposes of assessment of students to rank them according to their abilities (Roediger, Putnam & Smith, 2011). Every education system has educational objectives. Evaluation that is done through administering examinations in the education process helps in determining whether the objectives have been attained or not (Wheeler, 1997). The examinations outcome is used as a basis for evaluating the examinees ability and the quantity of knowledge acquired (Fasasi, 2006). The examinee is thereafter promoted to the next level or offered employment depending on the quality of the certificate (Naliaka, Odera & Moses, 2015).

Although examinations help in evaluating the quantity and quality of knowledge a learner has acquired within a given period of time, due to incidents of cheating in examinations, many decisions made based on examination results are not valid (Oniye & Alawaye, 2008). Consequently, examinations should be carefully designed and administered to ensure honesty, fairness and objectivity in the whole process (Naliaka, Odera & Moses, 2015).

The World Bank (2001) describes examination malpractice as an intentional wrong action that is contrary to the rules of examination. This action places a student at an unfair advantage. Cheating in examinations has become a major problem in the world and it has negative effects on education. Although cheating is experienced in other tests in the coursework such as class

assignments, term papers, homework etc., it is more significant in national examinations which is the common method used in evaluation in most systems of education worldwide (Dodeen, 2012).

Examinations can be classified mainly into internal and external examinations. Internal examinations are those that are set in schools by teachers in form of Continuous Assessment Tests, terminal examinations and annual examinations. National examinations in Kenya are administered by KNEC where a K.C.P.E or K.C.S.E certificate is issued upon completion. The KNEC given examinations facilitate entrance to the next level of the education process (Anzene, 2014; Naliaka, Odera & Moses, 2015).

In Kenya examinations have played a vital role in the education system for about a century now (Boit, Njoki & Chang'ach, 2012). National examinations act as a benchmark for measuring the students' capabilities and defining who becomes what in society (Kamuri, 2015)

### **2.3 Akratic causes of cheating in K.C.P.E and K.C.S.E examinations**

Most students caught cheating in examinations say they do so in subjects they perceive as difficult (Lamberd, Barton & Hogan, 2003). This makes them to cheat so as to meet the demands of the parents, teachers, and the society at large (Nyamwange, Ondima & Onderi, 2013). Teachers have a desire of getting promotions in the subjects they handle and parents too want their children to pass highly so that they can join top schools in the country or prestigious universities and be admitted for prestigious courses (Nyamwange *et. al.* 2013).

Omemu (2015) argues that students are no longer hardworking but instead have the desire to pass for the sake of achieving success and wealth. The Kenyan education system is basically examination oriented. Great emphasis has been put on certification instead of the knowledge

acquisition by the learner (Omemu 2015). Employers look at the quality of the certificate presented to them to consider one for hiring.

Candidates who sit for the K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E. cheat in those examinations not because they do not have the content they need to pass those examinations, but because of one characteristic in them, namely, the weakness of the will. Anybody who does an action that they know is wrong is said to be weak willed. Factors responsible for cheating among students in national examinations are the education system, societal and personal characteristics.

### **2.3.1 Societal factors**

Akratic actions come about as a result of imitation, habit and societal influence (Rorty, 1983). As much as an akratic action is voluntary, the society greatly influences one into acting against their better judgement. The akratic person here must critically reflect, recognize and evaluate reasons for their actions against the pressure from the society (Rorty, 1983).

The society greatly contributes to the development of character of students who are part of it. Students tend to do what they see done in society by their parents and leaders. The Kenyan society as a whole is a corrupt one and to a greater extent has contributed to the problem of students cheating in examinations (Muchai, 2014). The society being made up of weak willed people – who engage in corruption - is likely to influence its young who in this case are students into acting akratically in order to meet the desires of the self and the society at large.

The school as a social institution, like any other, exists within a socio-political and geo-political environment that influences it. The students' behaviour is therefore expected to reflect societal norms (Itedjere, 2006). Though the students may judge that society as corrupt, the fact that wrong doing is glorified may make them choose this akratic path.

In the event the government officials, teachers and parents engage in actions of corruption, then the school, one of the institutions in society, must of necessity reflect what is practised in the



entire society at large (Omemu, 2015). Itedjere (2006) argues that cheating in examinations is as a result of the society nurturing its students into cheats and turning them into prominent people in society.

Students are no longer independent in terms of subject choice: instead this responsibility has been taken over by the parents in disregard of the student's ability (Omemu, 2015). The orientation students get from their parents and other adult members of a given society is that of succeeding without hard work (Omemu, 2015). Most students do not consider skill and knowledge acquisition as of importance any more.

### **2.3.2 The education system**

From a hedonistic point of view, appetites, emotions, instincts and passions govern one's soul (Sinha, 1984). The human soul is subject to the law of necessity and devoid of freedom of will (Sinha, 1984). Naturally, human beings seek only that which pleases them and tries to avoid any action that may cause pain and undesirable consequences (Sinha, 1984). Poor grades are undesirable to teachers, learners and parents. Teachers who may double as invigilators may akratically tend not to be strict in invigilating, because high performances on their learners may bring with it a move to higher job groups, since some promotions are awarded in relation to one's performance and that brings about pleasure.

Most human beings desire to get money. Principals of schools, teachers and invigilators may get large sums of money in form of bribes from parents and students to allow students to cheat. This action gives them (principals of schools, teachers and invigilators) materialistic pleasure. While those involved know that cheating is wrong, the desire to get great sums of money easily and over a short period may overwhelm them. This kind of *akrasia* is associated with hedonism (Sinha, 1984). Muchai (2014) and Kisilu (2000) explain that poor teaching, learning environment and lack of appropriate facilities contribute greatly to cheating in examinations.

Some teachers fail to attend to their lessons as scheduled in teaching-learning school timetables and, some who attend to their lessons fail to deliver the content within the stipulated time but instead waste a lot of time giving irrelevant information to students (Muchai 2014). Poor lesson attendance has been mentioned as a possible reason why learners cheat. Is it not a fact that teachers know that it is morally wrong not to attend to their lessons, and yet demand payment at the end of the month? This study assumes that they do. Nevertheless, this akratic behaviour may be due to the hedonistic desire to make more money outside the school system.

Schools also face a problem of inadequate facilities for teaching and learning to be conducted effectively. Vital facilities such as well-equipped laboratories, libraries, classrooms and qualified teachers are limited in relation to the population of students (Anzene, 2014). This leads to a state of student unpreparedness which eventually leads to cheating (Nyamwange, *et. al.* 2013).

In most cases examinations are poorly supervised as they are done in very congested rooms (Nyamwange, *et. al.* 2013). The congested state of examination rooms provides opportunities for cheating, as invigilation of students in such examination rooms becomes ineffective (Muchai, 2014). Kenyan teachers are poorly paid - a factor that has led to rampant corruption cases in national examinations management, luring teachers who double up as examination administrators to accept bribes to supplement their meagre salaries (Muchai, 2014). Although teachers are not well paid, it ought not to be a justification for exam malpractices on the part of teachers. This is a self-justifying, fallacious and akratic argument propounded by hedonistic teachers.

### **2.3.3 Personal characteristics**

All human beings, by their very nature, desire what they perceive as good. But perception is according to the individual person and not according to the universal good (Bacon, 2005/1863).

Human beings by their very nature are known to avoid pain and pursue pleasure. Students are likely to choose cheating as a possible pathway to obtaining good grades and the gratification associated with it, even though they know that cheating is not the right thing to do. As noted in section 2.3.2., this is a philosophical concept known as hedonism.

Accordingly, the desire by students to pass examinations and acquire good grades at whatever cost is responsible for cheating (Omemu, 2015). Students with low self-esteem have no ability to face examinations with confidence. With the phobia of failing examinations, they opt to cheat in order to acquire the grades that they desire (Anzene, 2014).

Each person in their own capacity is crowded with the Baconian idols (Bacon, 2005/1863). These idols are false notions that impede understanding and are responsible for impediment of entrance of truth into the human mind. Francis Bacon identified four namely, “idols of the tribe, idols of the cave, idols of the market place and idols of the theatre”. These are more likely to influence akratic behaviour in students, for they seem to negate true rationality in their actions. Any student possessed with any of these idols will rationalise the need for cheating in examinations. Since not many students even understand that they are under the possession of these idols, they easily accept these false notions (idols) as a justification for their cheating. This conception of idols is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has explored the concept of examination and the akratic causes of examination cheating. These akratic causes have been broadly categorised as societal factors, the education system and personal characteristics. But what causes *akrasia*? And are there any philosophical arguments that may be applied to counter this weakness? These questions are addressed in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CONCEPT OF *AKRASIA* AND ITS CAUSES

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this research project, *akrasia* is identified as a possible cause for cheating in national examinations. In this chapter, therefore, the concept of *akrasia* is discussed in detail. Causes of akratic behaviour in human beings are also discussed and they include the idols of the mind, fallacies and the ethics of power.

#### 3.2 The concept of *akrasia*

The term *akrasia* refers to the weakness of the will. Weakness of the will are cases where one knows or believes that some activity is better than another but voluntarily does the worse option (Pakaluk, 2005, Uszkai, 2012). The activity done in this regard is within the power of the doer not to do it. Thus this conception implies lack of self-control (Pakaluk, 2005; Mele, 2009; Uszkai, 2012). Generally speaking the term *akrasia* connotes meanings associated with lack of control, moral weakness, and incontinence. The direct opposite of *akrasia* is *enkrateia*. Thus *enkrateia* connotes being in control or command, strength of character or strong moral will or continence (Pakaluk, 2005; Mele, 2009; Uszkai, 2012). The two attributes *akrasia* and *enkrateia* are states of the soul. It should be noted that these two concepts are different from virtues and vices. The latter are psychological states (Uszkai, 2012). It apparently appears that *akrasia* is a condition that lies in between the extremes of virtues and vices.

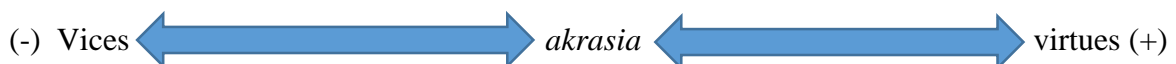


Fig 2: (The researcher's own interpretation of *akrasia*)

The term *akrasia* typically means the inability to resist wrong desire despite the dictates of reason. Accordingly, *akrasia* occurs when one grasps what they ought to do but does something

else due to impulse or emotion. It is to be noted that according to Socrates, *akrasia* is lack of knowledge (Jowett, 1892). For him, no one errs wittingly. Nevertheless, the conception of *akrasia* by Socrates was different from that of Aristotle. To him, it is lack of knowledge as he observes in his famous maxim 'nobody errs wittingly'. In reference to the Socratic view of *akrasia*, Uszkai (2012) argues that immoral actions are involuntary actions and virtuous actions are due to knowledge of the good. Thus according to Socrates, *akrasia* does not exist, since knowledge cannot be overpowered.

Aristotle rejects this notion since to him it is not the lack of knowledge but rather the overpowering of knowledge by emotion that leads to an akratic action (Jowett, 1892). To Aristotle, *akrasia* is acting irrationally where emotion prevails upon reason (Pakaluk, 2015). Though the akratic person loses self-governance to act, the action taken is deliberate/intentional without undue pressure or compulsion

This Uszkain argument is a metaphysical one. The notion of the knowledge of good may be understood in metaphysical terms. The hedonistic conceptions of pleasure only yield instant joy to the detriment of the doer. For example, a teacher who gets sexual favours from their students to help them cheat may gratify their pleasures of the moment. This may prove very disastrous to the teacher in the long run. If the teacher had knowledge of these disastrous consequences, their akratic behaviour would have been avoided. But what really causes this akratic behaviour? The researcher discusses three cardinal possible causes of akratic behaviour, namely, Baconian idols of the mind, fallacies and the will to power (the ethics of power).



### **3.3 Causes of akratic behaviour in humans**

#### **3.3.1 Idols of the mind**

The Baconian idols of the mind may be partly responsible for akratic behaviour in humans. Idols are false notions that partake of the human understanding so that they impede entrance of truth. For purposes of fundamental interpretation, there are four idols of the mind identified by Francis Bacon (1561-1626) as discussed below albeit briefly.

##### **3.3.1.1 The idols of the tribe**

Each human being has a nature inherent in them. This nature may be associated with the tribe or race from whence a person comes. Therefore human beings tend to see things from their own nature influenced from the nature of their tribe or race (Bacon, 1863/2005). There is therefore an erroneous notion that our perceptions and sensory experiences of the mind, are parameters of the universe (Bacon, 1863/2005). Human beings are attached naturally to their tribe or race. If the tribe or race is falsely asserted on some phenomena – if many believe so, it is so- then people in that tribe will look at issues with faulty perceptions (Bacon, 1863/2005). This pre commitment can be referred to as *argumentum ad populum*, i.e. an argument from the populous. Accordingly, human perceptions and experiences are only dependent on the individual person rather than the universe. Our understanding may be symbolized as a false mirror that receives light rays irregularly, distorts and discolours the true nature of things (Bacon, 1863/2005).

Those involved in cheating may have been influenced by this akratic idol of the tribe. In Kenya, the majority of people measure success not in terms of moral development of the person but in terms of grades obtained in examinations, and the amount of material wealth that one has, irrespective of the means of how these has been acquired (Muchai, 2014). The society that greatly contributes in moulding students who are part of it is involved in scandals associated

with dishonesty. These makes the students believe that dishonesty is an acceptable method of achieving success (Muchai, 2014).

### **3.3.1.2 Idols of the cave**

Each person has a cave of their own. This may be likened to Plato's 'allegory of the cave'. This personal den refracts and discolours the light of nature due to one's own peculiar nature, their education and the discourses that they have with fellow humans (Bacon, 1863/2005). The reading of books, the authority of those whom a person esteems and admires, the differences of impressions may to a great level influence the human mind. Thus the human soul is a dependent variable and full of perturbation, and governed as it were by chance (Bacon, 1863/2005).

Concerning cheating in examinations, we may postulate that students may be under the captivity of this akratic idol of the cave. Many of the heroes of learners in Kenya might have grown to their heroic positions through unfair means (Itedjere, 2006). For example, during the 2015 examination leakages in Kenya in the *WhatsApp* social media, some of the political elites, instead of condemning the leakages, fervently denied their occurrence. As such, examinees may perceive this act of cheating as 'normal' and acceptable by society. If their teachers tell them to cheat and facilitate this process, will it not then appear as an acceptable act, irrespective of its moral undesirability?

### **3.3.1.3 Idols of the market place**

Human beings usually interact with one another as they trade or undertake other social activities. They use words that carry meaning in the discourse. Words used vulgarly can be apprehended as such by the human mind. At times language could be handled carelessly by human beings to a point of creating confusion in meaning. As Bacon seems to suggest, "... the ill and unfit choice of words wonderfully obstructs the understanding" (Bacon, 1863/2005).

To a great extent, this idol may have contributed to the level of examination cheating in Kenya. The school as a social place brings substantial interaction between different stake holders. Socialisation is partly done through language. This study postulates that learners get exposed to inappropriate words that are used in the school set-up, and this may obstruct their understanding, thus akratically influence cheating.

#### **3.3.1.4 Idols of the theatre**

These are false notions that influence the human mind by dogmas of philosophies and from wrong laws of demonstration (Bacon, 2005/1863). All received systems are but many stage plays representing worlds of their own creation after unreal and scenic fashion (Bacon, 2005/1863). False perceptions awakened by philosophical and/or scientific teachings generate authority for themselves. This leads to a false understanding of reality. Here statements are dogmatically accepted because of faith bestowed on the speaker. Examinations that are part of the education system are likely to be contaminated by misunderstandings of these teachings (Batista, 2013).

This idol can cause an akratic behaviour in those that are involved in the examination setup by each individual trying to justify the action of cheating. For instance, one may say that all that works is good and therefore since cheating can lead to the attainment of good grades, cheating is good.

#### **3.3.2 Fallacies**

A fallacy is an argument that seems to be correct, but upon examination proves to be incorrect (Namwamba, 2005). It is an invalid form of argument, an instance of incorrect reasoning (Namwamba, 2005). The term argument, as explained by Namwamba (2005), originates from the Greek word '*argure*' meaning "make clear". Arguments seek to clarify an opinion, a fact or a proposition. Individuals who fail to resolve an argument resort to threats or force

(Namwamba, 2005). Arguments for purposes of convincing, persuading or negotiating may be fallacious, if rules of deductive reasoning are violated. As such, fallacies result, with the attendant catastrophic akratic behaviour. Common fallacies are: *Argumentum ad baculum* (appeal to force), *Argumentum ad hominem* (abusive) and *Argumentum ad verecondiam* (appeal to authority).

It is not the task of this research project to explore all known fallacies, but to illustrate that fallacious reasoning may have greatly contributed to the notion that cheating is an ‘acceptable’ wrong. For example, if the head teachers or principals of schools persuade learners to cheat in any way, the learners are more likely to be persuaded since authority has spoken (*Argumentum ad verecondiam*).

*Argumentum ad hominem* are fallacies aimed at the person and ignoring the issue in question (Solomon & Higgins, 2006). It is committed when one attacks an individual who comes up with an opinion or an idea instead of logically analysing the opinion expressed by the individual and finding its truthfulness (Solomon & Higgins, 2006). For instance, students may argue that those who set regulations that govern examinations are corrupt, and so those policies that include penalties for cheating are invalid as they are formulated by corrupt individuals. This argument is fallacious as one’s character is logically irrelevant to the correctness or incorrectness of their argument (Namwamba, 2005).

When one appeals to force or the threat of force and accepts a conclusion, one commits *argumentum ad baculum*. For instance, if teachers are compelled by the ministry of education to produce good results, they may force students to engage in cheating in order to attain the good grades.

### 3.3.3 The Nietzschean ethics of power

The Nietzschean ethics of power is associated with the German philosopher, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, (1844-1900). Nietzsche, (nd) in his famous work, *thus spoke Zarathustra*, argues that there is a general belief that there are no eternal varieties of virtue. As such, humanity may adopt this ethical relativism. Humans are bound to look at ethics circumstantially, be they historical circumstances or geographical ones (Sinha, 2009).

Accordingly, nature is irrational and without pity and indifferent to moral values. It is as Darwin will say of it, 'Struggle for existence and survival of the fittest.' According to Nietzsche, there is no truth but only different perspectives and different ways of looking at the world (Sinha, 2009). Relativists claim that what is true for one person might not be true for another person or other people. At its most extreme, the claim is that every idea is as good as any other (Sinha, 2009). Accordingly, life is amoral and its nature is to conquer, suppress and exploit (Sinha, 2009). Thus virtue applies differently to different individuals depending on the social ladder, e.g. there is morality of slaves and that of masters. There is always an innate desire in humans to conquer their limitations. This is what Nietzsche calls the will to power. Nature is an expression of power and the purported virtues negate what they support (Nietzsche, nd).

Thus weakness, baseness, cowardice, humility, pretence and forgiveness must be replaced with strength, bravery, self-assertion, self-aggrandisement, ruthlessness, and pride (Sinha, 2009). Taking this argument forward, most learners see examinations as limitations that they must conquer. Any obstacle to the passing of examinations must be overcome. The ideals of the need to cheat or not to cheat interpreted circumstantially. Learners and other participants in the cheating process most likely adopt ethical relativism, and the will to power of the Nietzschean type. This may therefore be partly to blame for this akratic behaviour in learners as it relates to cheating.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

*Akrasia*, the concept that this research has employed to analyse the causes of cheating and their remedies, has been discussed above. The causes of *akrasia* have also been discussed, where the researcher has identified Baconian idols of the mind, fallacies and the will to power as possible causes of *akrasia*. Remedies employed by KNEC in curbing cheating are analysed in relation to *akrasia* in the next chapter.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **REMEDIES TO CHEATING BY THE KENYA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Cheating is a phenomenon forbidden by all systems of education in the world, but some students and some stakeholders break the rules and go ahead and practice the irregularity. In Kenya, it is KNEC's responsibility to ensure that there is fairness in the conducting of national examinations. For this objective to be achieved, KNEC has laid down strategies to prevent any candidate from gaining undue advantage over other candidates through cheating in examinations. In case there is a reported case of cheating, the council conducts investigations and anybody found to be involved in the phenomenon is penalised (Kenya national examination Act, 2012). This chapter analyses the remedies that KNEC has laid down in an attempt to curb this vice.

#### **4.2 Remedies by Kenya National Examinations Council against cheating in examinations**

The Kenya National Examinations Council Act 2012 provides rules and regulations governing the national examinations done in Kenya. Some of the penalties laid down include a jail term not exceeding ten years or two million Kenya shillings or both for accessing examination materials and revealing their contents knowingly. Those who impersonate students are liable to a jail term not exceeding one year or a fine not exceeding two million shillings. Where there is evidence that cheating took place, the results for those particular subjects are cancelled in case it is of a student, and results for the station are cancelled in case it affects the examination centre (Kenya National Examinations Act, 2012).

It has been observed in the K.C.S.E examination that was done in the year 2015 that fifteen K.C.S.E candidates, among them five boys and 10 girls, were caught in Mombasa with examination papers for Kiswahili prior to the examination. This group of students was arraigned in court to face charges for their actions (Benyawa, 2015). In this case, KNEC employed the deterrence theory that is meant to create fear on potential offenders.

According to KNEC policy, when a student or an institution has been convicted of cheating, a disciplinary action is taken against such a person or institution in accordance with the requirements of the examinations act (Kenya national examinations Act, 2012). Despite these policies, KNEC officials tend not to act effectively in regard to the policies.

In the year 2011 for example, the principal of Sawagongo high school was caught with examination papers that were yet to be done (Munuhe, 2016). He was arrested, locked up in police cells, and later released without being arraigned in court. In the same year, KNEC officers without notice visited Nyakach girls where they found two ladies assumed to be teachers coaching candidates on a biology examination that was to be done, and seized examination materials. The materials they were using were taken as exhibits, but were never delivered to KNEC, by the officials. The two ladies were never charged for the offence, neither were the results of that examination centre cancelled. It is alleged that the KNEC officers were bribed with Khs. 1million (Munuhe, 2016).

There are laws in place that stipulate that when one is convicted of committing a crime, the person will need to be subjected to punishment in order to deter them from committing the same crime again and/or create fear in potential criminals, and as a result reduce crime in society (Odhiambo, 2009). In this case the severity of the penalty imposed depends on the magnitude of the crime. The graver the offence the more severe the penalty should be (Odhiambo, 2009). One may ask, what could have happened if there were no laws put in place

that give guidelines on what crime need to be punished and how? From the utilitarian point of view, punishment has one main ultimate goal: preventing crime or rather reducing its rate (Odhiambo, 2009). It is as a result of punishment that one tries to avoid committing a crime (Odhiambo, 2009).

KNEC has employed the deterrence theory of punishment in an attempt to curb cheating. The council, by providing the penalties mentioned above, aims at deterring those who cheat. A question arises: how effective are the remedies in curbing cheating in examinations? And if they are, then, why do we have examination results being cancelled every time results are being released? This study has attempted to answer these questions in the light of the Aristotelian conception of *akrasia*.

### **4.3 Akratic critique of KNEC remedies in curbing cheating in national examinations**

Examinations are set, manned, transported to examination centres, administered, supervised and invigilated, marked and released by people who have been identified by KNEC. Those who perform these duties are likely to be affected by *akrasia*. The KNEC officials, who are the custodians of examinations, seem to have failed in performing their responsibilities.

From the foregoing reflections, it is evident that cheating in examinations has been perpetrated by some KNEC officials. As discussed in the previous chapter, human beings, by their very nature, tend to lack self-control. The power by human beings to suppress conflicts between motives is overwhelmed by the weakness of the will (Cooter, 1991). It may be due to *akrasia* that some custodians of examination materials leak the content of examinations prior to the examination period, some supervisors tend to be lenient during supervision and some students and teachers collude to cheat in examinations.

As seen from the above discussion, KNEC seems to have entirely relied on the deterrence theory of punishment in its remedies against cheating. Such an approach may have been responsible for KNEC's failure to curb this vice. This theory has been observed to have its own weaknesses. The assumption that people tend to weigh the consequences of their actions beforehand can easily be refuted by observing that some crimes are spontaneous and highly emotional in character (Kennedy, 1983). For example, some students stumble upon examinations materials a few minutes before the examination time. Even if they came to know that these will be real examinations, the emotional aspect of humanity may not allow them to refrain from looking at the questions. The Swahili saying, '*Macho hayana pasia*', that is, "eyes have no curtains" aptly applies here. An individual with strong emotions that may lead to perpetration of a given offence is not likely to be deterred from committing the offence regardless of the punishment imposed (Kennedy, 1983).

Even though it is not possible to prove the practicability of the deterrence effect of punishment, it is continually administered to offenders. The effectiveness of the deterrence theory of punishment cannot be explained, as it tends to disapprove a hypothesis instead of proving it (Kennedy, 1983). This may be partly to blame for the cheating cases year in year out.

The deterrence theory of punishment lacks a sound moral foundation which reduces the effectiveness of the punishment in deterring crime. The effectiveness of deterrence depends on positive responses to offences. Without the moral dimension in this theory, a breakdown in the form of disobedience may be experienced. This theory can easily be associated with inhumane forms of punishment (Kennedy, 1983). For example, some learners may feel that it is unfair to punish candidates from selected 'small' schools yet the 'big' schools have the same examination leakages since they receive this information from the powers that be. If such feelings are widespread, deterrence theory of punishment may not be effective at all.

## **4.4 Conclusion**

It is clear that from the above weakness of deterrence theory of punishment that cheating may continue for a long time. Heavy fines and penalties have not effectively deterred cheats from perpetrating their acts. The lack of a moral dimension of deterrence theory of punishment, for example, may initiate a rebellion by some candidates. This means that, some candidates may continue cheating irrespective of their knowledge that cheating is wrong. This is made possible when they feel that it is unfair to be punished when they are supposed to be aided to do well in examinations.

From the above discussion, it is imperative for KNEC to change strategy to avert this perennial problem of cheating. There are other theories that explain the ‘why, and ‘how’ of punishment. However, in the next chapter, the researcher discusses a possible solution to this problem.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE SUGGESTED REMEDY FOR CURBING CHEATING IN NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS IN KENYA

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, the study has detailed cheating as a problem facing the education system the world over in general, and Kenya in particular. Consequently, *akrasia* has been identified as a possible cause of cheating in examinations. In this chapter, the researcher proposes a possible remedy to this phenomenon of cheating in KCPE and KCSE examinations.

Cheating in examinations is a practice that is morally wrong and it needs to be dealt with in order to have a meaningful education system. The examination practices in our education systems need to be examined, and the practices that lead to cheating get changed so as to curb this ill. An education system that results in desired grades which eventually leads to desired career choices and production of quality professionals is required.

Emphasis on grading has taken a cardinal role in educational practices throughout the world. This is a way of evaluation where students are assigned grades that are meant to reflect their mastery of content. This method of evaluation raises several questions: does the grading truly reflect the learner's mastery of content? Are examination practices effective? Is the cramming and duplication of examinable material that students seldom retain after examinations meaningful? Assigning grades serves many purposes in education. It can serve the purposes of sorting, motivation and feedback. How then do we balance between these purposes in educational measurement and evaluation such that grading does not supersede any of them?

## **5.2 The suggested new grading system**

This study proposes a change in the examination grading system that allows a student to live their own life and not the life of their parents or society. The teachers should let the learners interests prevail and avoid imparting to the learner what they (the teachers) think is best for them. When adults interfere with the freedom of the learners in making choices in regard to their careers and interests, a country ends up producing a generation of robots.

As the researcher now proposes a change in the examination grading system, a few paramount questions require attention. What will be the nature of such an examination system, and how would it curb cheating in examinations? How shall it be structured? How sure are we that a change in the examination system and any other educational reform shall minimise or eradicate cheating? Have we not seen educational reforms in Kenya since independence without any success in eliminating this vice?

Studies have been carried out on ways of demystifying the examinations to be reflective of reality. K'Odhiambo, Gunga and Akaranga (2013) have suggested the use of both subjective and objective evaluation methods to cushion against the demeaning grade 'E'. However, their recommendation still falls short of a holistic approach. They seem to concentrate on subjects examinable at KCSE level. Thus the researcher observes that although subjective and objective evaluation may reduce cheating, it may not be a panacea to this problem.

The researcher now proposes a holistic evaluation system that covers all the aspects of the human person, that is, psychological, emotional, physical, spiritual / moral and intellectual development. The Kenyan examination system currently only tests the intellectual aspect of the human person, relegating other important aspects of the child's development. For example, the timetables in primary and secondary schools run from 8.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. detailing subjects to be taught with short breaks in between. Most schools allow a one hour, usually



between 4.00 P.M to 5.00 P.M. for games and other activities. This is expected to cover all other aspects of the child save for the intellectual development. The research proposes a grading system that will not only cover a variety of aspects of human development, but also serve the purposes of evaluation as shown in the table below.

**Table 1: A suggested evaluation and grading of learners by KNEC**

Type of development of the child	Possible marks awarded	Grade assigned	Remarks
Intellectual Development	<b>16-20</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	11-15	B	Good
	6-10	C	Average
	1-5	D	Require more practice
Emotional Growth	<b>16-20</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	11-15	B	Good
	6-10	C	Average
	1-5	D	Require improvement
Psychological Growth	<b>16-20</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	11-15	B	Good
	6-10	C	Average
	1-5	D	Require attention & improvement
Spiritual/moral Development	<b>16-20</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	11-15	B	Good
	6-10	C	Average
	1-5	D	Require special attention and improvement
Physical Development	<b>16-20</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	11-15	B	Good
	6-10	C	Average
	1-5	D	Require more practice
<b>Grand Total(Mean)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60 Points</b>	<b>GENERAL REMARKS: For example:</b> i) MG: A - Recommended for a career in .... ii) MG: B- Due to a score of C in moral development, recommended for further training in character before any further career path, et cetera.

### **5.2.1 Interpretation of the table**

The aim of this study was to find a pathway to obtaining quality professionals from our education system. The researcher conceptualised that this could be possible through a holistic evaluation system and fair conduct of examinations. The researcher postulated that if this were possible, individuals would obtain desired grades in examinations. This would then result in desired career choices and hence quality professionals as shown in the conceptual framework in section 1.9. The researcher has indicated in table 1 above how such a quality evaluation could be obtained.

It is to be noted that for a learner to score a straight ‘A’ in the final analysis (mean grade), such a learner must score an ‘A’ in all the levels of human development. Thus, a learner who gets straight ‘A’s in academic subjects (Mathematics, Chemistry, English, Etc.) but does not obtain straight ‘A’s in the other aspects does not get a grand Mean grade of an A.

It is noted that the spiritual aspect of the human person, herein synonymous with moral development is highlighted in red. This is deliberate. It means that irrespective of any sterling performance in the other aspects, it will be impossible to score a grand mean of an ‘A’ if the learner does not obtain an ‘A’ in his or her moral development. Why is this aspect important here? We suggest that education is for service to humanity. We may never wish to develop competent doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers, and other professionals who are immoral in character. The harm these professionals do is much more than their expertise. In this system, one must score at least a ‘B’ in moral development in order to be allowed to proceed for studies leading to future careers.

The spiritual aspects of growth are to be assessed continuously throughout the learners’ time in school. Teachers, class representatives, and school administrators should comment on the child’s character development on the quarterly reports, supplied to the learners and other

stakeholders for continuous review for purposes of improvement. At the end of the academic cycle, a grade is assigned by the school - not KNEC - on the spiritual development of the learner, and the grade is then forwarded to KNEC for eventual certification.

Below is an example of a postulated structure of a section of a report card that captures the moral aspect of the learner as posted by three teachers.

**Table 2: Assessment and grading of intellectual and character development of learners**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Teacher's Name</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Character-Formation</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	Paul, S. N.	18	A	Generally a rude, dishonest and unruly- student. Serious attention required. <b>Grade-D</b>
<b>English</b>	Frierich, D.	12	B	A well behaved boy. <b>Grade-B</b>
<b>Kiswahili</b>	Ombogo, W.	8	C	A V. Excellent girl. Honest and trustworthy. Keep it up forever. <b>Grade-A</b>

Although as discussed earlier, human beings are likely to be affected by *akrasia*, it may be impossible for all teachers to collude all the time to give erroneous or biased grading in terms of character evaluation throughout the child's life in the school in such a system of grading. As such, the final grade assigned may reflect genuineness in terms of a child's character.

With more emphasis put on the learner's moral aspect of development, they are likely to desist from examination mal-practises since this may impact negatively on their future final grades and subsequent career placement.

Children are differently endowed. As for physical development, each learner is to be assessed on their abilities in different fields that reflect on their potentialities. A child who is good in a particular athletic event scores an ‘A’ in such an event, and a recommendation is made to allow such a learner to develop his or her potential in relevant academies. The students’ participation in co-curricular activities is thus paramount in their final grading, and hence the ministry of education will grade learners’ physical development as shown below, say in an activity such as drama.

**Table 3: Assessment and grading of physical development of learners**

Name of Student.....School.....Class/Form.....ADM. No.....

Year of Participation.....Name of Officer Grading.....

ID/PP No. Of officer.....Rank/ Position.....PF No. /TSC No.....

<b>Event participated</b>	<b>Level reached</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Drama</b>	International/National	A
	County	B
	Sub-County	C
	School	D

Thus for learners in secondary school, this is a four year progressive record that will amount to the final grade. However, this is equally based on the moral aspects that govern these particular events. The same is applicable to a learner good in drama, in-door games, football, and any other activities that encourage physical development of learners. The final report and grade is compiled by the Ministry of Education and forwarded to KNEC for final grading.

As for the psychological and emotional development of learners, an assessment should be undertaken by the guidance and counselling department. Class teachers here play a key role in the grading of these learners throughout their lives in the school. An aggregate is obtained to arrive at the final mark sent to KNEC for certification.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

As discussed above, the education system in Kenya needs to be examined and the practices that lead to cheating changed so as to curb this vice. As such the researcher has proposed a change in the examination grading system where all aspects of development would be evaluated. These aspects include intellectual, emotional, psychological, moral and physical development. With such a grading system, cheating is likely to reduce to a minimum. The researcher notes that education is for service to humanity, and therefore moral development should be a key determinant for one to proceed to the next level. With all the proposed aspects of evaluation, the learner is likely to join desired careers in relation to their performance and the system is more likely to produce quality professionals.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the summary, conclusion and recommendations are given in regard to what has been discussed in the entire research. In the summary, all salient issues discussed in this research are briefly highlighted. In the conclusion the study suggests that the examination practices in our education systems need to be examined and the practices that lead to cheating changed so as to curb this vice. Three recommendations have been given for consideration by educational stakeholders.

#### 6.2 Summary

The title of this study “Cheating in national examinations in Kenya: An Aristotelian akratic analysis of causes and remedies” shows that the study attempted to analyse cheating as an immoral practice in the Kenyan education system. In chapter one, the researcher noted that cheating is a worldwide phenomenon. It was also noted that KNEC as a body responsible for setting, invigilating, marking and releasing examination results, has failed to address this problem. The research conceptualised a possible remedy of cheating (due to *akrasia*) in examinations through the change of the evaluation system. In the conceptual framework, section 1.9, it was hypothesised that a holistic evaluation system could remedy this perennial problem.

In chapter two, the causes of cheating in national examinations were discussed. The concept of examination was examined and the akratic causes of cheating that were broadly categorised as

societal factors, the education system and personal characteristics were discussed. On societal factors, the researcher noted that the society plays a key role in moulding the student's behaviour by encouraging him or her to conform to its norms. Therefore, the moral decadence reflected in a given society is likely to influence the behaviour of students. The education system was also examined as a cause of cheating. The education system comprises hedonistic individuals who want to satisfy their desires at the expense of doing what is right in terms of supervising and keeping safe examination materials to avoid leakage to the learners. It has also been noted that human beings, by their very nature, desire what is good in accordance with their own judgement. Each individual in the education system then, tends to use any means possible to attain what is good.

In chapter three, the concept of *akrasia* was discussed. The possible causes of *akrasia* that were identified and examined were Baconian idols of the mind, fallacies and the Nietzschean will to power. Idols of the mind were defined as false notions that influence human understanding and impede the entrance of truth. The Baconian idols discussed in this research were the idols of the tribe, idols of the cave, idols of the market place and idols of the theatre. Idols of the tribe were explained as notions that cause human beings to see things from their own perspectives influenced from the nature of their tribe or race. As such, there is an erroneous notion that human perceptions are parameters of the universe. Idols of the cave on the other hand were explained as one's own limitation likened to Plato's 'allegory of the cave'. Language, if handled carelessly, obstructs understanding. This is called the Idol of the market place. Finally, the idol of the theatre was discussed. This refers to false notions associated with false teachings, dogmas of philosophies and erroneous laws of demonstration.

A fallacy is an argument that seems to be correct, but upon examination it proves to be incorrect. Fallacies discussed in this study were *Argumentum ad Baculum*, *Argumentum ad Hominem* and *Argumentum ad Verocondium*. *Argumentum ad Baculum* is a fallacy committed



when one appeals to force. *Argumentum ad Hominem* is committed when one resorts to insults to disapprove an argument or proposition, while *Argumentum ad Verecundium* is committed when authority is appealed to in matters outside their area of specialisation (Namwamba, 2005). The Nietzschean will to power was also discussed as a possible cause of *akrasia* in this chapter. This argument is somewhat like that of Darwin's 'struggle for existence and survival of the fittest'.

In chapter four the researcher discussed the remedies employed by KNEC to curb cheating, and how ineffective the remedies are. The researcher observed that KNEC employs the deterrence theory of punishment has failed in curbing this vice. The researcher observed that heavy fines and penalties have not effectively deterred cheats from perpetrating their acts. The lack of a moral dimension of deterrence theory, for example, may initiate an *akratic* rebellion by some candidates. This means that some candidates may continue cheating irrespective of their knowledge that cheating is wrong.

In chapter five the study has proposed a possible solution to the problem in question. A new grading system has been suggested, where the learner's ability is tested holistically rather than the current grading system that purely tests intellectual ability. The researcher has proposed a grading system that caters for intellectual development, emotional growth, psychological growth, moral development and physical development. This would encourage the all-round development of learners.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

Three objectives guided this study. The first objective was to analyse the causes of cheating in national examinations in Kenya. The second was to analyse the remedies used by KNEC in

fighting cheating in examinations, and the third was to propose a possible solution to the problem of cheating in examinations.

In regard to the first objective, it was noted that Cheating in national examinations is a common practice in Kenya. It was also observed that intellectual grading has taken a cardinal role in evaluating learners. It was further noted that *akrasia* could be a possible cause of rampant cheating in examinations. The study identified three akratic causes of cheating as the societal factors, the education system and personal characteristics.

In regard to the second objective, the research recognised that KNEC's remedies to curb cheating in examinations have failed. The hefty fines and cancellation of examination results do not deter students and all involved parties from engaging in the act. Finally, on the third objective, the researcher has proposed a new grading system that aims at testing the ability of the learner in all aspects of life, that is, intellectual, emotional, psychological, moral and physical development.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

In view of the foregoing reflections, the following recommendations are made to deal with cheating in examinations:

- i) Examination and evaluation of learners resulting to eventual grading should be holistic, that is, covering all the aspects of the human person (Intellectual, physical, spiritual/ moral, psychological and emotional).
- ii) The learners' interests should prevail. As such, educators ought to avoid imparting to learners what teachers and parents think is best for them.

- iii) Further research should be carried out on other possible methods of grading the learners.

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