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Youth perception of and Participation in electoral Democracy in Kenya

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Consolata Moraa Makori, declare that this thesis is a result of my own research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signed: _____

Consolata Moraa Makori

Date: _____

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my father and mother. They taught me that the best kind of knowledge is one that has character. It is also dedicated to the youth in Kenya who believes in a better Kenya.

ABSTRACT

Young people in Kenya have increasingly attracted immense attention especially in politics. The role they play in the political arena is well documented in Kenya's political history. This study has explored the perceptions and attitude of the Kenyan youths towards the fundamental concepts of democracy and governance. The study has analyzed their engagement and involvement in the Kenyan democracy with the particular focus on the rationale for their political behaviors. It also seeks to examine how the youths perceive their political leaders and political parties taking into perspective the barriers they face in their political participation. Moreover, the study explores to understand the youth in the light of ethnicity and ethnic politics. The findings and discussions in this study are as a result of the use of both primary and secondary sources, involving 45 individual interviews and 4 focus group discussions. Providing a descriptive analysis of their political behavior, this paper argues that the youths are co-authors of the current political culture in Kenya's democracy.

Key words: Democracy, Governance, Politics, Youth, Ethnicity, Political leadership.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SAPs—Structural Adjustment Programmes

IMF—International Monetary Fund

GDP—Gross Domestic Products

UON—University of Nairobi

FGD— Focus group

ICC—International Criminal Court

UN—United Nations

NCST—National Council for Science and Technology

IEBC—Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

ECK—Electoral Commission of Kenya

UNECA—United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, —United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

GEMA—Kikuyu Embu Meru, Association

IED—Electoral Environment in Kenya

ICG—International Crisis Group

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and rationale of the Study

The youth occupy a distinctively strategic position in every society and especially in political debate about the future development of any country. Politicians in general, but more so in Africa, have however been historically hesitant to effectively engage such young people in political affairs. While youths are often involved in informal, politically relevant processes such as activism or civic engagement, it is unfortunate that in many countries they are not formally represented in their respective national political institutions such as in the legislature, which may negatively impact on the quality of democratic governance (Abbink, 2005). The youths are often considered within a perspective of national debility or renaissance, projected as symbols of a constructive and advancing future or characterized as menaces and unruly. However, the political resonance of issues associated to youth's participation and democratic engagement has risen recently as waves of political protests by young people have gained footing in different parts across the globe.

As verified by the 2011/2012 Arab spring and various other 'Occupy movements' around the world, the involvement of youth in formal politics is vital. In some countries where protests by youth led to the over-throw of authoritarian regimes, some frustrations arose where the youth were not included in new formal decision-making, destabilizing democratization and accelerating the dynamics of conflict. The importance of youth's participation in political systems is recognized globally through international conventions and UN resolutions including in the UN's World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and the African Union's African Youth Charter which in Article 11 on youth participation, specifies that every young person has the right to participate in all spheres of society.

Since Kenya gained its independence in 1963, it has been faced with a myriad of complex challenges including, economic reforms, national constructions and reconciliations.

Murungaa and Nasong'o (2013) argued that although Kenya, like many other African countries, holds multiparty elections, the practice of democracy and good governance in the country as well as in many other African nations has been among the trending debates both nationally and internationally. The authors further notes that the concept of democracy is globally understood as a means to the establishment of more responsible institutions, which are responsive to the needs of different groups in the society.

Recent events in Kenyan politics, including the post-election violence in 2007, the 2010 enactment of a New Constitution and the national general elections in 2013 have left many wondering the position of the youths in building and strengthening Kenyan democracy. This question is in line with the general acceptable fact that the youths are an indispensable and dynamic portion of the Kenyan Population (Njonjo, 2010). It is also true that there are many factors that hinder their participation in building the Kenyan democracy (ibid). Therefore this study focuses on the most contested concepts in development of Africa i.e. democracy and governance with particular focus on understanding the role the Kenyan youth play in electoral processes.

In 2007, Kenya was thrust into a political, economic, and humanitarian crisis following a disputed presidential elections and subsequent violence. The sitting president Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner by the Electoral Commission of Kenya amid extensive allegations of electoral fraud, which led to protests and violence in the country between the members of opposition and government supporters. This violence reflected the ethnic divisions that have long characterized Kenyan politics (Muhula, 2009). While election-related violence was not new to Kenya, the magnitude and effects of the 2007/2008 violence were unparalleled. According to Muhula (2009) about 1,500 people were killed and 660,000 displaced from their homes. He further states that the most adversely affected areas in the country were six provinces, which included both urban and rural areas. The post-election violence involved extensive destruction of property and land, seriously affecting economic activity and food security. Socially, the violence shattered the country's national fabric, exacerbating tension and mistrust along ethnic cleavages (ibid).

Muhula (2009) further observes that the Kenyan youths were central to the violence: They were responsible in planning 7% of the violence and made up more than 55% of direct perpetrators and also constituted most of the victims. While some of the violence was spontaneous, for example, looting of property as a result of the prevalent lawlessness, young people were also involved in planning violence through organized gangs (ibid)

Economic drivers like unemployment and political manipulation of ethnic identities by local and national politicians are some of the reasons that have been cited as the major enhancers of the youth's participation in perpetrating the violence (Muhula, 2009).

The subsequent general elections in the country were held in 2013. Although the process was characterized by technical difficulties, making the whole process to take more than a week before announcing the new president, it did not result to violence. However, following up the election process from Norway through the social media, the researcher was troubled by the vile of hatred and ethnocentrism perpetrated by young people. The experience from these two general elections and the youth's role therefore evoked the researcher's interest in trying to understand how they perceive their participation in politics against a historically political role as 'foot soldiers'.

This study centers on youth because the researcher believes that it is the population segment that holds the key to sustainable democracy and leadership. Historically, the youths have been used to mobilize political support for old leaders therefore making them important actors in the democratization process in Africa and elsewhere. Understanding how young people think and participate in Kenya's democracy is critical in analyzing Kenyan politics and the concept of democracy besides understanding how their creativity can be tapped in promoting positive and revolutionary political change.

1.2 Research Objectives and Thesis Statement

Through history, the political elites in Kenya have used the youth as the means to achieving political loyalty and electoral legitimacy. This includes patron-client relationship that is characterized by the youths performing roles such as campaigning and executing violence during elections.

Social problems including high levels of unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, crime, illiteracy, violence, and HIV/AIDS are a clear manifestation of the position of the youths in relation to electoral promises offered by the leadership. These problems have left the youths in a subaltern and vulnerable position of misuse by political elites through ethnic patronage.

Social, political and economic marginalization of the youth threatens Kenya's stability. Quoting Robert F. Kennedy from the "Day of Affirmation Address" at University of Cape town in June, 1966, he said :

"Our answer is the world's hope; it has to rely on youth...It cannot be moved by those who cling to a present which is already dying, who prefer the illusion of security to the excitement of danger. This world demands the qualities of youth; not a time of life, but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity"(Kennedy,1966).Viewing the youth as capable agents and important stakeholders in decision-making processes and understanding their way of thinking can enhance sustainable democracy and good governance.

This study therefore profiles the attitudes and experiences of the youths in Kenya's electoral democracy by looking at the role they play through the electoral cycle. It is against this background that the objectives of this study were established as including:

- To ascertain and analyze how Kenyan youths conceptualize democracy and good governance.
- Understand how the youths view political leadership and political parties in Kenya.
- To identify the barriers to effective and meaningful political participation amongst the youths in Kenya.

The study addresses the above objectives through focusing to answer the following three research questions:

1. What does democracy and governance mean to the youth?
2. How do youths participate in building the Kenyan Democracy?
3. What challenges do the youths face in relation to their participation in democratic governance?

1.3 Thesis Outline

This thesis is structured into seven chapters:

- The first chapter presented an introduction of the issue under study including highlighting the background of the study, the research objectives and research questions.
- Chapter two presents the research methodology, discussing the research design, data collection and analysis methods and ethical considerations that guided the research. The study's limitations and delimitations are also presented in this chapter.
- Chapter three presents the theoretical framework and a review of literature associated with youth's participation in democratization and good governance.
- Chapter four delves further into literature review focusing on what has been researched and written in relation to the study objectives and research questions.
- Chapter five and chapter six provide the findings discussions and subsequent analysis of the study.
- The final chapter presents conclusions, summarizing the findings and highlighting recommendations for further research and some major recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a background of the study was presented. This chapter outlines the research process. Specifically, the chapter presents the following: research methodology, ontological and epistemological considerations, research design, population and sampling, research procedures, data collection, data analysis, research presentation, and the chapter summary.

2.2 Research Methodology

This study employed qualitative research method in data collection and analysis. Qualitative research method was a preferred because it allows the researcher to study aspect of social life through the study of human behaviour and the rationale behind such behaviour (Bryman, 2008). It also enables the research to look at a broad range of interconnected processes and realities that have been socially constructed in the subject of interest (ibid).

The epistemological position of interpretivism was adopted for this study. Interpretivism allows the researcher to understand the social world of participants through their own interpretation (ibid). The main assumption of interpretivism is that realities are constructed through the participants' experiences or views of their social world thus aiding the researcher in arriving at conclusions on the subject being studied (Berg and Lune, 2012).

Researchers carrying out qualitative research focus on individual perceptions, meaning and experiences, motivation, empathy and emotions and expectations that are subjective in nature. These perceptions are associated with the subjective realities of individuals and groups (ibid). Qualitative research allowed data collection to take place in form of words and statements as opposed to numbers and statistics as employed by quantitative research. In addition qualitative research provided the researcher with the advantage of collecting both verbal and non-verbal communication.

As part of the qualitative methodology, the research adopted the case study approach to begin the research process. The case study approach served as a guide to the data collection process and helped in data analysis. It also provided a deeper understanding of Kenya’s history of democratization and governance. In addition it enabled the research to analyze and capture the interaction of different factors, characteristics and nuanced patterns of Kenya’s political arena. This in turn enabled a more holistic description and analysis of the topic of interest (Berg and Lune, 2012)

Furthermore the research adopted the spiraling research method to design and conduct the research. This approach looks at the research as a cyclical one where “one begin with the idea, gathers theoretical information, reconsider and refine the ideas, begin to examine possible designs, reexamine theoretical assumptions, and refine these theoretical assumptions and perhaps even your original and refined idea” (Berg and Lune, 2012 p. 25). Therefore one keeps revisiting the different stages and the ideas that one started with as illustrated in the diagram below.

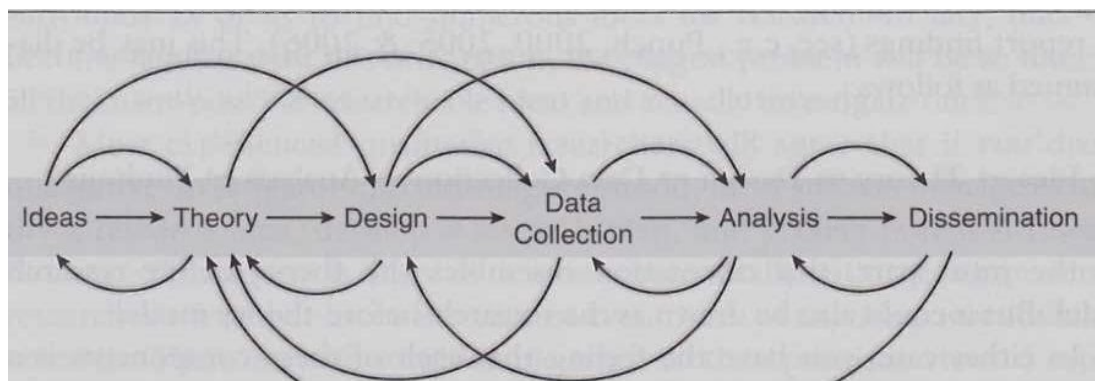


Figure 1. The spiral research approach

(Berg and Lune, 2012 p. 26)

2.3 Research Approach and Sampling Design

The target populations for this study were urban youths most of whom resides in some of Nairobi’s slums. The sample for the study was drawn from this population. The sampling strategies that were used include some elements of convenience sampling and Quota sampling. To begin with the researcher recruited interviewees that were readily available and accessible from “the street” through convenience sampling (Berg and Lune, 2012).

Quota sampling was later employed by using the contacts established through the process of the first sampling processes and by the knowledge of some of the research assistants to access the population with the characteristics the researcher desired. Quota sampling allowed the creation of stratum of the attributes the researcher was interested in. Since the Kenyan politics and elections are characterized by ethnicity one of the factors that were being considered in choosing the sample was ethnicity. (Berg and Lune, 2012) . Other important parameters that were important in ensuring the representativeness of the sample included: level of education, age, gender and political orientations. The study was conscious to the fact that the Kenyan youths are not a homogeneous group.

The age bracket of youth set for the study was between 18 and 35 years, as per the Kenyan constitution's definition of youths. In Kenya, 18 are considered the age of majority where one gets to enjoy his/her political rights like eligibility to voting upon acquiring an identity card. It is between these ages that the youth are officially oriented to participate in Kenya's political system. One becomes a fully-fledged citizen with civil, political and legal rights and obligations as provided by the Kenyan constitution (Njonjo, 2010). In addition eighteen is the age at which most of the youths complete their high school education. During this period they try to find out how they will develop themselves socially and economically. More responsibilities are accorded to them and the society raises the bar of expectations. The youths are expected to further their education, secure employment or maybe even start their own families depending with their ability to provide for family needs. Furthermore, this age bracket encompasses all the definitions of youth employed in different entities both at the national and the international level.

2.4 Data Collection Methods

This research was a triangulated project in terms of data collection techniques: It employed more than one data gathering strategy to achieve its objectives. Primarily, 45 in-depth face-to-face interviews were carried out across four different locations: Kibera, Mathare, Korogocho, and the University of Nairobi. Each interview took between 30 and 45 minutes, a time which allowed the researcher to engage in deeper conversations with the respondents.

In addition to the individual interviews, 4 focus group discussions that comprised of 8-10 youths were held in Kibera, Dandora, Mathare and Korogocho. These discussions were exploratory in nature. Information from these group interviews was used to supplement the knowledge gained from the individual interviews and also as a kind of validity check on the findings of the individual interviews to provide more certainty to the conclusions that were arrived at (Berg and Lune, 2012). Moreover, group dynamics were also used to reveal some aspects of the subject matter that may not have been apparent through the individual interviews assisting the researcher pick on conscious, subconscious and the semiconscious psychological and socio-cultural processes of participants (ibid).

To further strengthen the study, in-depth interviews were also held with 3 key experts who have been involved in youth affairs especially in relation to democratic governance. The three interviewees included:(1) An external adviser to the United Nations Habitat's Youth Advisory Board, (2) A renowned young social-political activist in issues of democracy and good governance and the founder of PAWA 254 which is an organization that fosters social change through the use of different artistic fields such as photography, documentary filming, visual arts and graphic arts in what they refer to as “*ARTivism*” and (3) An official working with the youth at the National Democratic Institute in Kenya.

Two elderly persons aged 65 and 80 were also interviewed. These interviews were aimed at acquiring the elderly persons’ perspectives about youths and their position in society. Information from these interviews not only assisted in bringing out some important aspects and characteristics of youth and their participation in the Kenyan democracy but they also informed the development of some conclusions and recommendations to the subject of youths and their participation in Kenya’s democratic governance.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out, governed by the use of an interview guide (Appendix 1). Semi-structured interviews were preferred as opposed to structured or non-structured interviews because these enabled the researcher take advantage of their flexibility nature in structuring the questions and directing the course of the interview (Berg and Lune, 2012). Berg and Lune (2012) observes that semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to have pre-determined subtopics and questions while at the same time allowing the interviewer to adjust the level of language depending on the characteristics of the participant.

Furthermore, Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to digress from the structured questions and add or delete probes depending on how the conversation developed (Berg and Lune (2012).

The field study was conducted between end of February and mid-March 2014 using English and Swahili, which are Kenya’s official languages of communication. In some circumstances, slang/street language was also used to ease communication between the study participants and the researcher and in some contexts facilitate an easy flow of ideas during conversations, therefore improving the efficiency of data collection.

2.5 Study Area

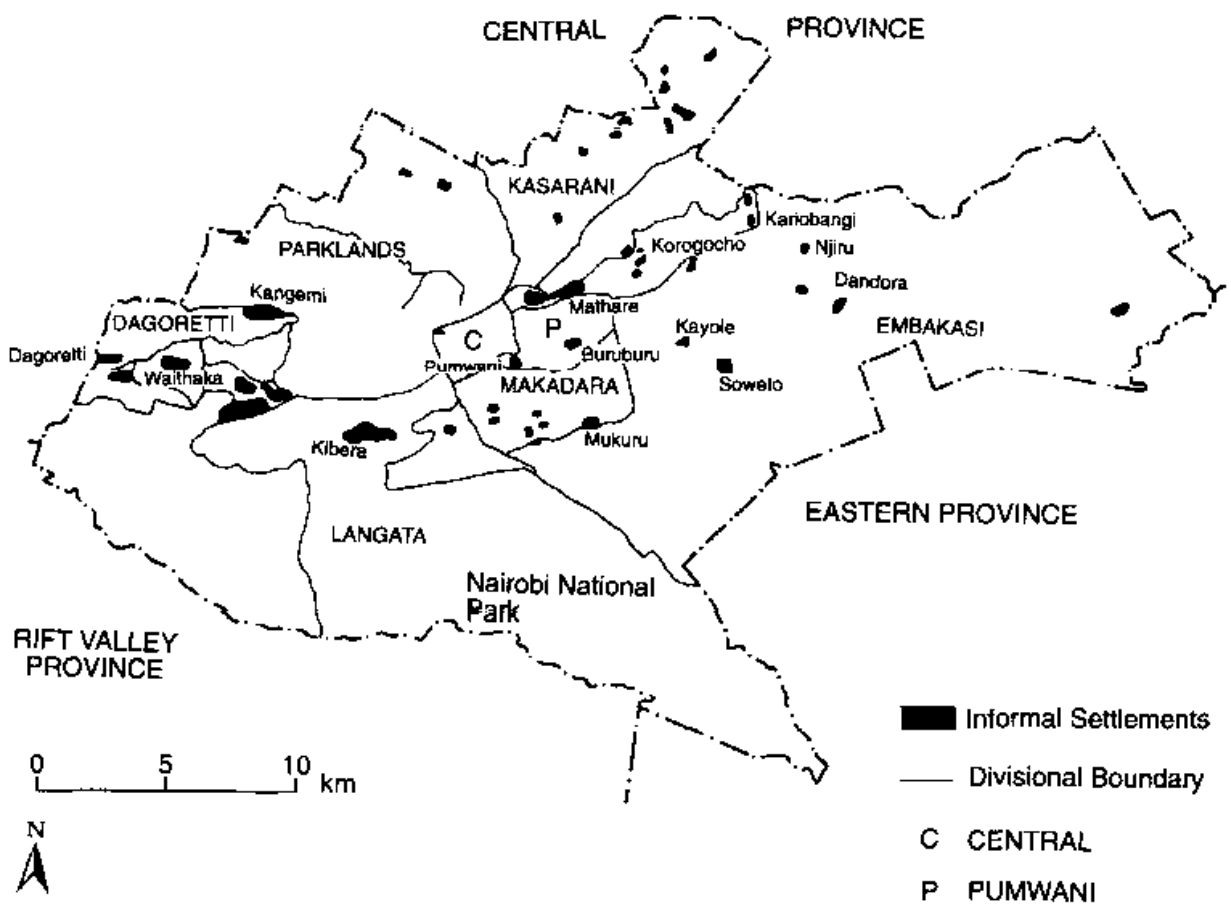


Figure 2. Map of Nairobi showing the study areas

Source: (Obudho, 1992, p. 100)

The area selected for the study was Nairobi, with the main reason being that it is ethnically diverse and thus the researcher could get a well-stratified sample based on ethnicity.

Ethnicity plays a central part in Kenya's politics, hence a characteristic that was highly considered in the study. Secondly, being the capital and largest city in Kenya, Nairobi has a huge population of young people that have migrated from all the other parts of the country in search of employment opportunities upon completion of their studies even as others further their studies in the city. Lastly, the choice of Nairobi was also convenient to the researcher as regards language. Most of the youths in Nairobi speak Swahili and English. Swahili is researcher's native languages and thus this saved her time that might have otherwise been used for translations.

Areas in Nairobi selected for the study were the University of Nairobi, Dandora (a suburb) and three major Nairobi slums, including Mathare, Korogocho and Kibera. The choice of including slums in the study was made because these, were not only epicenters of violence after the 2007 national elections, but also had the majority of the urban voters. Voter turnout is also higher in the slums as compared to other regions, making them attractive to politicians who use the numbers as easier ways of votes' acquisition without having to bother on giving back the necessary public services and improvement of the lives of their constituents after gaining power (Sana and Okombo, 2012).

2.6 Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis was undertaken in line with the research questions beginning with a thorough analysis of the collected raw field data. First, the data gathered through field notes of the interviews and the recorded interview responses was transcribed word for word and stored in a computer. The data was then classified and structured using a thematic analysis, which entails the comparison of information involving different issues and topics relevant to the research questions that enables the emergence of themes (Berg and Lune, 2012). Emerging themes were coded to highlight thematic categories mainly related to the research questions and guided by the literature review process. Some quotations included in the findings are Swahili and slang languages that were frequently used by respondents during interviews and focused group discussions.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

A research permit was applied from Kenya National Council for Science and Technology (NCST). This institution regulates and assures quality in research and projects by protecting respondents who willingly share their knowledge and opinions during a study.

The fundamental elements of privacy consent and confidentiality governed the study. The informants had to sign a written informed-consent form, as acceptance to voluntarily and freely participate in the study.

Confidentiality means that the researcher ensured that the information collected from informants could not be traced back to them hence promoting anonymity (Patton, 2002). This was important due to the nature of the topic and the context in which it was conducted. By guaranteeing confidentiality, the researcher was able to protect the privacy of the respondents as the study involved the examination of their public and private lives including their innermost beliefs, opinions, ideas, attitudes, emotions and political behaviour (Ibid). The study is therefore obliged to report its findings to the participants and the National Council for Science and Technology for the purpose of contributing to Kenya's research body.

2.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

As is the case with most studies, readers should consider the presented results of the findings in the light of some limitations. One limitation of the study was the sample size that was relatively small. These findings cannot therefore be generalized to all the youths in the country and there is thus a need for further research to support the findings.

Although the researcher made deliberate efforts to ensure that the study sample was well representative, it was a challenge to get specific characteristics of the population that would represent the heterogeneity youth represents. For example, while Kenya is comprised of 43 different ethnic groups, the researcher was only able to interview youths from 6 ethnic groups because of their dominance in the contexts of interest. The characteristics of the population that were well achieved are sex and education background of the respondents.

Time -and financial constraints did not allow the researcher to fairly judge the socio-economic status of the respondents. There was therefore a reliance on observation of their environment and descriptions provided by youth in the discussions that were carried out.

There were also some gender and age stereotypes that were associated with the study whereby some of the respondents wondered why a young lady would pursue political issues in such a patriarchal society where men dominates the sector. Although with this said, most respondents appreciated the discussions, terming them as eye opening.

Many respondents mentioned that they anticipated gaining economically or through other ways for participating in the study. There were some complains of perceived exploitation by some previous researchers without any benefits accruing to the community. The researcher explained from the beginning that the research was to benefit both the researcher and the respondents in that it would lead to an analysis and delve into issues that would hopefully widen their horizon, reflection and the way they think about political issues. Researching on political issues in Kenya is a limitation in itself since political issues are met with a lot of suspicion especially after the post-election violence experiences. The researcher felt that participants were forth coming with their answers but at the same time some of them exhibited a lot of skepticism and suspicion on which the study was meant for despite being assured that the study was purely for academic reasons and that their anonymity would be guaranteed.

Lastly, the fact that the researcher is a Kenyan may have led to either positive or negative unconscious biases. The researcher strove to maintain a high level of methodological and ethical standards, striving to be as objective as possible to counter any biases that could have arisen.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has covered the research methodology in details, giving an outline of the design of the study. The study is qualitative employing a case study approach. This chapter has also explained the research design including data collection and analysis methods while also presenting ethical issues that will be considered.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First is to discuss and operationalize the central concepts that were extensively used in this study, including democracy, good governance and youth's role, with a view of discussing their conceptual and practical application. Secondly, it explores the general and specific levels of some of the literature and major ideas behind these concepts. The review of the literature shows some of the different approaches taken by various authors on this theme highlighting some gaps that exist in the research area and of the problem statement besides being used in data analysis.

The concepts of democracy and good governance have not only dominated the global political realm but also different disciplines, including development studies, economics, and social and political sciences. They are among the most valued concepts in the world and yet the vaguest in terms of definition and application. This has led to some scholars claiming that we are living in a world whereby democracy is qualified by an array of adjectives hence losing meaning (Plattner, 2013; Mwangola, 2007). According to Plattner (2013), the two concepts have attained the status of buzzwords nationally and internationally, making it difficult to give them a precise meaning. So what do these terms exactly mean and what is the alliance between these important concepts?

3.1 Meaning and Models of Democracy

Democracy is one of the most contested concepts in the world. All manner of political systems refers to themselves as democracies. In Africa, the concept is widely preached but least exercised. For example, in a country like Uganda where competitive elections are seldom witnessed, the country considers itself as a democratic republic. Democracy is equated with popular power and can be defined as a rule by the people and for the people (Plattner, 2013). In comparison to dictatorships, oligarchies, monarchies and aristocracies, where people have little or no say, democracy, theoretically seeks input from the citizenry in decision-making processes (ibid).

Democracy in its classic sense seeks to realize human potential through their active participation and has therefore been historically associated with the struggle against social injustices that mostly arise from tyrannical leadership (Adejumobi, 2003).

Everyday democracy is about a shared assumption, whether inarticulated or unrecognized, of how citizens want their country to be. The citizens determine the economic, social, political structures and systems they want, how they want their laws administered and how they want to be governed. Consent in terms of shared will is essential for a democracy to be achieved (Adejumobi, 2003).

In Kenya's context, as in many multiethnic and multi-religious states, democracy ought to ensure that minority groups in each of these categories are not excluded in decision-making processes (ibid). Mustapha and Whitfield (2009), citing William (2003), asserts that democracy is not a state but a process whereby the liberty of citizens and residents is protected through the process of holding those in power accountable, so that the ruled can achieve an adequate political representation. Important in William's definition, is that the governed have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. He further observes that "the process involves the acts of defining, defending and creating institutions and cultures that promotes a set of goals.... the process of democratization facilitates debates about public issues including the nature of conditions of democratic politics" (Williams, 2003, p. 43).

The definition of democracy affects the outcome of different plans of a particular context. For example the definition of this concept affects the way leaders are recruited into office and how they leave office. It also affects how the constitution is viewed. It is indisputable that the way democracy is defined has a great influence on the direction a people take with regards to their development and the speed at which this development is going to take place (Mustapha and Whitfield, 2009). Mwangola (2013) observes that in the Kenyan context, as it is in many African countries, citizens have been cultured to look at democracy as an aspiration rather than something that is practical and realistic to achieve. He, therefore, emphasizes the need to look at this concept as a verb i.e. a word that conveys action and activity rather than a noun. In practice, especially in developing countries, the concept of democracy has been equated to multi-party elections.

While discussing democracy, it is natural in most contexts that the attention automatically shifts to the elections of representatives both at the local and the international levels. Elections are done every five years in Kenya and practically, voting is seen as a marker of 'true democracy' (ibid). From the above definitions, it is true to say that elections represent a small fraction of what real democracy entails.

It is not just about elections every fifth year or about constitutions and electoral law, but about how people are involved, get a national consensus to choose their leaders through sharing their opinions without feeling that their freedoms or rights are being threatened. Important in making choices is the knowledge of the opportunities that exist. This, therefore, requires people whose experiences have grown through time. “Democracy at the basic level is reflected in respect and the acceptance of the law. At the national level, it is reflected in checks and balances of the important institutions: the Executive, Judiciary, and the Legislature” (IED, 1996, pg. 19).

A conceptual definition of democracy also entails an understanding of its complex dynamics such as the need to evaluate and analyze the past, the present, and the protracted future. In the case of Kenya, its definition has to take into consideration the history of the country, including its pre-colonial societies, the colonial period and the postcolonial period for it to be well covered and be inclusive. Although different definitions and characteristics of democracy have been promulgated, as shown above, the central theme that characterizes these definitions is the idea of making governance come closer to the people. In addition to voting, real democracy, therefore, entails the ability to participate truly in the decision-making process in everyday discourse in the public sphere.

3.1.1 Forms and Types of Democracy

The quest for democracy is a global affair that has been going on for decades with the existence of different forms and types of democracy. Most scholars on the concept of democracy perceive it in relation to the liberal type of democracy. However, several other types of democracies are practiced in different countries, including social democracy and socialist democracy (Njogu, 2011). In its classical sense, the concept of democracy means the people having an opportunity to express power. The liberal democracy narrows down to people electing their representatives through competitive elections. The elected individuals make up the government and they have a duty to protect as well as uphold the rule of law, political and civil rights, and must be accountable to the people who elected them to the position of power (Adejumobi, 2002).

Liberal democracies are more concerned with the right and freedoms of individuals as opposed to collective rights. According to him, although the concept of democracy shares some characteristics like the right to political participation and public accountability and the rule of law, they have their differences by definition (ibid).

Democracy, in general, has an emancipatory element but liberal democracy, on the other hand passively accepts immunity. He states that replacing the definition of democracy with liberal democracy devalues and trivializes the essences of the term (Adejumobi, 2003). The table below shows the differences between the two types of democracy.

Table 1. *Difference between classical and liberal democracies*

Classical Democracy	Liberal Democracy
The main objective is to realize human development	It only offers protection for human development
Freedom is positive and activist	Passive acceptance of immunity
It enables as well as empowers	It prevents and protects
	Historically, this form of democracy emerged to cause a political structure, which seeks to protect the economy, involving protection of emerging revolutions, particularly industrial and technological and protection of private property. Thus, this type of democracy is compatible with market economy (Ake 2000, p.14 in Adejumobi 2003)

Adejumobi (2003) further observes that the liberal type of democracy within the western societies was geared towards representing and protecting the bourgeois' hegemonic interests, as well as the interests of the capital class. Therefore, in this form of democracy, the concepts of socio-economic rights and equality are quite abstract resulting in the marginalization of members of the lower social classes.

In addition to the different forms of democracies, two types of democracies exist: Direct democracy and representative democracy. Direct democracy is a form of democracy whereby all members of a nation get the opportunity to decide (Kriesi & Bochsler, 2012).

On the other hand, a representative democracy establishes an intermediary actor between the people being governed and the political institutions that govern the state.

The political actor is chosen through elections that ought to be free, fair and representative in nature and are tasked with the responsibility of making decisions on behalf of their subjects and representing the interests of the people who have elected them (ibid). Non-state actors like the civil societies, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations also play an important role in the governance process within a democratic system. Kenya is considered to be a representative democracy.

3.1.2 Governance and Good Governance

Governance is seen as a more holistic term that goes beyond the state and institutions and entails steering the state and institutions in order to achieve the goals that have been set for the collective good (Adejumobi, 2002). The fundamental notions of governance include participation, consultation and involvement (Zeb, 2008). The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) defines governance as an engagement that is social in nature between the rulers and the ruled in a political community to fulfill a social contract between the two. (UNECA, 1999). It includes making of laws, setting of standards, and management of state structures with an objective to achieve the interest of the population at large (ibid). Non-state actors like the civil societies, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations also play an important role in the governance process. It encompasses a complex mechanism whereby the political, economic, legal, judicial, social and administrative authority whereby citizens and groups air out their interests, exercise their legal rights and mediate their differences. Governance has also been defined as the ability of the state to deliver goods and services to its citizens (Plattner 2013).

Presently governance is also strongly driven by the market economy and becomes good when it serves the interest of a great number of people in a society. According to Adejumobi (2003), participation is crucial if governance is to be considered as good governance. The core dimensions of good governance include participation, the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus-oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency and accountability (Albritton 2009).

3.1.3 Linkage between Democracy and Good Governance

There is a big dilemma for political and development practitioners on how democracy and good governance relate. Some authors like Albritton (2009) argue that democracy is not a prerequisite for a state to achieve good governance. They have noted that good governance can exist without democracy being in place. Solid examples include some countries in Asia like Singapore and Dubai. It has also been argued that democracy can also exist without the principles of good governance being adhered to, as it is the scenario in most third world countries (ibid). Democracy can end up becoming unpopular in the long run if it does not deliver what is important to the citizens of a society. On the other hand, authors Adejumobi (2003) see democracy, in particular, liberal democracy, and good governance, as having mutually reinforcing elements observing that democracy is a precondition for the achieving of good governance.

The working definition in this study for the concepts of democracy and governance will deliberately put more emphasis on their dimensions that mutually reinforce each other. It will be operationalized by considering some elements of democracy and good governance that make them mutually reinforcing to each other, i.e. the practice of democracy in a specific context is used to legitimize and determine goals and at the same time, governance ensures that the goals that have been established are effectively realized.

3.1.4 Youth defined

The definition of youth or young people is contextual depending on the cultural, social, political and environmental factors. The concept has been operationalized in different contexts, therefore, varies from country to country and from organization to organization adding to the list of fluid terms in the development arena (Zeb, 2008). It is important to note that the youth are not a homogeneous block. The differences arising due to the non-homogeneity by and large respected (ibid). These differences are usually marked by the different needs of this group i.e. sex, physical and mental capability, geographical location: rural and urban areas and many more making it a socially constructed term. The fact that some people in their mid-thirties and forties may still be in school and without jobs should not be ignored. This fact does not necessarily qualify them as youth.

The new Oxford American dictionary defines youth as the “*stage between childhood and adulthood*” (Oxford American dictionary, n.d, n.p). According to this sociological definition, youth is seen as a phase of transitioning between being a child, seen as being dependent on others, to a fully mature adult expected to be independent and responsible. This explains why different institutions, agencies, and countries define the youth using a specific age bracket. The United Nations (UN) entities define the youth as individuals between the age of 15 and 24 (UNESCO, n.d) while on the other hand, the African Charter and the Kenyan Constitution define youth as any individual between the age of 18 and 35 (Njonjo, 2010)

Eighteen years is presented as the age of majority in Kenya, at which a person is seen to have ‘influence’ on important decisions in their lives. This definition is based on the rights that come with one attaining 18 years which includes among others, the right to vote, right to obtain identity cards, right to be voted for and to be held accountable for one's own actions (Muthee, 2010). Though the constitution provides an age bracket for the youth, this concept is still inconsistently defined even within governmental bodies in Kenya. The National Youth Policy, for example, defines the youth as individuals between the age of 15 and 30. However, in political participation in most countries exclusions go beyond 24 years of age. People who have not attained 35 years of age are rarely found in political leadership positions (ibid). This research profiled youth as persons between the age of 15 and 34. This will be able to accommodate all the definitions presented above.

The youth population in Kenya is growing very fast and is amongst the largest in Africa. According to the 2009 National Census, 78.31% of the population comprises of persons between the ages of 1-34 years while those between the ages of 15-34 constituting approximately 35.39% of the total population. The Youth fact book notes that the percentage of the youth in Kenya will continue rising steadily in the coming years due to some demographic changes. These changes will occur as a result of changes in mortality, fertility, and social-economic factors. The rise of the middle class is one of such demographic changes, transitioning Kenya's population from child bulge to youth bulge (Njonjo, 2010). The youths have been seen to be caught up in high waves of poverty and unemployment leading to low self-esteem that has resulted in the youth resorting to social vices such as crime, violence, drug abuse, and prostitution (ibid). However, despite the mentioned challenges facing youth in Kenya, they are also seen as possessing creativity and entrepreneurial skills with much untapped potential.

3.2 Literature Review

This literature review section seeks to explore what various scholars, theorists and authors have written on the concepts of democracy and governance especially in relation to the youths in the African context. The findings of this review will help the researcher in interpreting the findings of this study.

3.2.1 Democracy and Good Governance in Africa

Different types of scholars have perceived democracy as an important aspect of governance in African states just as it is to other nations across the world. Beginning from the 1980s there have been attempts both nationally and internationally to gradually achieve political pluralism and democratization in Africa due to the hopelessness and disillusionment trends that have been caused by poverty, disease and abuse of human rights in Africa (Whitfield and Mustafa, 2009).

Several factors have been mentioned to influence democratic processes in Africa including; internal and external processes; historical memories, group loyalties, aid dependencies, geopolitical factors and political economy issues. Ndegwa (2001) states that democratization studies in Africa should encompass more multi-sided and elaborate studies due to the nature and developments that are taking place in the continent. Many studies that have been done in this field concentrate more on the political and legal sphere of life which focus mostly on state-led arenas such as the electoral and institutional arenas of governance. The author calls for the expansion of the analytical framework by looking at democratization discourses in light of other broader interdisciplinary issues like generational change, class and gender issues and change in social norms, as depicted by the civil society in and outside state arena. This, he says, will result in meaningful results on the achievements and failures of democratization processes.

Adejumobi (2003) observes that there is an overemphasis of elections as the main component of democracy in the African continent, which is treated as a magical wand that can heal most of Africa's problems. He adds that African countries have remained relatively poor in performance despite the fact that some of them have faithfully held elections as provided by the constitution. An effect of the overemphasis on elections is the use of political capital and energies on electoral politics leading to dictators and autocrats getting the space and time to devise new ways permitted by democratic principles, to stay in power (ibid).

He further states that the citizenry in the African context possesses abstract political rights for Therefore, questioning the practicability of the liberal democracy. In line with election as the center of discussion, Plattner (2013) claims that democratic electorates do not necessarily make wise decisions while choosing their representatives leading to the election of inferior and dishonest leaders, as opposed to competent and trustworthy ones. This ends up creating a vicious cycle whereby the inferior leaders get into power for personal gain instead of serving the electorate by providing services and implementing gainful policies.

Building stable democracies is very challenging, and it would be unrealistic to think that changing leaders and constitutions lead to stable and effective governments that interest themselves in delivering (Diamond, 1989). Supporting Diamond's assertion, Ndegwa (2001) posits that democracy is work in progress whose achievements are measured by the ability of a regime to secure and promote the rights of its citizenry both at the social, political and at the economic level. Democratization occurs is a messy process that requires a social foundation whereby that advocates for significant changes in political structures and political culture, social structures and the relationship between state and society calling for a change in the mentality of the leaders and the led (Diamond, 1989).

National contexts matter in the analysis of the successes and failures of democratic governance with Whitfield and Mustafa (2009) warning intellectuals to be careful in their analysis of what democracy means in different contexts in Sub-Saharan Africa. They note that in the regard of Sub-Saharan Africa as a unitary region, the outcome of this overgeneralization having had major regrettable consequences in democratization process one of which is the implementation of major economic policies. Though some similarities can be drawn from the different states, different authors continue to note that the different states have had different journeys in there democratization process, making their experiences unique to their context (Whitfield and Mustafa, 2009; Harrison, 2004; Abrahamsen, 2000).

Whitfield and Mustafa (2009) demonstrate a diversity of outcomes of the democratization processes, therefore, refuting the overgeneralization of democratic processes in Africa. For example, Freedom House considers Ghana as among the countries in Africa that are free while considering Kenya and Nigeria, who have experienced a mixed assortment of democracy since their independence, as partly free.

Zimbabwe and Ivory Coast, on the other hand, are considered as not free due to the disastrous authoritarian pattern of governance throughout their history. Though some of them are in the same group or class in relation to freedom, their trajectories can be explained by different factors for example for oil in Nigeria or aid dependence in Ghana crucial in explaining their democratization process (Whitfield and Mustafa , 2009)

3.2.2 The Global Political Environment and Africa's Democracy.

During the democratization process in the 1980s, the synergy between free market economy and liberal democracy was well played in African countries. Through pressures from the multilateral institutions such as World Bank and the IMF, African states were forced to believe that there was no alternative to liberal democracy and a free market economy. The support of liberal democratic reforms was used as an entry point to Africa through the financing of the Structural Adjustment Programs that has continued to this date, to influence African states' pursuit of liberal democracy with a strong element of free market economy (ibid).

The return of multiparty democracy and the emergence of the good governance agenda played a crucial role in transforming the democracy trajectories observed in most African states.

The development discourse became the heart of good governance during this period leading to what has been referred to as a period of political liberalization in the developing world. As mentioned before, a combination of internal factors such as failure of autocratic regimes and external factors such as push by donors provided an enabling environment to the pushing for the good governance agenda. Democracy at this time was perceived as public opposition to authoritarian regimes, respect of both civic and political rights majorly suffered due to dictatorship and institutionalized and competitive election (ibid).

The internal factor that made the implementation of SAPs more attractive for example in Kenya was the failure of the autocratic regime that was experienced in Kenya at this time. Opposition and demonstration by students, workers, and religious organizations and human rights groups were taking place around the country. These groups had great hope that democracy will improve their day-to-day lives. This included getting involved in decision-making processes in issues that affect their lives (Mwangola, 2013).

The proposed democracy was attractive because it had an emphasis on values such as respect for the rule of law, transparency, accountability and respect for human rights (Murunga and Nasong'o, 2007).

The argument for the introduction Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) by external actors (World Bank, International Monetary Fund and bilateral agencies) was the economic and institutional failures that had been experienced in African states. The GDPs of most countries were falling during this period. At the state level nepotism, corruption, tribalism mismanagement of funds and the abuse of human rights were the order of the day (Whitfield and Mustafa, 2009). The failure of the communist states during the cold war made the western proposal of democracy even more attractive and easy to sell to the African states. By manipulating fiscal and monetary instruments of African government, the World Bank who was the main actor had a goal to reduce state control of public resources and a foster a culture of democracy through the good governance agenda. SAPS defined political frameworks and parameters in African states (ibid).

An interesting observation by Tandon (1996) is that some of these external actors, i.e. European rulers and governments who considered African tyrants as their brothers and cousins during the 1970s were the ones who were pushing for economic and political reforms in the 1980s and the 1990s by being against the authoritarian regimes. In a creative and critical way, Harrison (2004) evaluates the construction of governance states in Africa noting one of its major consequences was the deconstruction of existing states and their loss of much control. Ake (1993) analyzes the power reduction of states as a misconception of the process of democratization in Africa arguing that while African leaders were considered as omnipresent, strong and having control within all their state boundaries, this was often not the case. African states are weak in that the leaders cannot penetrate the lives of all their citizens including those that lived the rural areas as leaders in the USA would do (ibid).

The product of the democratization process was the formation of governance states, which display similar features. These states are seen to have undergone identical processes with the goal to achieve specific discourses and programmes. One of the most important discourses that were achieved is neo-liberalism. The private sector, bilateral agencies, and the multilateral organization gained a lot of power through the process (ibid).

Harrison (2004) however points out that these factors, both external and internal should not be looked at as disorganized but as rational, looking at what was happening at that point in time. Though the main source of the liberal governance discourse is the World Bank the successful embedment of the same should not just be attributed to the World Bank only but also to the internal struggles that were undergone to achieve the current developments (ibid).

On the discussion of the creation of governance states in Africa, Abrahamsen (2000) challenges the marginalization of external factors in the analysis of the outcomes of governance states by underplaying the relationship between global political power and African states. She argues that discourses of power and global political economy promoted in the different agendas including the good governance agenda favor the western hegemony. Abrahamsen (2000) points out that most authors uplift external factors by viewing them as supportive while demonizing the role played by internal factors in Africa's. External factors are always considered as precipitation conditions rather than causal conditions to the current trends, therefore necessitating the need to look at how international and national factors entwine and overlap to affect the democratization processes in Africa. One of the changes that had to effect was the holding of multiparty elections. Amidst all this the donors had failed to have a precise definition of what good governance was for African states. The west and the multilateral donors tied the political change to aid conditionality (ibid).

Most of the African states held multiparty kind of elections, even though they were undemocratic in reality. For example in Kenya donors threatened to cut aid if Daniel Arap Moi, then Kenyan president, did not hold multiparty elections in 1992. Even though he consented to multiparty elections, both internal and external observers noted that they were far from being free and fair. Though political pluralism has been considered as a yardstick to democracy, it will be interesting to know what the youth think of political parties and the role they play in fostering societal and political norms.

3.2.3 Nexus between Development and Democracy

The nexus between development and democracy remain contestable. There is a tension and contradiction between which of these two facilitates the other or which of these two comes first. Adejumobi (2000) classify some discussions that have arisen in the relationship between development and democracy.

Some authors have argued that liberal democracies in terms of multipartism, the rule of law, and elections provide the basic foundation for economic development. These neoliberal values are seen to favor a healthy environment for economic development. An example that has been used to support the argument above is the success of adopting the liberal policy in different contexts between 1965 and 1990. Botswana and Mauritius had an economic growth rate of 8.4% and 3.2% respectively during this period. This is in contrast with nations like the Republic of Congo and Nigeria, which had an economic growth rate 2.2% and 0.1% respectively during the same period (Adejumobi, 2000). Others argue that linking democracy to development and the other way round overburdens democracy. This school of thought wants democracy to be seen and handled as a project on its own. They are careful to always relate the economic development and democracy by the fact that human rights that are crucial to citizens may not necessary bear tangible and economic benefits. They are concerned with the fact that democracy is reduced to economic development. This perspective, in my opinion, brings about the discussion of economic development vs. human development.

Other empirical studies have recorded poor correlation between development and democracy arguing that the performance of some nations may be affected by political democracy whereby participation of the masses in terms slows down the formation and the implementation of important democracies (ibid). Adejumobi (2000) who represents the third group points out that development is not reliant on the nature of regime that is in place, therefore, the need to take caution in linking development, especially economic growth, and democracy. A pre-requisite for development is not democratic states but states that put more emphasis in building developmental states. So the quest of building democratic states should also encourage developmental friendly structures. He gives an example of East Asia in the 1980s and early 1990s. The countries in these regions had authoritarian regimes but they managed to show remarkable economic growth and development. So African state and in specific Kenya should be able to learn on what encouraged development in the success stories that have been recorded in East Asia and other countries that can be adopted in conjunction with the process of building democratic states so as to achieve effective economic growth and government.

3.2.4 Ethnicity and Democracy

Ethnic politics are very prominent in the African continent. Thus, any efforts to understand democracy in Africa cannot be done without seeking to understand the role played by ethnicity. A number of scholars have contributed to the relationship between ethnicity, democracy, and good governance.

Koigi (2003) argued that ethnicity is not the problem, but negative ethnicity is what causes challenges in pursuance of good governance and democracy. According to this author, many Kenyans tend to use the term ethnicity and tribalism interchangeably. He, therefore, discussed the difference between ethnicity and tribalism. The ordinary citizens refer to the everyday ethnic contempt and biases as tribalism while the second category, academics, perceive ethnic prejudices and ethnic contempt as ethnicity. The academics/scholars term the word tribe as being demeaning and one that is loaded with racism and ethnocentrism that was practiced by the white colonialists. Koigi (2003) felt that the distinction between these two groups causes conflict in understanding what these terms mean. He, therefore, chose to use the term negative ethnicity to replace tribalism and ethnicity. Another justification for his use of the term negative ethnicity is that ethnicity has a beautiful side.

Ethnic consciousness has always carried a negative connotation in most intellectual discussions especially when discussing its social and political manifestation in Africa. Ethnic identities and affiliations have been characterized as delirious; their consequences have also been classified as uncivil. One of the factors as to why there is a lot of negativities that has been associated with ethnicity is that many African states have had a long list of conflicts along tribal lines that have been dubbed as inter-ethnic conflicts. Koigi (2003) does not see ethnicity or ethnic diversity as the real problem in the African continent. This is because the African ethnic identities do also have positive ethnic pride that should be celebrated and brought forward as a strength (ibid).

Though strong negative ethnic affiliations have been linked with underdevelopment and bad governance, Ake (1993) agrees with Koigi (2003) that ethnic diversity in African nations is not inherently the problem. The two authors seem to be in agreement that ethnicity is neither the major source of conflict nor the cause of poor governance and lack of democracy in Africa.

Koigi argues that negative ethnicity is characterized by behaviors such as electing leaders along ethnic lines, sidelining members of certain ethnic groups, and inequality in the distribution of resources along ethnic lines. He, therefore, felt that such negative ethnicity is denying Africa an opportunity to enjoy democracy and good governance (Koigi, 2003). According to Ake (1993), the main problem is not the diversity but bad leadership (ibid). In this case leadership is looked at as going beyond the traditional focus on conventional elites and thus the need to broaden the concept in order for it to encompass dynamics of power relations between the rulers and the ruled (Njogu, 2007).

Ethnicity is also negatively perceived when the elite and ruling class instrumentally use it politically to achieve their selfish economic and political gains, thus acting as an underlying basis to promote "social vices" such as patronage- clientele relationships at all level of politics, and the common syndrome "it is our time to eat" or what Berman (1998) describes as "Politics of the Belly" which is largely associated with corruption. This argument resonates with instrumentalist theory of politics that explain the relationship between greed, grievance, and ethnic identities whereby ethnic identities are seen as a political strategy for achieving status, wealth and power (Lake and Rothchild, 1998).

Other analytical approaches that have been used to analyze ethnic politics include primordialism/perennialism whereby ethnic identities are seen to be natural, fixed and unique. Ethnic behavior is seen to be stemming from the natural ties of a person being born in a particular community that are bounded in nature. The third theory, constructivism, perceives ethnicity as a social phenomena. Ethnic identities are seen as a product of both internal and external historical process. Different actors who have different interests have interacted through history to shape the ethnic identities in the postcolonial states. Therefore, the ethnic identities evolve with the change in social interactions that are far beyond the individual (ibid). Though in my opinion the latter has superseded the first two theories, it is important to note that both theories highlight important points that can't be ignored in the debates about ethnicity (ibid). If constructivism is to be adopted to analyze ethnicity, then Berman (1998) points out the importance of evaluating the effect of Pre-colonial and post-colonial factors on the post-colonial modern states.

Although Ake (1993) portrays the pre-colonial societies as having accountability, participation and communal thinking as dominant themes within Africa context, Berman (1998) states that patronage–client relationships can be dated back in the pre-colonial systems. Pre-colonial societies existed amidst ethnic diversity whereby systems were characterized by patronage and patriarchy. There existed unequal relationships whereby the "big man" ruled over the "small boy" (master-servant relationship). The servant in turn ruled over women and children. In addition, identities became especially important when the survival of a distinct community was threatened majorly by wars and famines. Such occurrences shaped ethnic identities in a specific way (ibid).

Modern ethnicity was for example shaped by the colonial political economy. Patron-client relationships existed in the pre-colonial period but they were reinforced and institutionalized by the process of colonialism this was majorly done through Africa's cash crops, the capitalist wage labor and the structural organizations that were set in place during colonialism (Berman 1998).

Colonial authorities relied heavily on tribal authorities like chiefs and other local authorities to penetrate the different networks so as to be able to promote capitalism and access resources. The chiefs were actively pursuing to get wealthy. The wealth they got from their colonial masters was also used to reward family, friends and all the followers that were loyal to the local administration. The power and the resources that these administrators had gained were also used to punish the enemies of the tribal authorities. In this whole process, the colonial powers actively used the divide and rule principle to maintain their desired status quo. Legitimacy was gained through violent authoritarian control. This consequently led to the development of asymmetric relationships between different groups causing internal differentiation in class formation that are seen up to date (Ake, 1993).

Authoritarian leadership characterized by the principle of "divide and rule" was well inherited by the leaders who took over after colonialism. Ethnic identities in Africa's post-colonial states were therefore shaped by some of these behaviors from both the pre-colonial societies and colonial states through negotiation and the renegotiation. In the post-colonial societies, the poor and those whose classes were undermined during colonialism use ethnic identities to make demands to access to resources both tangible and intangible.

This includes power, land, basic needs and infrastructures. Therefore if this argument is used, then that means that ethnic identities are not only used instrumentally by the elite to achieve their interest but it can also be seen as a demand from below both by individuals and communities for the internal distribution of resources and protection from external pressures (ibid)

Horowitz (2014) who discusses ethno-politics in multiethnic societies claims that it is more difficult to make democracy work when a society is ethnically divided. He states that ethnic division tends to produce political parties that are characterized by ethnicity. This in turn leads to ethnic voting. In most of the cases ethnic voting leads the majority dominating the minority hence is causing an imbalanced representation in national leadership. The problems come in power-sharing models of leadership that have an objective of forming an all-inclusive central government. Power sharing models poorly represent the ethnic diversity present in African states causing a rule by the majority. A by-product of these is the improper implementation of power-sharing deals especially in cases where elections have disputes. This has led to conflicts and civil wars in some countries examples being Rwanda and South Sudan. Horowitz (2014)

Some of the most neglected problems according to Horowitz (2014) the problem of adopting power-sharing institutions and the degradation of centripetal electoral institutions by the manipulation of the majority. Is the problem and all inclusive government or incompetence and dishonesty among the representatives chosen from the different communities to negotiate for the delivery of goods and services and carry out policies that best suit the needs of their people? In his discussion that focuses on the need to rethink democratization in Africa, Ake (1993) stresses the need for a paradigm shift in most of the modern theories that are used to analyze most of the themes in African politics. These include the principles of liberal democracy that basically does not consider the ethnic and social pluralism present in Africa.

Some of the dominant models of analysis on modernity trends are seen to be fixated on preoccupied economic production and modern state. As a result, most of the authors have ended up explaining and dwelling on what Africa is not instead of focusing on what Africa is; an ethnic pluralistic society (ibid). Too much preoccupation with ethnic identities has muted the debate on class in most of the African society therefore reducing class-consciousness among citizens.

A question that would be worth looking at in this research is whether the multiparty elections have favored development in terms of shunning negative ethnicity and fostering the nationhood in Kenya.

3.2.5 Youth Participation in Democracy: African Perspectives

There has been an increased interest across the globe on how young people participate in building the African democracies. This especially done in the context that participation amongst the youth is declining and is set to decline in future hence the need to know what contributes to the decline in participation.

Most discussions of the youth and their increasing numbers in the African continent are extremely focused on negativity and radical scenarios perceiving youth as problematic, vulnerable and disadvantaged both politically and economically (Resnick and Casale, 2011). Theoretically, liberal perspectives have dominated the literature on youth participation in building and strengthening democracies internationally (August, 2008). Recent empirical studies suggest that the consequences of the youth bulge in Africa offers many explanations to their political participation. They also point out the importance of youth voices in strengthening democracies in Africa. According to Collier (2007), youths in Africa are voluntarily or forcefully recruited into military rebel movements or army to fight in civil conflicts. One of the reasons for such involvements is the lack of economic security that is offered by jobs. To be able to secure social justice especially in scenarios where their futures are threatened by the regime in power, the youths join rebel movements (ibid).

Most of the analyst on youth issues among them Obonyo (2013) and Msigwa and Kipesha (2013) paint a dire picture of youth unemployment in the continent. According to them the youth bulge worsens the state of affairs in these countries. Lack of effective public policies and non-responsive youth programs have been mentioned as among the major causes of the experienced development especially on the way youth participate politically. Urdal (2012) links the youth bulge to political violence and political dissatisfaction amongst the youth.

Another theme that features the discussion of youth and political participation is generational conflict. Generational conflict in African politics has repeatedly featured in almost all of the post-colonial states (Abbink, 2005). Urdal (2012) questions the theoretical and practical claims that political violence mostly occurs as a result of competition between the youth and the older counterpart in power. His study concludes that the risk of political violence can only be reduced if youths are provided with better economic and educational opportunities.

Though most of the authors have portrayed the youth as described above, analysts such as Olopade (2014) try to rewrite the African story from an Afro-optimist perspective. She considers the youth in the continent as undivided and as being intolerant of old habits of poor performance but very optimistic. Though she tries to portray a positive picture of Africa, she reinforces what some of the experts on the topic of unemployment have concluded. She refers to the state of the youth in Africa as that in "Waithood" whereby they wait for their time to shine economically and politically giving rise to a lot of resentment and despair amongst them.

The literature review done by Resnick and Casale (2011) reveals that scholars have devoted most of their time on how the voter turn among the youth hence concentrating more on the institutionalized participation of the youth in strengthening democracy. Therefore more reason for this research to find out what the youths really do apart from voting. Evidence from these studies suggests that voter turnout amongst the youth is low as compared to the older generation. Resnick and Casale (2011) reinforces these finding by claiming that the youth in Africa, like other parts of the world, are less interested in voting. Unemployment and social-economic deprivation have been named as among the most highly relevant factors that make the youth participate in politics. The research claims that this trend is not likely to change in future. The study in the end questions the legitimacy of electoral processes as the best way of addressing the youth issues considering the manner in which youth participate. Resnick and Casale (2011) also observes that nationalist leaders through history have been seen to rely on the youth to legitimate their regime.

Additional evidence from Resnick and Casale (2011) suggests that youth compared to their older counterparts are less likely to practice partisan attachments in politics. In addition to this kind of participation the youth are also seen to be involved in collective action, protests and other forms of informal participation like attending community meetings and contacting their local political/party representative (ibid). In matters of age and politics, national leadership is mostly in the hands of the older generation. This contrasts with the fact that the African population has been considered as being youthful. States representatives have been recycled over and over again in every election.

In the afro-barometer study done in 19 countries in Africa, only three presidents were younger than 60 years (Resnick, 2010). Examples that still puzzle many is President Yoweri Museveni who has been in power since 1986, Robert Mugabe who has been in power since the 1980s and has done his level best to prevent Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, who is also past sixty, from ascending to power. In the Kenyan context, elections held in 2007 saw Mwai Kibaki (76 years) assume presidency against Raila Odinga, who was then (62 years). The above political leaders show a generational disconnect between the median age of the populations in Africa and the age of its leaders. Such developments have been made on the assumptions in most African cultures that with age comes wisdom.

This generational gap between the youths and its representatives is one of the identified factors for youth's display of disinterest in participation in democracies. Mwangola (2013) observes that the modern youth have no personal engagement with what happened during colonialism. Likewise Olopade (2014) argues that the story of colonialism is not what is important in today's youthful population. Instead, she depicted a picture of the youth in today's society as remarkably creative and entrepreneurial and risk takers despite the socio-economic challenges they face in the African settings. A dire question to ask is whether the creativity of the youths amounts to effective political participation in matters that affect them.

On the gender perspective, Abbink (2005) argues that the definition of the term youth includes male and female. He emphasizes the importance of gender considerations while undertaking studies of youth participation in strengthening democracies. He claims that most of the studies on youth and their role in democracies consider the gender dimension as a second information on policies that affect the youth and in empirical studies that look at their role in Africa.

However, statistically male youths are more active in politics compared to their female counterparts. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the fact females face the same problems, or maybe even more, in seeking to participate in political democracy (ibid). This study has identified a research gap in relation to understanding gender and the youth in matters of politics.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 YOUTH AND DEMOCRACY IN KENYA

The Kenyan Context: Historical perspective of Youth Participation in Democracy:

Just as in many other African countries, the Kenyan youths have historically played a significant role that can never be ignored in forming the Kenyan democracy. This literature review section sought to understand the role the Kenyan youths in the development of democracy within their country. To realize this objective, the researcher adopted case study approach to studying Kenya's historical event before, during and after colonisation and experiences across time including the analysis of themes and trends that arise as a result of looking at the democratisation process. Most of these experiences that are discussed below have impacted the role of the youth in the present years.

4.1 Pre-colonial Societies and the Colonial Era

Many scholars who have explored Kenya's history are in agreement that indigenous practices of the generational principles in its political systems has shaped to a great deal the position the youths hold in country's post-colonial state. The principles of democratic governance governed these societies. Every section and group in the Kenya's pre-colonial societies had a role to play. These roles were clearly divided into all groups in society: Childhood, youth, adulthood and elderly (Mwangola, 2013).

There was a general concern about the concept of democracy in the traditional societies. They understood democracy as a form of government that allowed the good of the community to prevail. Democracy constituted acting for the common good of all regardless of position in society and also entailed the respect of common values of the community. Mwangola (2013) highlights an example of the Kikuyu community of central Kenya where a set of new leaders were chosen every a quarter century. These leaders had to undergo rites of passage from a very young age. The youth were also represented at senior levels of governments. Such youth representatives ensured that the interests of young people were well upheld. The youths had their social rights and obligations that had to be enforced. They were also prepared for the responsibility of leadership that they would assume in adulthood, through supervised performance (ibid).

These youth had to prove to the society that they were responsible enough to be entrusted with various responsibilities. Their readiness to transit to adulthood and positions of leadership were depicted through the display of loyalty to the legitimate authority and by showing that they could protect and nurture their communities. Another marker of their readiness for transition was demonstrated a sense of responsibility, where one would perform necessary societal tasks without awaiting directives from members of the community. This included both young male and female members of the society but having differentiated roles. Elders had a moral obligation to ensure that the different groups and persons coexist peacefully. They acted as arbitrators in addressing emerging problems and differences between societal members (ibid). In such settings, the interests of the larger society superseded individual interests. According to Mwangola (2013), such systems of governance prevented misuse of power or too much accumulation of power by an individual.

In addition to the pre-colonial practices, the colonial rule played an important role in making and nurturing of Kenya's youth political tradition. Authors like Kagwanja (2005b) and Mwangola (2013) postulate that the colonial systems played a great role in creating the tensions that exist between the youths and the elderly people to date. The youths were actively involved in fighting against the British colonial rule and its policies that were largely discriminative. The colonial rulers were greatly dissatisfied about the Kenyan youth who were seen to pay their allegiance to the ethnic and racial identities depending on what they sought to achieve both for the country and for their individual needs. Educated youths in urban settings started to push for reforms in the 1920s. This happened through some ethnic-based organizations such as Young Kavirondo Association (YKA) among the Luos, Young Kikuyu Association (YKA) and the Young Nyika Association (YNA) (all formed in the 1920s).

These ethnic groups worked together for the release of some of the freedom fighters that had been detained by the British rulers. The youth were, therefore, instrumental in the fighting for the country's independence enjoyed today (Mwangola 2013). Kenyans, regardless of age, desired to be equally included in the governance of the country. According to Mwangola (2013), the struggle was for a worthy cause. He notes that that a weakness among the youths did not have any long-term goals for what they really wanted to achieve. Kenyans, during colonization, had negligible influence on policy in political Forums like the legislative council (Legco)(ibid).

The political structures that governed the youth in the pre-colonial societies were no longer relevant in the colonial government. Therefore the youths and other groups had to look for other forums to address issues like salaries and discrimination in all public services.

Kenyans got actively involved in the legislature in 1944 even though they had a minimal amount of representatives in the house. Legco was responsible for the development of leaders that inherited the government in 1963. A young Kenyan, Thomas Mboya, at the age of 22, was among first African to be elected as a representative to the Legco. The detention of some elderly political leaders paved the way for his political career. In a meeting held in the 1958, he was the actively involved in addressing some of the misconception about age and leadership in the African context whereby the old were seen to be the ones who should rightfully lead. When the older leaders saw the progress that young men like Tom Mboya were making and the causes they were fighting for they made it their objective to silence this crop of youth that was emerging (ibid).

4.2 Kenyatta's Era

Moving to the postcolonial state, the Kenya's general "democratic space" kept expanding. The country had made some steps towards establishment of democratic governance. The youth were always and have always been actively present in the transition from colonial rule. However, some political leaders were feeling threatened by such developments whereby the youth actively pursued leadership in the country. Young people who were politically active such as Tom Mboya had to be contained by the elderly politicians (Mwangola, 2007).

According to Mwangola (2007) generational conflict started to emerge immediately after independence because the youths were demanding their 'rightful' place in government and leaderships. This was caused by a feeling of being short-changed amongst the youths in political leadership, especially after all their efforts and sacrifices in fighting for the freedom of the country. One of the factors that have been attributed to the status the youth held politically was the inability for them to organize themselves into functional social movements that were youth-led since the colonial period. Elders argued that the youths were not rational and ripe enough to be offered leadership position. The status of youth in politics did not change even after all the milestones that had been made in terms of democratic achievements (ibid).

A major event in the political leadership of Kenya is that Jaramogi Oginga Odinga declined to take presidency before Jomo Kenyatta was released from prison. When Kenyatta was released from prison in 1963, he became president and made Jaramogi Oginga Odinga his vice president. The relationship between the two, however, did not last for long making Jaramogi a personality that is well remembered to be in opposition politics until he met his death in 1994 (Khamisi, 2011). After the fall out between Kenyatta and Oginga Odinga, the youths were organized to fight for state power both for the ruling party (Kenya African National Union [KANU]) and the opposition (Kenya African Democratic Union [KADU]). The ruling party and the opposition parties formed youth wings. The youth wings formed by KANU were majorly instruments of weakening the opposition while those formed by KADU sought to help the opposition get into power and protect their political interests. The elders who were in power did not want to transfer power to the juniors. Mwangola (2013) observes that the older generation used the 'seek and destroy' mission to get rid of any young individual who was actively involved in seeking a transfer of power to the younger generation. The president used his authoritarian rule to silence any person who was heard criticizing the government. The politics of exclusion came into play when the constitution was amended in 1968, which set the age limit to 35 years for anyone who wanted to vie for presidency. The reason given for these amendments was that young people below this age were immature and unable to lead the country (ibid).

The youths were looked at as agents of helping the other elder groups to actualize their purpose. Kenya became one party state in 1969 when Kenyatta's government banned the major political parties across the country. President Kenyatta rejected socialism that was mostly advocated by Oginga Odinga and favored liberalization and pro-western policies. Though the youths were identified as resourceful in the Jomo Kenyatta government, the government had practically done little to change the political and economic oppression faced by the youths as inherited from the colonial rulers (Kagwanja, 2005b).

KANU remained as the ruling party for almost four decades of Kenya's politics. British civil servants dominated jobs in the early years of independence. After the British left, the spirit of nationhood and Pan-Africanism, which had acted as the driving force to freedom fighting, disappeared. Kenyatta's government rewarded the Kikuyu elite and the politically compliant politicians with prime jobs in the civil service. His government also rewarded tokens of land to strengthen any alliances that he had formed (Khamisi, 2011)

Large pieces went to patrons and the elite from his ethnic group, thus his era as the President is well remembered for land grabbing. Such injustices strengthened ethno politics and patronage politics in the early postcolonial era (Khamisi, 2011).

These, among other factors, continued to strengthen negative ethnicity besides triggering a feeling of betrayal among the communities that did not get an opportunity to share in the “national cake” being distributed. Altruism was no longer a concern to the Kenyans that were in government even as corruption flourished. The youths were not into focus and the government propagated tribalism whereby the Kikuyu elite enjoyed preferential treatment in getting jobs, tenders and contracts. All these factors destroyed the country’s economy: a country that was initially at the same economic level with countries such as South Korea ended up 40 times behind due to corruption, nepotism and tribalism (ibid).

4.3 Moi’s Era

Following the sudden death of President Jomo Kenyatta in 1978, his then vice president, Daniel Moi, became the new President of the Republic of Kenya. Moi began well in his political career by showing a lot of enthusiasm in fighting corruption and tribalism when he felt that his political position was being threatened. Under his rule in 1982, the Constitution of Kenya was officially amended making Kenya a de facto one-party state whereby KANU was the only legal party until the 1990s. Moi is well remembered for the introduction of the "mlolongo" (queuing) system of voting in 1988. In this system, the voters made a queue behind the picture of their chosen candidate. This undemocratic system denied the voters secrecy in voting and made it easier for Moi's foot soldier to easily identify the disloyal voters (ibid). His leadership style was that of a dictator.

Most of the antagonist groups, led by young Kenyans in universities, trade unions and some religion institution fought against Moi's tyrannical system, some even losing their lives in the process. One of their desired changes was to revoke Section 2A of the 1982 Act that made Kenya a one-party state (Kagwanja, 2005b). Universities and other academic institutions became an arena for social movements. Their main goal was to achieve democratic reforms. Moi through repression and dictatorship refused a call for a referendum that called for political pluralism.

Leaders who were responsible for mobilizing the population for political pluralism had support from both the Urban and rural populations (ibid).

After much pressure internally and externally, Moi consented to a multiparty democracy, which saw the rebirth of multipartism. However, Moi still managed to manipulate the 1992 and 1997 general elections winning the two elections. The division among the opposition parties made it even easier for Moi to win the two elections. Moi followed the footsteps of Kenyatta with regards to favoring his own ethnic community by 'Kalenjinising' the civil service. At the same time, he was strategic and 'smart' enough to protect the economic interest of the Kikuyu's who were well established in businesses. This political behaviour reinforced more negative ethnicity, more corruption and patronage politics to the individuals that were politically correct in his eyes. . His era is well remembered for major scandals that deteriorated the economy of Kenya. Among them is the Goldenberg scandal. In addition, it is well remembered for the culture of patronage and violence by the different political parties where youth were the instruments of achieving the desired political ends by the elders. Up to date, no major culprits have been brought to book despite the fact that many commissions of inquiry and reports were formed and written respectively (Khamisi, 2011).

The re-introduction of a multiparty system in the 1990s saw no meaningful change in the position of youth in politics and power. Instead, the hegemony of old leaders became entrenched (Kagwanja, 2005a). Leaders in both the ruling party and the opposition were people who had been in the political scene since 1950s. Some of these leaders included President Moi, Mwai Kibaki, Kenneth Jindo Matiba and Raila Amollo Odinga were still controlling the country's politics and seeking leadership positions. These political personalities ended up dominating the political scene for the better part of Kenya's history. The elite who had strategically established themselves immediately after colonization majorly dominated the political scene. Most of these individuals are well educated (ibid). However, it cannot be ignored that these individuals had begun their political journey as youths and managed to reach those positions of national leadership. Some of these old leaders had to undergo much opposition, and they have also built their political carriers over time.

The youth, during this wave of Kenya's democracy, had to execute assignments that were given to them by the old counterparts and other instruments of power that were mostly party leaders.

Most of them acted as security agents to both to the ruling and opposing parties. These youth groups would perpetrate violence on behalf of their leaders (Kagwanja, 2005b)

Moi, who ruled through his one party system between 1982 and early 90s, used the youth wings as his “police”. Their duties were to dispense punishment to anyone who opposed the government directly and/or indirectly. Youth wings were well placed in local communities to follow up on what was taking place at locally. Among other duties, they were to follow up on any people who opposed the ruling power. The youth wings defended their master at all cost (Kagwanja, 2005b). They physically abused the opposition, violating human rights against individuals such as Matiba, who preached multipartism or anyone who seemed to "know much."

The scenario remained the same even after Kenya achieved multiparty systems. The re-introduction of multipartism did not just see the expansion of democratic systems but also witnessed resurrection of political parties and coalitions based on region and ethnic identities that had a strong element of individual control (Khamisi, 2011). Over the following ten years from 1991 a total of 160 political parties emerged. This number shot up to three-hundred in the subsequent years and would only reduce in 2008 after the Political Party Bill was passed. This Bill controlled the formation and registration of political parties. Prominent political parties were formed along tribal lines examples are DP led by Kibaki and primarily for Kikuyu , FORD that later split between FORD-Kenya led by Odinga and dominated by Luo and the communities that neighbored them such as Luhya and Kisii and FORD and Asili led by Kenneth Matiba and dominated by Kikuyu. The Kisii community later split from FORD-Kenya and formed FORD people under the leadership of Simion Nyachae (ibid). Although the era of coalitions seemed as if it was characterized by national cohesion in the eyes of the people, Khamisi (2011) notes that most of the political parties and the coalitions that came after were formed out of convenience and commitment to own interest as opposed to clear and conclusive ideologies.

The political parties and coalitions that arose were created based on the demands of the moment therefore having no long term goals. For example in the 1950s, the primary agenda for parties' formation was fighting for independence. In the 1960s, the main agendas were pluralism in politics and the protection of human rights and in 1980s through 1990s were fighting for multipartism and Moi's totalitarian rule. In 2007, the coalitions sought to remove Kibaki's administration for alleged favoritism of his community in economic development. After these coalitions attainment of their primary goal, or failure to, they did not hold for long. They went

back to the struggles return back to control of power and state resources (Khamisi, 2011 , Kagwanja 2005b, Mwangola,2013)

Therefore, Kenyan political parties are characterized as lacking national values and do not seek common good and common interests for Kenyans. Moreover, “such political parties lack constructive substance that would propel their members forward” (Khamisi 2011, pg. 32,)

The return of political pluralism in Kenya saw the formation and resurrection of many youthful private armies. These private armies replaced some youth wings that existed before. They had an obligation to protect the leaders of the different political parties. The political elites used ethnic-based militia groups. The main objective of these groups was to curb any efforts of any ethnic group supporting and uplifting democratic reforms. These armies were associated with some political leaders. An example of these youthful armies included the Jeshi la Mzee (associated with Fred Ngumo), Jeshi la Mbela (associated with Darius Mbela) and Jeshi la Embakasi (Army of Embakasi with David Mwenje). Some of the ethnic militia groups that were used by the ruling party included the Chinkorokoro (amongst the Kisii), Sungusungu (Kuria), Morans (Masaai) and the Mungiki (Kikuyu) (Mwangola, 2013). These groups committed gross abuses against community members in the name community policing, especially in the rural areas. A classic example of a group that exists up to date is the the Mungiki in Central Kenya. This group started with the objective of restoring Kikuyu culture and due to its politicization and manipulation of its grievances by politicians, it ended up as a criminal group which committed crimes such as forced women circumcision, forcing illegal taxations on people, and assassination of its opponents (Kagwanja, 2005a).

Youth wings were also used to fight for the interests of their respective parties and political leaders. Examples of such youth wings include the Youth for KANU in 1992 (YK 92), which was originally a lobby group. (Mwangola, 2013). Such youth groups constituted the educated youth whose main role was to persuade Kenyans to vote for their candidate of choice. YK 92 helped KANU rule through 2002 by dishing out cash to voters and doing community projects that would make members vote for KANU at the expense of the country’s economy. Such factors besides corruption and clientism ended up causing inflation that destroyed the economy (ibid).

Apart from such youth wings and private armies, there existed social and political activists in institutions of learning who had their own way of fighting for democratic reforms. They had their professors and teachers as political mentors.

Secondary school students and university students addressed societal problems through theatrical performances that were held in the national school festivals (Outa, 2004). However, the government of the day discouraged their efforts through banning plays characterized by political criticism. Such plays also saw some leaders and head of departments expelled or suspended by Vice-chancellors in the institutions of higher learning following the threats directed at such institution leaders for over-involvement in political issues (ibid).

4.4 Kibaki's Era

In 2002, Kenya experienced a momentous political change as President Moi was constitutionally barred from running for another term. By this time, most Kenyans were tired of Moi's repressive regime thus were willing to do anything to achieve new leadership that would do away with KANU and Moi. During campaigns slogans like "yote yawezekana bila Moi" (All is possible without Moi) became quite common from urban to rural areas. Moi, however, used another strategy that would safeguard his survival after his retirement by introducing what Kagwanja (2005b) refers to as "Project Uhuru". He introduced Uhuru Kenyatta as his successors. He largely used the Mungiki youth wing in his political activities, which also included campaigning for KANU. The son of the first president Uhuru Kenyatta (41 years old) was Moi's chosen successor who vied through the KANU ticket.

In seeking to have Uhuru occupy the top seat, Moi sought to exploit the generational discourse. He did this by changing strategy and making the election contest a generational contest rather than an ethnic-related contest. In his long rule of 24 years, Moi had taken advantage of Kenya's mix of ethnic tensions and to divide and rule (Kagwanja, 2005b). Uhuru Kenyatta was politically young compared to the other old competitors such as Mwai Kibaki (71), Raila Odinga (57), Martha Karua (45) and Moody Awori (75) who had forged a political alliance with the main goal of dislodging power from Moi. Most of the above persons had served in Moi's regime both in the government and as opposition. These politicians had learned from Moi's long administration that the only effective strategy to win Kenya's election was the formation of a coalition characterized by national cohesion (Kagwanja, 2005b). Moi had thought that the generational strategy would appeal to the public and more specifically to the youths, by showing them that he was now ready

for the generational transition of power. The KANU campaigns were dubbed "Kienzi Kipya Mwongozo Mpya" (New generation new leadership) (ibid).

Working towards frustrating Moi's efforts was a multiethnic coalition registered under the name National Alliance of Kenya (NAK), which managed to bring together Kenya's three largest tribes, Kikuyu, Luhya, and Luo. The coalition also brought on board several other ethnic groups such as Kamba from Eastern, Embu and Meru. NAK had representatives from the Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) led by Kibaki, National Party of Kenya (NPK) led by Charity Ngilu, Forum for Restoration of Democracy-Kenya (FORD- Kenya) led by the late Michael Kijana Wamalwa, and the FORD–People led by Simeon Nyachae (Khamisi, 2011; Kagwanja, 2005b).

In the early 2002, Moi sought to politically outdo Kibaki and Nyachae by rewarding some of the "political youngsters" with jobs. He appointed Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, who were sons of Kenya's first president and Kenya's first and strong opposition leaders respectively. In addition, he appointed some former leaders of the YK 92 like Cyrus Jirongo, William Ruto, and Julius Sunkuli into different leadership positions. He was trying to assure Kenyans that he is serious about handing out power to the "Uhuru generation". This witnessed the merger of KANU and the Luo based National development Party (NDP) that was led by Raila Odinga. This coalition did not last for long; things started falling apart when Moi named Uhuru Kenyatta as his successor, without consultation forcing the NPD members among other politicians eyeing for presidential seat to break camp (ibid). Those who broke away formed National Rainbow Coalition (NRC) which joined NAK in forming NARC.

NARC appointed Kibaki as the torchbearer and had youths actively campaigning for the coalition under the slogan "Kibaki Tosha." NARC's manifesto also focused to address challenges faced by different ethnic groups, thus immensely frustrating Moi's efforts. Among the main campaign promises that lured the youths in favor of NARC included creation of half a million jobs every year, Zero tolerance of corruption, a new constitution, and 'free primary education (Khamisi, 2011). NARC won the elections with a landslide victory of 62% against Uhuru Kenyatta who garnered 31 %, and Kibaki became the new President on October 2002 (Kagwanja, 2005b). Unfortunately, NARC did not use its advantage of having members of different ethnic groups to note is that bring an end to negative ethnicity that characterized Kenyan politics. Kenyans after

the 2002 general elections continued voting for political leaders along ethnic lines (Kagwanja, 2005b).

During his leadership period between 2002 and 2007, President Mwai Kibaki is well remembered for his political discourse of rewarding his old cronies with positions in government. The youths who had been actively involved in holding demonstrations, protests and campaigns to get the Kibaki government into power did not get a fair share for their effort. The NARC manifesto had during campaigns emphasized on prioritizing the youth agenda by creating jobs for the youth countrywide. Odhiambo (2010) noted that the Kibaki's administration ignored the youths in its endeavors. While young, educated and innovative youths watched, Kibaki gave lucrative positions and jobs to old and retired personalities most of who had bypassed the age of retirement (55 years). It was during his rule that the age of retirement was raised from 55 to 60 years to accommodate his allies into leadership positions, which greatly agitated the youths (ibid).

An example of such appointments that were also ethnic was that of Matere Keriri, Kibaki's schoolmate as the Comptroller of State house, Chris Murungaru, Kiraitu Murungi, David Mwiraria, Amos Kimunya, the late Njenga Karume (who had also served in Kenyatta's government), and the late John Michuki, most of whom were above fifty years, to occupy important positions in the government. All these individuals became influential ministers in Kibaki's first government. These were not only tribesmen but also old hardcore and rich business tycoons. He followed the trend of rewarding the Kikuyu, Embu, Meru elites, tribes that have been politically dubbed as GEMA from the central part of Kenya as it was in Jomo Kenyatta's government. He was therefore seen to not only extend the marginalization of the youths that was experienced in Moi's regime but also extending negative ethnicity.

Many were shocked by the appointment of the 34-year old Alfred Mutua as a government spokesman. Despite of him playing the card of ethnic politics, Kibaki is respected for having revived the Kenyan economy which had dwindled due to many years of mismanagements from plundering that happened in the Kenyatta and the Moi's regime (Khamisi, 2011). The Kenyan annual budget by 2002 was Ksh 117 billion, but Moi's government had accumulated Ksh 630 billion debt that was left for Kibaki's administration to deal with. Thus, Kibaki had such an uphill task in seeking to revive the economy (ibid).

The government initiated Kazi Kwa Vijana (jobs for youths) project following lots of complaints from the youths. The youth felt that excluded economically and politically. Youths were getting involved in criminal activities, corruption, and impunity as their only known ways of survival from many years of experience. Kibaki's government failed in its promise to fight corruption or even create half a million jobs every year for the youths.

The coalition did not last long due to what Khamisi (2011) refers to as the politics of betrayal. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between the political parties in the coalition was betrayed. Appointments of ministers and civil servants in the new government were not done in accordance with the agreement. NAK and LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) had agreed that the cabinet would comprise of eleven officials from each side to total to twenty-two officials. Contrary to the agreement, Fifteen out of twenty-five ministerial positions had gone to (NAK), eight to LDP and the rest to the small parties that were part of the coalition. Different members of the coalition experienced betrayal at many levels that created tension in the coalition. Major wrangles existed in the coalition for the five years that it was in power.

Kibaki's administration had promised Kenyans a new constitution that would change the history of injustices. One of the major events in Kenya's history is the Constitution referendum that happened in 2005. During the referendum, Raila joined along with KANU which had now become the main opposition party. Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya (ODM) campaigned for a 'No vote' to the proposed constitution, calling for the amendment of some sections of the constitution. Kibaki campaigned in favor of the referendum. The referendum failed as the government lost leading to the dissolution of the cabinet. President Kibaki appointed a new cabinet dropping out the LDP members. LDP and KANU now became of the major opposition parties. LDP was officially kicked out of the Kibaki government immediately after the referendum (ibid). In all these activities, the youths were main players, used in the referendum campaigns for both "Yes" and "No" votes (ibid)

In 2007, LDP, KANU, and other small parties decided to team up, form and register the Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya (ODM Kenya) as a party that they would use to run for forthcoming general elections. As the year progressed this new coalition proved to be unstable and in July 2007 KANU pulled out of the coalition, and Uhuru Kenyatta campaigned for the re-election of Kibaki for the second term.

Internal disagreement in the same party caused the split of the party whereby Kalonzo Musyoka and Raila Odinga split into two factions: Raila's group that constituted of William Ruto, Najib Balala, Joseph Nyaga and Musalia Mudavadi took over the ODM party that had been registered before while Kalonzo Musyoka's team remained with ODM-Kenya. The two factions had their own party elections that had their controversies. Raila Odinga emerged as the winning presidential candidate for the ODM party while Kalonzo won the party elections that made him the presidential candidate to run on the ODM-Kenya ticket (Khamisi, 2011).

These two candidates among others faced president Kibaki, who was now vying under the Party of National Unity (PNU), a coalition of several parties. The elections at this time were marked with a lot of negative ethnicity where the GEMA and Kisii's mostly supported Kibaki majorly because Simeon Nyachae of FORD-people was in PNU. Raila Odinga had incorporated a number of parties from different parts of Kenya giving him a large base of support from Luo community, Western Province (Luhya), Rift Valley province (Kalenjin) and coastal province. Kalonzo Musyoka got much support from his stronghold (Kamba people). The media and polls dubbed the election as a "two-man race" (between Kibaki and Raila). The elections were peaceful but upon the announcement of the winner by ECK, all hell broke loose. Kibaki was declared the winner and hurriedly sworn in as president despite the controversial and disputed contest of votes on both sides (ibid). Raila claimed that he had won the presidency. The international observers claimed that the elections were partially free and fair that vote rigging was reported from both sides. Kenyans, including the youths, who had gone to the polls in very large numbers to cast their vote, had the hope that institution like Electoral Board Commission (EBC) would strengthen democracy and address historical injustices. They were now angry and frustrated as their hope dwindled (Muhula, 2009).

With the announcements of the results, with Kibaki as president, widespread violence erupted in the country (Dagne, 2010). The youth were both the victims and perpetrators of violence. The youths were used by politicians to perpetrate violence while others became victims of physical, sexual and mental abuses. About 1,500 were lost and more than 600,000 people became displaced from their homes. The violence across the country was along ethnic lines. For examples, Kalenjins in Rift Valley sought to displace Kikuyus from the region they perceived as their tribal land (ibid).

Militia groups majorly composed of the youths such as Mungiki, Mombasa Republic Council (MRC), the Land Defense Force (LDF) of the Rift Valley and the Western province were on the frontline fighting for their tribesmen and seeking to displace persons from other tribes residing in their regions (Sana and Okoth, 2012; Muhula,2009). The violence ended with the intervention of external mediators which led to a power-sharing deal between Kibaki and Raila. The national coalition government lasted its full term between 2008 and 2013 though characterized by balkanization of negative ethnicity. The two principals worked together in giving Kenya a new constitution. They also sought to bring the country together through numerous tours across the country preaching "healing and reconciliation" (Khamisi, 2011).

The new constitution was seen as more favorable by youths for it sought to address their interests. Although the constitution is not very clear on how the implementations will practically work, Article 55 of the Constitution requires the undertaking of affirmative action by the government that will ensure that youths access relevant education, training, and employment. In addition, the government has to ensure that youths have platforms that will maximize their participation politically, socially and economically. Article 97(1) which envisions the participation of youth in the national assembly also provides for political parties to nominate twelve members that will represent special interest including those of the youths. Article 98 provides for having two youth representatives both male and female and the youth representation at the county assemblies having been described in Article 177(c). All these inclusions in the new constitution were steps forward for the Kenyan youths in hoping for better days in relation to their participation in the country's political system (The Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

In 2011, a new elections regulatory board, the Independent Electoral, and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) was formed in accordance with the provisions of the new constitution hoping to address political injustices during elections. Moreover, the new constitution provided for a devolved government while still maintaining a unitary government at the national level. Counties would autonomously have power to execute some distinct functions (Khamisi, 2011).

4.5 Power to Uhuru

Kibaki was constitutionally barred to contest for presidency in 2013. This is because he had already served for two terms, which is the maximum time provided by the new constitution. The elections were anticipated to be complex because Kenya was adopting devolution of power and resources to the local governments. Kenyans were voting for the President and the Deputy President, Senators, Governors, County Representatives, Women Representatives and Members of Parliament. Among the candidates contesting for the presidential candidacy was TNA's Uhuru Kenyatta, who formed Jubilee Coalition with his running mate as William Ruto. These two were facing trial in the International Criminal Court (ICC) for alleged participation in the 2007/2008 post-election violence (ICG, 2013). Other parties in Jubilee Coalition were William Ruto's United Republican Party (URP), Charity Ngilu's National Rainbow Coalition Party (NRC) and Najib Balala of the Republican Congress Party (RCP).

Also vying for Presidential office was Raila Odinga under Coalition for Reform and Democracy (CORD). CORD is a coalition of 14 political parties, including Kalonzo's Wiper Democratic Party and Wetangula's FORD-Kenya (EU, 2013). Other Presidential Candidates included Martha Karua under NARC Kenya, Musalia Mudavadi under Amani coalition, Peter Kenneth under Eagle coalition, Mohamed Abduba Dida of Alliance for Real Change (ARC), Paul Muite of SAFINA and Ole Kiyapi under Restore and Build Kenya (RBK). The elections also turned out to be a two-man race between two members of Kenya's political dynasty (Kenya's first president son, Uhuru Kenyatta and the son of Kenya's major opposition personality in the politics of Kenya, Raila Odinga). Though the two major camps denied using ethnic identities in luring votes, statistics indicate otherwise. However, both coalitions sought to appeal to the youths by the inclusion of the youth agendas in their respective manifestos (ibid). The campaigns were characterized by peace messages with a reflection of 2007/2008 post-election violence.

For the first time in the history of the country, Kenya held a presidential debate that was broadcasted in all local TV station where the candidates had to present themselves and the major highlights of their manifestos. Though some of the leaders used ethnicity to mobilize voters in their campaigns, none of the leaders used ethnicity to sell their ideologies in this debate. The campaigns were characterized by youth agendas and appeals.

Uhuru referred to his coalition as the digital coalition (youthful in nature) while referring to competitors as analog (old school), a message that resonated well with some youths. Politicians used all tactics to link with the youths such as the current Nairobi Senator Mike Mbuvi who would dress like a youth in seeking to associate with them, Peter Kenneth used a youthful slogan “Tunawesmake” (We can make it) referring to young people, and Nairobi women Representative used a youthful slogan “Manzi wa Nairobi” all in the efforts to sell themselves to the youthful voters (Gathigah, 2013).

During and after voting Kenyans including the youth experienced a tense moment. The voter turnout was the highest ever recorded in Kenya’s history (ibid). Ngunyi (2013) a renowned political scientist had a hypothesis on the Tyranny of numbers that was majorly based on the fact that Kenyans vote as ethnic blocs. It explained that Uhuru had a larger numerical advantage compared to the other presidential candidates especially Raila by using the ethnic logic of the registered voters. He claimed that the elections had already been won after the registration of voters was over. Uhuru had support from the GEMA and the Kalenjins giving Uhuru a large ethnic numerical advantage as compared to Raila who had lesser votes from the Luo, Kamba, Turkana and the Luhya votes, which were already divided due to a Luhya presidential candidate, Musalia Mudavadi. The other communities had swing votes, which could fall on any of the major parties depending largely on where their patrons would pledge allegiance (Ngunyi, 2013). IEBC showed a lack of preparedness especially with the new digital biometric systems.

Kenya held its general elections on March 4th, 2013 and after the tallying and many days of waiting, Uhuru Kenyatta was declared the winner. Kenyans voted as ethnic blocs as Ngunyi (2013) had foreseen. Uhuru Kenyatta won by a thin margin of victory, which shattered Raila’s hope for a runoff. Raila challenged the integrity of the elections in the Supreme Court claiming that the elections were rigged. After the supreme court had announced the unfavorable ruling results of CORDs petition, violence erupted in CORDs strongholds including Kisumu where hundreds of youth rioted, in coast province riots were observed in different areas in the country

where youth vented their anger towards authorities like police station and placing roadblocks, some were engaged in throwing stones while still others cried on media over the court's ruling (TCC, 2013).

4.6 Literature Review Conclusion

The purpose of this literature review (Chapters 3 and 4) was to examine the trending themes in relation to democracy and governance hence helping the readers have a better understanding of the divergent aspects at a general level and specifically in the Kenyan context. This comprehensive literature review has outlined definitions and critical discussions on democracy, governance and the politics. The role of the youths in African democracies and their historical role specifically in the Kenya were also reviewed. This was done by reviewing other relevant themes like political leadership and ethnicity. The content of the literature review will, therefore, act as a guide in seeking to understand the political position the Kenyan youth hold now. The observations from the two review sections will play an important role in the interpretation of this study's findings.

The rest of the thesis, therefore, aims at expanding the analytical framework by exploring the arenas that will look at the political behavior of the youths in light of some elements of democracy that have been discussed above. It will go beyond voting as a measure of participation, to how the youths are involved in the country's political system after elections and their relationships with their elected leaders hence aiming to give a holistic picture of the youths' engagement and their relationship with their leaders. Evident in the exploration of the literature is the literature gap as far as youths' engagement in civic participation after an election, therefore, a need for more research in this area.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS I: YOUTH PERCEPTIONS & VOTING PATTERNS

The following chapter starts with providing the characteristics of the respondents and their settings. After that, the results and findings of how the youth perceive democracy, governance and politics will be presented followed by subsequent analysis/discussions in each section. The presentation of the findings and the discussion will use the same order used when stating the objectives in an endeavor to respond to the study's objectives and the research question

5.1 Characteristics of respondents

5.1.1 Gender and age

All the respondents were Kenyans, 58% of them being male and 42% female. Apart from some of the key respondents, the rest of the participants were aged between 18 and 35 years old, with 52% being in the age bracket of between 18 and 25 years, 23% falling in the age bracket of between 26 and 30 years and 25% falling in the age bracket of between 31 and 35 years

Tribe	No of respondents	Gender
Luo	12	M—7 F—5
Kikuyu	10	M—6 F—4
Kisii	8	M—5 F—3
Kamba	7	M—4 F—3
Luhya	4	M—2 F—2
Kalenjin	3	M—2 F—1
Embu	1	F—1

Key: F—Female, M—Male

5.1.2 Education status

The level of education of the respondents varied with 51% having graduated from secondary schools especially in the slums settings and 33% were taking their tertiary education either at the university or in other institutions of higher learning. The rest of the respondents, 16%, had either attended only primary school or dropped out of secondary school altogether (see fig. below).

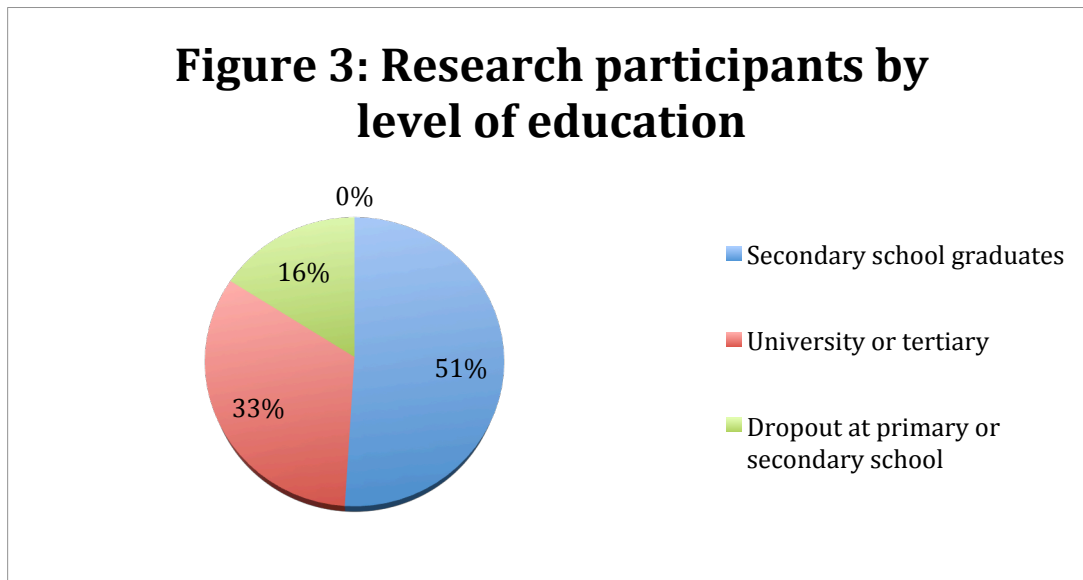


Figure 3. Research participates by education level

5.1.3 Employment and income

The vast majority of the youths that were interviewed in the slums were self-employed. A significant portion of the respondents was employed as casual laborers, especially in the informal sectors. The income sources of the respondents were diverse. The informality of their jobs classifies them into the category of the respondents who did not have a permanent or regular source of income. As from the information gathered from the interviews, it is evident that most of them struggle to meet their day-to-day basic needs and therefore having acute economic challenges. Some of the common occupations of the respondents included simple trade such as selling vegetables, porridge, shoe retailing, retail shops, selling water in the slums, tailoring, operating Mpesa shops, and riding “*boda boda*” (motorbikes). Majority of the respondents pursuing their tertiary education at the university or other institutions of higher learning were either unemployed or also involved small-scale businesses. In the slums only a few of the individuals interviewed were unemployed or without means of livelihood.

From the kind of means of livelihood that most of the respondents were involved in, their kind of income was majorly informal wages.

As for the social and economic conditions of the respondents, the contexts in which the slum dwellers lived were characterized by poverty, insecurity, and poor infrastructure. The slum settlements and environmental conditions depicted health hazards. The settlements were not by any means heterogeneous. Some of the females interviewed were young single parents who had dropped from primary or secondary schools. Interviewed students at the University of Nairobi were in a modern, clean and protected environment. It is the researcher's opinion that the socio-economic conditions of the respondents are important to mention because they allows the reader to gain a deeper understanding of how context affects the perception of the youth on democracy, governance and the discussions that will follow in this research.

5.2 Youth perception of democracy, governance and politics in Kenya

This section explores the perception and conception of the youth on three major concepts, including: (I) Democracy, (II) Governance and (III) Politics. In seeking to obtain the perceptions of the respondents, the researcher ensured that she did not give any clue in regard to the components that have been considered important in the different researches that have been carried out on democracy.

5.2.1 Youth perception of democracy

The Researcher sought the youth's general understanding of the concept of democracy. According to their responses, the term democracy is primarily associated with the concept of freedom. A significant portion of the respondents quoted the classical definition of democracy, which is "rule by the people and for the people." However, the rest of the respondents basically saw democracy as associated to:

- Freedom of expression and association,
- Freedom of movement,
- Freedom to vote choice political leaders,
- Freedom to participate in government policies affecting their lives,
- Equity in accessibility and distribution of national resources,
- Equal opportunities to work and earn a decent living.

The first three components dominated most of the definitions. Other descriptions to democracy included:

- Rule by the majority,
- Democracy as peace,
- Democracy as empowerment of the youth by the different actors around them to help them become self sufficient by providing job and education opportunities.

A few of the respondents perceived democracy in the light of leadership whereby it is seen as a form of leadership that is an alternative to dictatorship. Many defined democracy as a form of leadership that tries to solve the problems citizens face in their day-to-day lives. Moreover, some of the youths mentioned that they mostly hear the term democracy during national elections' campaigns and right after votes have been tallied. The common phrase during this period is that "democracy is on trial" especially if political leaders suspect any form of electoral malpractices. Some of the participants' responses whose ideas seemed to be shared by the majority included:

"Democracy is all about enabling the people to contribute in the government affairs, direct or indirect" (Kikuyu male, 28 Kibera).

"I think democracy is what tries to help people. It is what tries to solve the problems that its citizens go through" (Luo female, 23 UON).

"Democracy to me is good leadership. Something that tries to bring about change" (Kamba Female, 30 Kibera).

"The way I see it, it's like freedom. You are free to do what you want and to support anyone without being victimized or hated on" (Luo male, 24 Mathare).

"Democracy is whereby the rule of majority does not infringe on the rights of minority" (A Social activist).

Although most of the respondents' conceptions on democracy could be majorly classified into the freedom and rights components aforementioned, the study revealed that a few of the youths had no words to define the concept. Some of the respondents showed disinterest, relating this concept to politics, which was not in their interest. Democracy to them was synonymous to involvement in politics, which they were not ready to engage in. These respondents lacked words to express their understanding of the concept.

This category of the respondents linked the term to history and political science that are selective subjects at the secondary and the university level giving this as a justification for not knowing what the term stands for.

From the definitions of democracy presented by the respondents, it can be concluded that youths in Kenya value their freedoms especially in relation to electing their leader and on issues of empowerment and accountability. Moreover, it is evident that youths have a positive perception of the concept of democracy. Interestingly, the youths were more concerned with individual freedoms that come with the democracy as opposed to freedom seen in the light of collective rights. Important to note is that the youth seem to be more concerned with their rights as provided for by the principles of democracy but seldom saw their responsibilities that come along with enjoying such rights.

5.2.2 *Youth perceptions of governance*

When asked what governance meant to them, majority of the participants associated governance to leadership and allocation of resources. To them, governance entails the role accorded to leaders by the citizenry to serve the nation. They saw this role is seen to be realized through effective management, control and distribution of resources, including human resources. Some youths perceived such roles as guided by the laws of the state, which gives leaders the mandate to exercise certain rights and privileges in relation to administrating their respective regions. Some of the youth mentioned equity as an important element of governance while others looked at governance in the light of devolution, which is Kenya's latest form of governance. This group viewed governance as the management of the activities of the county government. It was also related to development projects that follow after the election of their leaders. Representing majority of the responses on governance were the ideas from two youths below:

“Governance is the role that a specific group of persons have been given by the citizens so that they can be able to serve them” (Kisii male, 24 UON)

“The way we are governed by the people we have chosen to represent us (Luyha female, 22 Mathare).

On the relationship between democracy and governance most of the respondents felt that the two concepts were mutually exclusive, in that one cannot take place in the absence of the other. The youths argued that in order to have good governance the elements of democracy have to be in place. Most respondents also noted that the people in control of resources have to act in a democratic manner if resources are to trickle down to the citizenry. Some respondents felt that there is need for laws and legislations empowering the citizens to act democratically hence the importance of good governance. Another argument used by some of the youths is that bad governance undermines democracy while good governance promotes democracy.

The researcher also sought to examine the respondents' perceptions about democracy and governance in the Kenyan context whereby the question was whether Kenya is democratic or not. From the responses given, it is apparent that most youths do not see Kenya as a democratic country, attributing their responses to some specific themes that were recurrent in their discussions. These themes included the lack of genuine youth's incorporation in matters directly or indirectly affecting their lives, poor leadership and corruption, citing examples of mismanaged funds both at local and national level.

Associating democracy with freedom was seen as a vice by some youths. Such youths posited that some leaders have used the freedom of expression to speak against other communities or against other individuals, thus causing division in the country. In addition some youths saw Kenya as undemocratic because they believed that the leaders use government mercenaries to silence them if they dared express their opinions in relation to government malpractices and prevalent injustices both at the local and the national level. One of the most common examples cited in perceiving Kenya as undemocratic was electoral fraud in form of vote rigging.

An equally prominent theme among the youths in relation to democracy in Kenya is the perception of democracy as a privilege enjoyed only by the upper social classes some of who are also the political elites. The youths argued that democracy was only but a myth among the economically poor Kenyans. In addition, high level of corruption across various government offices was seen as the highest impediment to considering Kenya as a well functioning democracy. The youths argued that Kenyans with resources to bribe their way were the only people who seemed to enjoy "Kenya's type of democracy" whereby money talks.

The respondents also identified hereditary leadership as an aspect that shows a lack of democracy in Kenya. They mentioned some examples of key leaders in Kenya such as Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga and Musalia Mudavadi were seen as having risen to positions of power because of their familial association and their historical political positions.

Many respondents identified the concept of negative ethnicity as one of the reasons that make Kenya undemocratic. The interviewees cited numerous incidences of negative ethnicity, especially in relation to access and division of resources. Some of the representative responses aired on the question of Kenya and democracy include:

“It is a country where the leaders take the role of the big cats while the rest take the role of rats. You see, structures and strategies have been erected, where the rich are made richer and the poor made poorer” (Kalenjin Male, 25 UON).

“Politicians undermine rules of natural justice when they get in power” (Kikuyu female, 23 Dandora).

“In Kenya democracy is like insurance. Another legal way of getting oppressed. You just talk and talk no one is listening” (Kikuyu male, 30 Dandora).

“There are just a handful of people benefiting from it. We Kenyans operate from scandal to scandal with no answers at the end of the day” (Kalenjin female, 25 UON).

“They use the constitution against the weak when they get into power” (Kamba male, 28 from Dandora).

“I prefer the Moi’s government at least life was good then. Too much of this democracy is not good” (Luo male, 25 Kibera).

“You will always find me where a Kamba is, I am a Luo where Raila is, I am a Kikuyu where Uhuru is. Whether he has a case in ICC or not, I don’t mind because he is a Kikuyu. That is how we vote and that is not democracy, it is what we call tribal affairs” (Elder, 80).

The interviewed social activist who echoed the voice of most of the youths in regard to democracy in Kenya posited that Kenya does not qualify to be seen as a democratic state. Citing the example of the President's accusation in the ICC on issues of violation of human rights, he argued that Kenya cannot know democracy with such leadership in place. He noted that freedom of expression was often violated citing examples of bans on peaceful demonstrations. He also noted that the high levels of intolerance for individuals advocating for social justice in the country. Just like the interviewed youths, he cited corruption as a major impediment to democracy and also shared the sentiments of the youths that Kenyan elections were always characterized with malpractices.

However, a small group of the respondents felt like the country is partially democratic. This category noted that Kenya has made some steps forward and cannot be compared with some countries or with its past arguing that Kenya is still in the process of developing itself and that it had made baby steps in relation to the democratic achievements. Although its democracy cannot be considered as a fully developed democracy, these individuals were hopeful when they see the steps Kenya has made one of them being the multiparty elections held every five years and the fact that they get to choose the representatives of their choice. Some of the youths in this category noted:

"We are getting there, I was not born yet then, stories I hear, I don't think there was much democratic space until 1992 when we had multipartism. That is why I am hopeful. Technocrats and autocrats that are still in the system. They are still in the old way of doing things" (Kamba male, 33 UON).

"Kenya has democracy yes, but the leaders we elect are the ones that are undemocratic" (Kikuyu female, 22 Kibera).

It is apparent from the above observations that Kenyan youths are generally dissatisfied with the level of democracy in the country. While a majority felt that the country lacked democracy in various fronts, a handful of the respondents felt that the country was making progress towards good democratic processes. Comparing the general findings on the elements of democracy and the context specific discussions if Kenya is a democratic country, it can also be concluded that the youth view social, economic and political rights in the Kenyan democracy as being abstract to them.

The present democracy practiced in Kenya seems to maintain the hegemonic power of the political and the economic elites in the country hence living the youth with a feeling of marginalisation in different fronts. The above findings question the effectiveness of the elements of liberal democracy in Kenya whereby democracy the rule by and the good for the majority in the country.

5.2.3 *Youth perception of politics*

The concepts of democracy and politics, as seen from the above findings and discussion, seem to be intertwined. Therefore, it is hard to discuss democracy without the discussing politics that comes along with it. The relationship between these two terms can generally be looked at as politics as the exercise of power whereby the distribution of national resources play a key role while democracy is the context in which power is exercised (Lake and Rothchild, 1998). In this part, the researcher required the participants to describe how they perceive the concept of politics in the Kenyan context.

Some of the participants perceived the Kenyan politics as a battle for supremacy where political leaders from different political parties fight for power or seek to rise to the position of having a say in the national issues. Others perceived politics as activities practised by political parties and those in power, usually during campaigns and voting. Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that most youths have a negative attitude towards Kenyan politics. Most of the interviewed youths saw politics as "a dirty game", whereby the players only sought their interests. According to the youths, politics as in democracy are associated with a specific group of people i.e. the economically powerful who are mostly also the political elite. They described individuals who are active in political affairs as "sharp", well connected, learned and rich. Some other adjectives they used to describe political leaders were: cunning, unethical, immoral and hypocritical. Justifying their negative attitude towards politics and political leaders, the youth expressed an increase in political cynicism among politicians both at the local and at the national level.

Majority of the youths expressed 'hatred' for politics and all the activities that come with it. Some of the youth described the politics as characterised by corruption, discrimination, intimidation, negative ethnicity and violence.

Others thought of politics as breeding grounds for war, reflecting back to the post-election violence that was experienced in 2007/2008. Some of the comments used by youths to describe politics in Kenyan context include:

“When I hear the word politics, I get a headache and I lack morale. I think about the way we don’t have peace in Kenya...I relate politics to war” (Luyha male, 25 Kibera).

“It’s the way politicians play with the lives of the citizens...I relate it to bad things” (Kisii female, 29 Kibera).

“Mind game. They use what they know to manipulate what we don’t know and we end up backing them up” (Kikuyu, FGD, Kibera).

The research did not note any difference in description between male and females or as far as the level of education is concerned. When explaining these concepts the slum dwellers relate the concepts more to their local day-to-day experiences while those in higher institutions of learning referred majorly to national issues. While the youth in the slums were more concerned about their daily survival as important in their definition of democracy and governance, the youths in university were more concerned about their survival upon graduation in terms of securing employment. The above findings and discussion on youth perception on democracy, governance and politics seems to indicate that young people look at the freedoms and goods that come with the concepts of democracy, governance and politics as an aspiration for them. It has been observed that majority of the youths look at all these concepts as mutually exclusive.

5.3 Youth Participation in the Kenyan Democracy

Within countries categorized as democratic states, one of the most fundamental aspects of democracy is having a right to choose one’s representatives through the voting process.

The objective of this section of the study is to examine how young people participate in the process of voting their leaders, as well as the motivation behind their choice of candidates/political party. The section will also present the findings of the roles youths play during the pre-election, election time and post-election periods.

5.3.1 How Youths voted in 2013

In seeking to understand how the Kenyan youths participated in the 2013 general elections, the researcher's first interest was whether the youths participated in the voting process. From the findings, it was evident that majority of the respondents (39 out of 45) voted in the general elections (see fig below). A few of the respondents who had not participated in the voting processes gave their reasons for failure to participate.

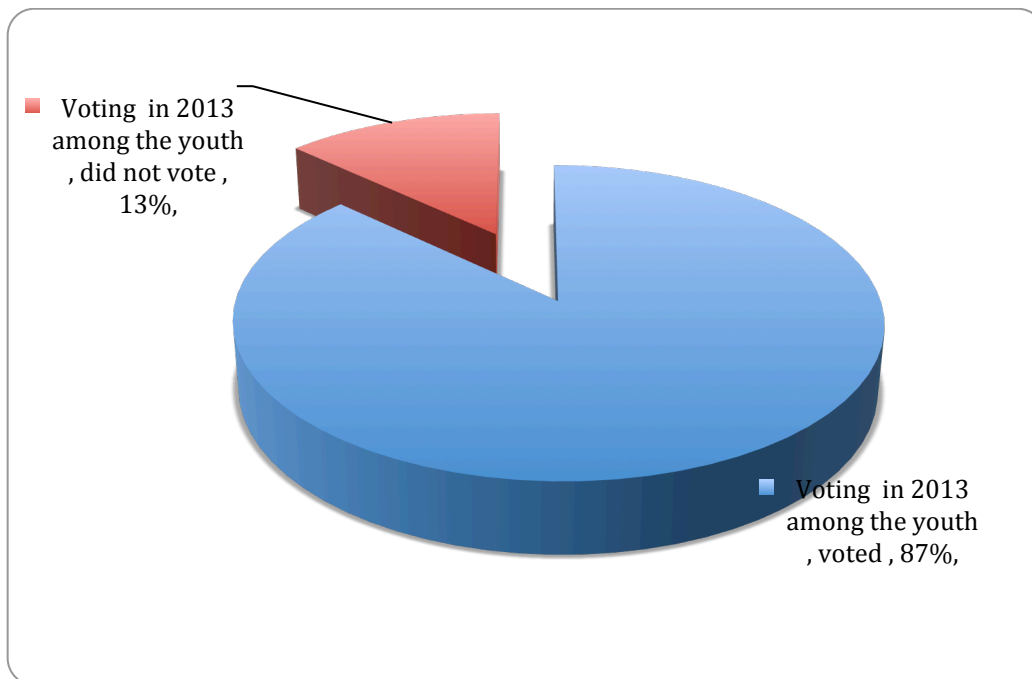


Figure 4. Voting in 2013 amongst the youth

The second question related to their perception of elections at the grassroots level and within the national platform. A significant proportion of the participants (66.6%) perceived elections as better than those held in 2007. Some believed that the voters were more informed about their rights compared to the previous elections. Majority of the youths posited that this time around they were more cautious about their actions before, during and after the elections. When asked to characterise the Kenyan elections in 2013, the youth had the following to say:

Credibility: A significant portion of the interviewed youths described the elections as fair while others described the whole process as one lacking credibility and accountability.

It was interesting to note that most of the youth who described the elections as fair were supporting the side that had won the 2013 elections.

Some youth described the election, the voting and the tallying of the results as a slightly fair process whereby transparency was the main concern. The youth who expressed their dissatisfaction with the results faulted the IEBC for the non-credibility. They expressed their mistrust to the whole electoral system, terming their activities as corrupt and partisan. The group of the youth doubting the credibility of the electoral body believed that electoral fraud is still rampant in Kenyan elections. Among other undemocratic practices, the youth observed that voter buying/bribery was a common practice especially in the slums.

Chaotic and tiresome: Most of the respondents in the study described the election period as chaotic. Cases of violence were reported in the slums. Some of the youths noted that the political parties nominated their flag bearers too late, creating uncertainties among the electorate. Another reason cited for the chaos was the massive failure of the biometric and electronic kits. In addition the youth also explained that it was challenging for them to vote, in that it was the first time that Kenya held six elections at the same time, due to the implementation of devolution as stipulated by the new constitution. This was given a code name of "the 6 piece suit" by the politicians. Most of the youth noted that there was misinformation on how one should vote thus causing confusion. The process was not only chaotic for the youth but also tiresome and time-consuming.

Lack of competition: The youth viewed the elections in Kenya as lacking competition in the sense that they saw the same old faces vying for electoral positions repetitively. Some of the youths noted that at the end of the day they knew the two most popular competitors were the two coalitions - Jubilee Alliance and CORD Coalition; therefore, terming the elections in Kenya as those run by two major "horses". They also mentioned the dominance of two major tribes in the Kenyan democracy (the Kikuyu and the Luo).

Fear: Majority of the youths (88%) residing in various slums were categorical that the elections were characterised by fear. Most of them described the 2007/2008 elections as grievous hence a causing fear in 2013. Some of the youths interviewed had either lost a home, a parent(s), a relative or a friend especially in Mathare, Korogocho and Kibera.

They were afraid that the extreme violence they experienced was going to reoccur due to the atmosphere that was experienced in 2007/ 2008. Apart from the fear of violence, some youth noted that there was coercion of voters in some of the polling stations.

Some youth narrated incidents where they were coerced or intimidated to vote for specific political parties by fellow youth in the neighbourhoods worked as top security. The rules of the secret ballot in such cases were not obeyed vote for a desired adding to the equation of electoral fraud experienced in the Kenyan democracy. This instilled fear in some of the youth.

Tribalism/Ethnic voting: There was a common understanding among the respondents that the Kenyan elections are majorly characterised by activities that are based on ethnic identities and affiliations. Majority of the youths (84.4%) observed that activities during the election period including the recruitment in political parties and voting took place on ethnic lines. Another factor that the youth mentioned supporting their observations is the fact that politicians used vernacular as they campaigned regardless of the fact that Nairobi, and particularly the slums are ethnically diverse. Vernacular was not only used to lock out people from other tribes from understanding what the politicians were talking about but also to incite the electorate and at times misinform and libel their opponents.

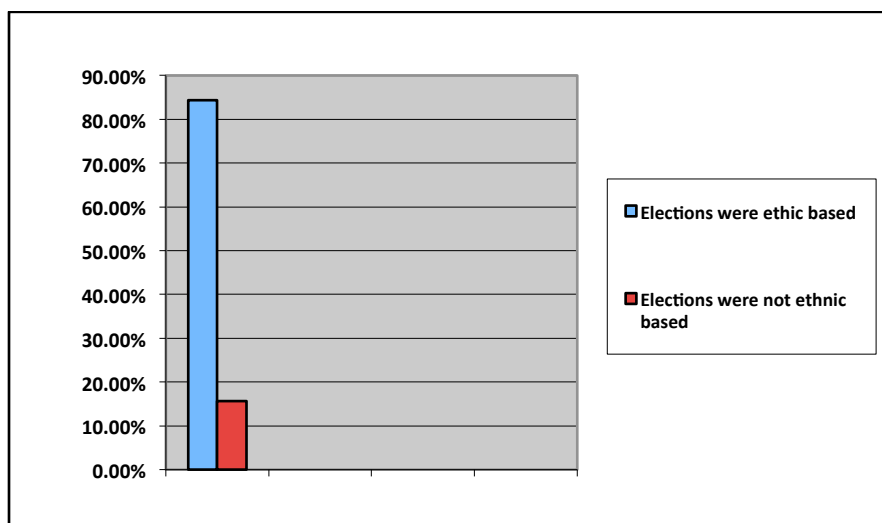


Figure 5. Election activities and ethnicity

5.3.2 Voting patterns and reasons for voting

Looking at the voting patterns of the youth that were interviewed it is clear that majority voted for either of the two dominant coalitions (Jubilee Alliance and the CORD coalition). Out of the 45 youths interviewed, only two did not want to disclose the political parties they voted for positing that the information was confidential. Since ethnicity in relation to voting was one of the essential components for the study, the researcher tabled the findings on the voting patterns

All the Luos except one (who voted for UDF) voted for CORD. The Kambas that were interviewed voted for different political parties (CORD [4], Jubilee Alliance [2] and KNC [1]). The same applied to Kisii, whom except 1 [KNC] voted for CORD. All the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin that were interviewed voted for the Jubilee Alliance. All the Luyha voted for CORD except one who voted for UDF. The voting patterns suggest that the youths voted based on their ethnic affiliations, cutting across gender, education background and the context (see table 3 below)

Table 2. Voting patterns among the youth

Political Party	Jubilee Alliance	CORD Coalition	KNC	UDF
Luo	0	11	0	1
Kikuyu	10	0	0	0
Kisii	0	7	1	0
Kamba	2	4	1	0
Luyha	0	3	0	1
Kalenjin	3	0	0	0
Embu	1	0	0	0

It can be concluded from the table above that youth voted on ethnic lines. The findings further indicate that voting among the youths mostly depended on which political alliance or coalition their ethnic patron was supporting. It was also observed that when they were asked which party they voted for, they mentioned specific parties under the coalitions instead of the name of the coalition further proving ethnic voting.

For example some of the youths that voted in the Jubilee coalition mentioned the political party that coincided with the party their ethnic representatives led i.e. a Kikuyu youth would say that he/she voted for TNA instead of the Jubilee coalition, same to a Kalenjin who would mention URP that is headed by William Ruto who is a Kalenjin as opposed to the umbrella coalition. An equally important observation from the findings is the fact that the youths voted for individual representatives rather than the political parties. Therefore, the youths consider political personalities as more important than the political parties during voting.

In making their decisions on the presidential candidate, the youths drew information from television, radio and speeches given during campaigns rallies held across the country. The socialization from home, places of worship, and from their peers also played a major role in disseminating information that influenced the voting decisions made by the youths. Out of 45 respondents, only 5 had read the manifestos of at least one coalition. The few who had read the manifestos had either read them in bits or the condensed versions.

Although it is evident from the findings above that the youths had voted along ethnic lines, the youths were reluctant to admit that their choice for party or candidates was ethnically influenced. It is the observation of the researcher that the youth gave the reasons below to be evasive in relation to the component of ethnicity and voting behaviour. In their endeavour to do so the youth gave the following reasons to why they voted in the first part of the discussion.

Civic duty/civic right. Some of the youth voted because they considered voting as part of the responsibility they have as citizens. Others considered voting as part of exercising their democratic right. Some others perceived voting as an opportunity to participate in being part of a decision on something or someone you believe in. Generally, the youth that voted argued that anyone who had not voted had no right to complain about bad governance. Some of the comments representing the general perception of the youths on voting included:

“I think it is wrong if you have achieved the age of voting and you don’t vote. It’s like you are in the grey area. You don’t know what is what” (Kamba male, 30 UON).

"You know when you don't vote and then others start saying that a specific person has been voted in, and I am not happy about it. I cannot complain. That one vote could make a difference" (Luo female, 24 UON).

Personalities and politics: The findings of the research show an increasing dominance of prominent personalities in the Kenyan electoral politics as opposed to party politics. When asked why they voted for the different representatives, some of the youth mentioned that they were attracted by the characteristics of political personalities in the various parties including their charisma and physique. Parties in the two major coalitions that the youth voted for were ODM, TNA, URP and Wiper. The participants identified some key personalities in each of the parties that appealed to them, including Raila in ODM, Uhuru in TNA, Ruto in URP and Kalonzo in Wiper. The choices the youth made for the presidential candidates also influenced the choices they made on the other five positions. Some youth mentioned misinformation by campaigner where they believed that they were supposed to vote for all the representatives in a coalition to suit the six-piece suit narrative. One of the reasons that they mentioned that influenced their decisions is the amplification of personalities by the media houses. The main personalities that the youth voted for or did not vote for evoked both positive and negative emotions among the youth hence influencing how they voted.

"I like the politics of Raila...Raila's perspective of looking at things and the way he talks that really attracts me" (Luo male, 26 Mathare).

"Most of the women voted Peter Kenneth because of the looks; he looks young and he is handsome. And you noticed most of them did not vote for is it Martha Karua they wanted this Peter Kenneth who looked brown and presentable" (Kikuyu female, FGD from Kibera).

Hope for fulfilled promises: Even when ethnicity seems to have significant in the voting behaviour of the youth, they on the other hand vote in their representatives with the hope for positive change where the need of a majority of the population is in focus. They are concerned about the fulfilment of election promises given by their parties of choice or by the representatives. Some of the youths who participated in the study were unemployed and therefore they voted hoping that the new government would create job opportunities for them.

Some other participants were concerned about the state of education claiming that the current system failed to prepare them well for the demands of the job market. Thus, they voted hoping that the government would address issues of education. Some women voted for TNA because of the promise of free maternal care. University students were concerned about what the future holds for them upon completion of their studies in relation to securing jobs. Some young men expressed their concerns about extrajudicial killings in the country by law enforcement agencies or general insecurity and thus voted for candidates that they believed would change the status quo. The following responses from the interviews clearly indicate hope for promises' fulfilment in the voting among the youths even when they are in doubt that change is going to happen:

“I voted with my eyes in the future but somehow (giggles) somehow, I don’t see the future” (Kikuyu male, 23 from Kibera).

“ODM would have promoted me and my business...the prices of food would have gone down. The issue of unemployment was the first priority for me as a youth. They had job creation as one of their promises” (Luo male, 25 from Mathare).

Desired change in leadership: The findings also revealed that some of the youths voted to bring change in the country’s leadership. For some of these youths, change in leadership referred to breaking the political dominance in terms of the ruling families or hereditary kind of leadership in the Kenyan politics. To some others, change meant doing away with individuals who had been involved in scandals and corrupt deals. This was mostly the case for youth who voted against the tide. Others looked at change along tribal lines, positing that real change would be having a president from a different ethnic group other than Kikuyu and Kalenjin who according to the youth have already had their opportunity to lead.

“You know there are families that have been in power I don't know since when, so I voted to break that dominance” (Luo male, 22 from Korogocho).

“I listened to the presidential debate and if you followed well, you heard that those people had sagas. You hear this person has stolen this you hear that Uhuru owns almost all the land in Kenya. So I analysed the whole debate and for me I voted for Peter Kenneth because he didn’t have any scandals” (Kikuyu male, FGD from Dandora).

Age and political experience: Age influenced the youths in their decision to vote. The different camps of the youth looked at the age perspective depending on the party they voted for. As for the youths who voted for Uhuru Kenyatta and Jubilee team noted that the country needed young, energetic men to take leadership. Thus, they voted to ensure that the elderly leaders would not win the elections. On the other hand, the ODM supporters posited that the reason for their voting was because they needed some experienced politicians in positions of power. These youth argued that Raila and his team were well experienced in Kenyan politics because they have been in politics for long therefore making him the best candidate because he knew exactly what needed to be done to bring about the desired change.

You know when you vote, you look at the age. You know ODM has (giggles)...Let's just say that I saw that Uhuru was down. He is too young; I, therefore, chose someone who is older because I think that their brains have matured enough... They call them (referring to Jubilee) the digital generation and leadership. You know we are not used to this digital kind of life. Everything is new” (Kisii female, 29 from Kibera).

“I voted for Jubilee because Uhuru and the other candidates in his team were young and vibrant” (Kikuyu male, 24 UON).

5.3.3 Reasons for not voting

One of the common justifications given for not voting was a conviction that none of the aspirants was worth casting a vote for. Another reason given for failure to vote was the negativity that surrounds Kenyan politics, particularly the campaigns and the elections. Those who fell into this category consider people in general and mostly politicians as cynical hence no motivation for voting for any of the candidates. The third reason cited for not voting is the conviction that the promises given by politicians during campaigns are unrealistic. Such youths looked at the politicians and political activities as political gimmicks to get them into or help them stay in power. Some of those who had voted in 2013 vowed never to vote again majorly because of the reasons shared by those who did not vote.

Other reasons given for not voting in the last elections included lack of identity and registrations cards and being busy with other personal activities. The researcher noted that although some of these youths had their I.D cards, they had not bothered to register as voters. Thus, they did not have voting cards and would not participate in the voting process. Some two youths who had not voted posited that their work was more important to them than voting because it is that job that put bread on their table. Thus, they would not afford to close it for voting.

5.3.4 *Why not the other six presidential candidates?*

The analysis has established that the youth predominantly voted for two prominent political parties. It further establishes that it was not only a political battle between the Kikuyu and the Luo but also between two prominent personalities i.e. between Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga.

In this part of the research the researcher was interested in knowing why they did not vote for the other six candidates while as a matter of fact the lineup of presidential candidates had three more Kikuyu candidates i.e. Peter Kenneth, Paul Kibugi Muite and Martha Karua the only female presidential candidate and two candidates from other ethnic groups i.e. Mohamed Abduba Dida from Wajir and James Ole Kiyapi a Masaai and Musalia Mudavadi a Luhya. This research opened up for the discussion of ethnicity in relation to voting.

One of the most common arguments employed by a significant portion of the respondents is that a person vying for a political office especially at the national level need to show that they have support at their home base. Although the youths would not directly refer to such kind of support as ethnically based, they argued that a presidential candidate must have the necessary support and approval from ethnic group before seeking the support of the rest of the communities across the country. Those who shared such thoughts believed that Uhuru and Raila had already managed to convince their people to support them before seeking the national support, an aspect that was lacking in the rest of the aspirants.

Secondly, the youths in all the four focus group discussions shared the sentiments of Ngunyi (2013)of the tyranny of numbers in the Kenyan politics. They stated that it is obvious that some Kenyan tribes have a higher population than others; hence managing to control Kenyan politics.

The youth explained that candidates from such tribes, who are favoured by the majority in their communities and a specific clique of political and economic cliques, are more likely to be accepted by the electorate. Any other competitor who vies for the same seat and is from the same tribe but not approved by the ethnic patrons of the different regions are perceived as an enemy of the ethnic group of the coalition. The Luo and Kikuyu tribes have the highest population in Kenya. These tribes supported Raila and Uhuru respectively. Attempts by other Kikuyu candidates such as Martha Karua, Peter Kenneth and Paul Muite to vie for presidency were therefore seen by their tribesmen as an attempt to divide the Kikuyu votes. Even though some candidates such as Peter Kenneth were seen as most preferred by the youths, due to his good development record, most young people could not vote in his favour because they knew that he had a low probability of winning the elections due to the lack of considerable support from the GEMA communities. Voting for him was therefore seen as a waste of vote.

In addition, some of the youths stated that the media played a very critical role in influencing them not to vote for the other six candidates. The media entirely focused on the "two horses" in the race, giving very little attention to the rest of the candidates. The media being the only channel through which they could evaluate the candidates did not give them enough opportunity to examine all the candidates without biases. Thus, majority of the participants were uninformed of what the other candidates had to offer and their ability to lead the country. Some of these candidates' campaigns were not covered or aired unlike Jubilee and CORD campaigns and rallies that received most of the attention of all the local channels. According to the youth, the financial capability plays a big role in Kenyan politics. They categorically stated that one's success depends on one's financial capability and whom she knows. Uhuru and Raila are relatively richer compared to the other candidates hence can penetrate the system to achieve their interests.

Furthermore, the respondents also supported their decision of not voting for the other aspirants the based on their evaluation of how active the candidates have been in the electoral cycle i.e. pre-election, election and post-election period. They hold the view that the other presidential candidates have a tendency of appearing during elections and disappear upon losing. In addition, some of the other candidates started campaigning too late towards the elections during the two main candidates continuously "campaigned throughout the five years" whether they are in government or the opposition. ODM and TNA campaigned thoroughly at the grassroots level using different methods that made them more visible to the electorate than the other candidates.

For them, the psychology of seeing is believing comes into play whereby seeing them around the election cycle make the youth develop confidence in these two candidates.

The youth also noted that their failure to vote for the other candidates was because they had gained little from the other presidential candidates taking the discussion back to voter bribery. They cited the Kenyan political culture where aspirants give money and other rewards to persuade the youths and the electorate at large to vote a specific party. Gifts like T-shirts, coats, hats and reflexive jackets with coalition logos made them more visible to the youths. This category of youths stated that the other six candidates were "unwilling" to dish out, thus they would not have voted for them. They claimed that in Kenya, one can only benefit from politicians during elections, after which they only mind about their selfish gains, therefore, those not willing to give out tokens were perceived as unattractive to the youth.

However, some of the youths gave very specific and personalized reasons for not voting for each of the candidates. Martha Karua was deemed as not ready for the presidential seat on the basis that she is a woman. The youth perceive women as soft and emotional characteristics that do not go well with Kenyan politics. This proves the inherent dominance of male in Kenyan politics and the attitude of even young people towards women in politics; the other presidential candidates were described as naive by some respondent hence deemed as not ready for the presidency.

5.4 Ethnicity and the rationale behind ethnic voting

Evidence from the literature review (see chapter 3 and 4) and Table 3 on how the youth voted show that ethnicity plays a big role in influencing the voting behaviour of the electorate in Kenya. This part of the research will therefore further analyse and evaluate the voting behaviour of youth in relation to ethnicity. Since the youth admitted at a general level that ethnicity is rife in Kenyan politics, the researcher asked the question at a personal level. To start the discussion the youth were asked either of the following questions:

- Do you think that ethnicity influenced your voting behaviour
- Do you consider yourself as tribal?

To note is that around 90% of the youths interviewed did not outrightly admit that they are tribal, even when all other findings indicate otherwise. Some justifications given to support the youths' denial included the argument that some participants, especially from university could not speak in their mother tongue. Others posited that the fact that they always have friends and neighbours from other ethnic groups is proof enough that they were not tribalistic. Most of them cited their upbringing, stating that they have been taught to love all people regardless of their different identities. Family socialization, in this case, played a significant role in how the youth think about people from different ethnic communities and the stereotypes and myths they hold of the different ethnic groups. The fact that they were least inclined to accept that ethnicity plays a role in influencing their voting behaviour shows that they relate ethnicity to negativity hence would not want to be associated with it directly. Surprisingly, many of these youths contradicted themselves in subsequent discussions by airing views and statements that were loaded with ethnic connotations, in responding to some questions or while giving their opinions.

As the discussions progressed, most of the youth became comfortable to talk about ethnicity and interesting to note is that they discussed it in a collective manner as in "We" as opposed to "I". This was especially the case where focus group discussions were held.

The findings on the question above confirm the findings of another study done by Archer (2009). Her research revealed that the older generation in Kenya are more likely to admit that they voted on tribal lines than the other age groups in society. This study also confirms the findings Koigi (2003) in his review of the literature on the language of the ordinary folks on the topic of ethnicity. The youth use the word tribalism in their everyday language to express what academics refer to as ethnicity. In addition, the research can conclude that the Kenyan youths present the term with a negative connotation, which confirms Ake's (1993) findings. His findings reveal that the word ethnicity/tribalism in Africa has always been presented as the cause of the many problems Africans go through. It is therefore not surprising that most of the youths dissociated themselves from being perceived as tribalistic.

As the youth present ethnicity as one of the major reasons for the political and the economic turmoil Kenya is going through, the discussion on the topic revealed that there are more underlying societal problems that have been camouflaged and presented in the name of ethnicity. It revealed that there were many underlying issues to the ethnic voting than just clientelistic practices As Ake (1993) argues; ethnicity arises to hide real political dynamics.

Therefore, he refutes the fact that ethnicity is inherently the problem. He further states that ethnicity and ethnic identities are used as a false face to hide real emancipatory struggle of a particular group of people who perceive political activities as oppressive, effective, disenfranchising and marginalizing. Therefore his view of ethnicity point goes beyond seeing ethnicity as the colour of the skin and physical characteristics to understanding it through the complex dialects of the social realities of the youth, in light of their context (ibid).

In this case, ethnicity has camouflaged social problems like corruption, nepotism, unemployment, insecurity, leadership, and integrity and the power relations between the leaders and the led. The section below will further present the findings and analyse the rationale for ethnic voting among the youth.

5.4. 1 Rationale behind ethnic voting.

One of the most simple reasons that the youth mentioned for voting on tribal lines is the fact that it naturally gives them joy, happiness and a sense of inherent pride when one that they supported, and, in this case, their ethnic patron, wins the elections. The youth feel a sense of belonging when they vote for their own. Another reason given by the youth for voting on ethnic lines is the fact that they perceived that everyone else was voting for their ethnic patron, hence following the trend by voting their own. For them, voting for a person who does not belong to their ethnic group or out of what their ethnic patron is supporting would earn them a title of betrayer, traitor or a sell out in their important social circles. One youth noted:

"Like me, where I stay the majority are Kikuyu. They (fellow Luo) abuse us, they call us stupid because I stay in a house that is owned by a Kikuyu, and they beat you up at times. They say that you are stupid and that you have been lorded over by Kikuyu. You know these days, people don't come and call you Linda they come and call you a Jaluo or am a Kikuyu, it's as if you do not have a name. You are referred to as thieves because you are a Kikuyu. As for the Luos, we are referred to as people you people who love to complain after losing elections unlike us who know how to win without delay, how would you feel? You will start asking who do they think we are (anger) then tribalism just starts like that." (Luo female, 22 Mathare)

Furthermore, the youth vote along ethnic lines in the belief that if one of their own is in power, especially the presidential and the parliamentary candidates, then they will benefit in one way or the other. The youth narrated their everyday experiences when they meet the state and local apparatus, therefore, making consequences of negative ethnicity a reality that matters to them. These experiences have made them to believe that the Kenyan political system is one of “winners take it all”, which means that if a person from a particular ethnic group assumes power, the entire ethnic group would be the most immediate benefactors from development projects and economic opportunities among other benefits that comes along with being position where an ethnic patron can control and “manage” resources.

"In Luo we say 'Tero ber dala' (Taking goodness or something good home) meaning that leadership is sweet when it is on your side. All the development that the leaders would bring will benefit us if not directly then indirectly" (Luo male, FGD Kibera).

The rationale for ethnic voting in terms of benefits cut two ways. Those who belonged to communities like the Luo, Kamba, Kisii and the Luhya noted that the reason as to why their communities were relatively backward in terms of development is because they had never had a sitting president from their respective ethnic groups. They carry the perception that the leaders serve their ethnic groups when they get into power hence want to have a taste of the honey pot. This group of youth purported that the Kikuyu and Kalenjin are more advanced because, for many years, men from their tribes had been occupying the highest seat in the country. They perceive a marginalisation of their communities from national development throughout history. Therefore, this group were more inclined to vote for their own to see if “*their time to eat the national cake would come*”.

While the ethnic communities mentioned above based their argument on historical and continued perceived marginalisation, the Kikuyu youth, on the other hand, had their own rationale for what the benefits they wanted to achieve by voting in their prominent ethnic king. Driven by fear, the Kikuyu youth voted with the hope of benefiting in terms of their security with physical safety being their priority. Those interviewed argued that they had focussed on their personal safety, that of their families and the security of their assets when they were voting. They not only voted for a Kikuyu president but also a candidate that was most likely to win.

Security was an important aspect to consider due to what they encountered in the post-election violence in 2007/2008. This category of youth felt that, even though, their ethnic community were also perpetrators of the post-election violence, their community was the primary target when the violence started. Therefore, they felt a responsibility to vote for the Jubilee coalition with a goal to safeguard their individual and collective need for security.

A 25-year-old Kikuyu student who studies at Maseno University in Nyanza narrated:

"I think, for me I do not know if I am tribal. I had some fear with regards to 2007 and now. At some point, I leant on my side because of the fear. You know I study in Kisumu and whatever they use to say I thought that we are finished. So due to that fear I don't know if am tribalistic. Maybe that fear, even if I really like Raila, I had said to myself, I either ultimately choose not to vote than vote for him. So that if he wins and in the process of this I die I would say that I never voted him in...For one, they were talking about chasing us from school, and they almost made sure that we would not be able to go and cast a vote or register for voting. We had to run away because they ensured that we have examinations that same week of registration. So that was an indication for us that if these guys get into power hehe! Things were going to be awful. They used to tell us openly if we get into power you will walk by foot from Kisumu to Nairobi. So I said let me lean on the other side because my vote will count."

Political propaganda and misinformation of the public during election period also played a significant role in influencing ethnic voting among youths in different ethnic groups. Some of the respondents in the discussions stated that during political campaigns, most of the contenders and their teams instilled positive emotion of hope and enthusiasm and a form of security about their political parties and their vision by raising fear and anxiety about their biggest opponents.

Among the Kikuyu, the misinformation was expressed in the light of the implementation of devolution whereby the CORD alliance convinced their followers that Jubilee had no plans to implement the new constitution having voted "No" to it during referendum. Individuals who believed in the devolution and who had voted in the favour of the constitution were easily swayed into voting against Uhuru and his camp because of such propaganda.

On the other hand, politicians seeking Kikuyu votes claimed that devolved system of government by any other person except by their own would lead to ethnic cleansing in the country and that the Kikuyus would be made to vacate from other counties or be killed. Such political propaganda made the Kikuyus living, working or studying outside the central province feel insecure and thus voted as a bloc to ensure that their ethnic patrons protect their rights as they implement devolution. Such propaganda were not only evident among Kikuyus and CORD supporters only, different fear and propaganda messages were used across the country by various political leaders in an endeavour to lure the voters in their favour. Repeated election propaganda over the years has ended up building upon, fear, hatred and mistrust and suspicion among different ethnic groups causing social polarization in Kenya.

Apart from the affective influence of pride, fear and revenge that have been discussed above, pure hatred or dislike for political personalities that were ethnic in nature also influenced some voting decisions. The hatred was driven by the fact that different ethnic groups did not trust the other dominant ethnic groups. In addition, their parents at home reinforced the hatred through misinformation and myths about the other communities. The youth claimed that the way their parents talk about the other communities and the leaders that come from those communities affected the way they view them hence influencing their voting behaviour.

Some of the youth mentioned that, in addition, there is intolerance among ethnic communities an affect that affect that influenced the voting behaviour. Some of the Kikuyus expressed their hatred for Raila's character, world view and his style of leadership while others expressed their hatred for the behaviour of most of the Luos during the pre-election and the election period. Among the behaviours that displeased the youth, especially the Kikuyu youth, was the fact that Raila's supporters especially from his community literally worship him, stating that his supporters don't think for themselves. They say that his Luo political supporters have elevated this behaviour to the extent of referring to him as "Baba" meaning "their father". These sentiments were not only expressed by the Kikuyu but also confirmed by youth from other ethnic communities, including the some Luo youth. The Kikuyu youth classified them in a class of people who wouldn't think beyond what Raila and the political leaders in his camp say.

Moreover, the Kikuyu youth noted that the behaviour of their Luo friends and colleagues summed with what they had seen on media right before elections did not only generate fear in them but also panic. For them, the way some Luo carried themselves in places of work and at school during the pre-election and election period depicted arrogance and pride that did not go well with most Kikuyu youth and they viewed them as violent and threatening to the stability of their ethnic group. The youth stated that they being threatened by some Luos by threatening of what will happen if Raila becomes the president. Since most of the Kikuyu are known to be entrepreneurs, some of the Luos threatened to take over businesses owned by the Kikuyu or not pay rent in rental houses that are mostly owned by the Kikuyu. The Kikuyu youth perceived their past and present behaviour as predictive of their future behaviour if a Luo becomes president hence voted in terms of ethnicity especially in Nairobi.

On the other hand, other tribes especially the Luo youth expressed not only hatred but also bitterness towards the Kikuyu. They stated that they generally mistrust Kikuyu with power. Stereotypes about the Kikuyu that they have been socialised in since childhood worsened their negative view towards the Kikuyu. Election propaganda summed up with the historical, political experiences o they have had in different instances made these other tribes believe that they are suffering because of the Kikuyu. This group feels that the Kikuyu see themselves superior to other tribes

Moreover, others in this group voted ethnically with a goal to change the “status quo” of what they explain as ‘being tired of being ruled by one tribe’. Therefore, they voted for the other side so as to see a change in the leadership in terms of ethnicity. By citing different historical events in Kenyan politics, the youth further justified their bitterness by narrating what has been happening in Kenya’s voting and political history. The bitterness was more pronounced among the Luo youth. They argued that since independence, Kenya has had four presidents, three of whom have been Kikuyus, and they still do not want to allow others to take office. In addition, they felt that the Kikuyu have always snatched the leadership from them by manipulating the electoral system so as they can stay in power.

Some of the youth went all the way back to when Kenya got its independence explaining the historical cleavages that make them dislike, hate and distrust the Kikuyu.

These youth believe that Jogo Kenyatta betrayed Jaramogi Odinga. Jaramogi, according to them, refused to accept presidency until Kenyatta, who was in prison, was released, after which Jaramogi agreed to Kenyatta becoming president only for enmity to arise between the two and Kenyatta ended up betraying Jaramogi.

According to the youth from other tribes, the Kikuyu refusing to support Raila in 2007 perpetrated the betrayal further hence characterising the Kikuyu as an ethnic group that is not good at returning political favours. With the examples above the youth in this category considered the Kikuyu as ingrates, disloyal and selfish when it comes to power. They looked at them as people who make a collective decision not to vote or give power to any other person apart from their own. Referring to 2007/2008 youth, the Kikuyu would do anything including vote rigging to maintain and achieve power because of the benefits of having control over national resources.

Their justification for their voting behaviour was not only to get the Kikuyu out of power but also to prove to Kikuyu that other tribes can also make it to the country's top seat of leadership. One of the youth noted:

"It's not our liking. You see like right now the people who are leading in Kenya are Kikuyus. There is something called honey and you know honey is sweet. So the Kikuyu discovered the sweetness of the honey, they have tasted the honey, and now they can accept even death in defence of the honey. Even us, we say like Luo or like the other tribes. So that's why we ask." "Why only the Kikuyu? The other tribes are like vultures; they are hungry. You know that someone who is hungry and a hungry person can do anything. That is why we fight. You know when we fight, the people who do not understand us would think, why do Luos just want Raila to become president? It is not like that. We all just want the leadership to move from a Waweru."(Luo, FGD, Kibera)

While the case presented above has mostly touched on the two dominant ethnic groups that are politically powerful and influential, it is important to mention that some youth questioned the status quo of the country that addressed the enmity and the hatred that is demonstrated between the Kikuyu and the Luo.

They questioned the two-man race as is in the Kenyan elections, questioning where this leaves the other tribes that are not influential political arena, Ethnicity has become a way of life for many, going beyond politics, to an extent that it majorly defines and informs how they settle in the slums, for example in you will find that in almost all the slums they have small villages dominated by specific tribes. In Kibera, for example, they have Kisumu Ndogo dominated by Luos are the majority, and Gatwekera dominated by Kikuyus and elder mentioned that they also have an area where the Kamba ethnic community is dominant.

5.4.2 *Who is to blame for negative ethnicity?*

After the discussion with the youth on ethnicity and reasons for ethnic voting, the youth think that ethnicity or what they refer to as tribalism is on the rise in Kenya. Most of them believe that negative ethnicity is not getting any better. Some youths argued that ethnicity is in the country to stay as there was no hope of it coming to an end in the near future which basically implied that there was no hope for any significant changes to the state of affairs. The respondents observed that some still hold on to the hate and bitterness even after the elections.

The youth have different opinions as to who is responsible for tribalism or negative ethnicity in the country. A majority of the youths who participated in the study either blamed Kenyan politicians for the prevalence of negative ethnicity and hatred among Kenyans. However, a group of youths blamed the Kenyans themselves for ethnicity in the country. Most of the blame was given to political leaders who use ethnic identities to instrumentally divide and rule Kenyan. They argued that politicians never care about the consequence of their words and actions in relation to dividing Kenyans as long as they benefit in the long run.

A segment of the respondents blamed Kikuyu and Luo communities for the prevalence of ethnicity in the country. Even though most of these youths voted for either of the two major coalitions, some of them posited that the Kikuyu and the Luo are the main reason for the political miseries Kenyans are going through. The last category of the youth stated that everyone was to be blamed for the developments experienced in the country. They argued that the leaders don't elect themselves. They are in most cases voluntarily elected by the same people who complain about their bad leadership. Thus, those who belonged to this school of thought argued that no one should complain about any suffering that they were experiencing in the hands of their political leaders.

After the discussions, above the youth were asked if they have any common problems they face in their settings. Unemployment was the most rampant while issues like insecurity, drug abuse and high levels of poverty, corruption, nepotism were also of great concern to the youth. When asked if dwelling on their ethnic identities has helped them able to address any of the issues that they mentioned above, all the youth were in agreement that tribalism has not been able to address any of the aforementioned problems. They came to the discovery that they suffer together regardless of which ethnic group they belong to. Most of those that live in the slum say that their lives have not changed despite the fact that they have elected their ethnic patrons a number of times.

"We all think of unemployment and all that stuff, but at the end of the day we believe that my tribe is the one that is best to help me. So at the end of it all, though we are suffering the same problems, we tend to look different ways instead of looking at the same way. So I believe that is what tears us apart." (Kikuyu Male, 28 Mathare)

5.4.3 Discussion

As illustrated by the findings presented above, most of the youth have to be pushed to accept that they are actors in the trends of ethnicity that is being experienced in the country. The analysis of the findings also shows the complexity that surround the voting behaviour of the youth in the light of ethnicity. They show the interplay of many factors that support the fact that ethnic identities are as a result of the complex social interaction. It shows that the understanding of ethnic voting goes beyond primordialism. In my analysis argue that the two other approaches to understanding ethnicity, i.e., instrumentalism and constructivist perspectives seem to intertwine in the explanation of the youth voting behaviour seen in the relationship between them and the political leaders. The analysis thus emphasises that ethnic identities and the differences that come with them are not inherently conflictual; a view shared both instrumentalists and constructivists.

I can conclude that the voting behavior and the political interaction on the basis of ethnicity described by the youth seem to satisfy the emotional and the psychological needs of the youth. The youth seem to be strategic in their voting whereby they safeguard their individual and collective needs. Their voting behavior seems to be guided by a lot of emotion, an affect that appeals to ethnicity. Their voting behavior can be seen to have been constructed and

reconstructed over the years through the youths' historical experiences, political experiences and myths. Their behavior had been shaped through intergroup and intragroup ethnic interactions over time and in the different spaces (Lake and Rothchild, 1998)

As the external advisor (UN) on youth issues noted: *“The Kenyan youth suffer the hangovers and the effects of bad democracy and bad governance.”*

Using Lake and Rothchild's (1998) analysis of ethnic identities I can conclude that the youth tend to overstate how good their ethnic groups are while at the same time maligning how other ethnic groups behave in the political arena. Most of the youth tend to blame members of other communities for their woes without using the same scale in the evaluation of their actions. Their political behaviour seems to be guided by a vicious cycle of information failures, emotion and fear and suspicion of other ethnic groups. One group and in this case comprising of the Luo, Luhya, Kamba and the Kisii explain their concerns in terms of perceive marginalisation through the unequal distribution scarce national resources in Kenya, the others group which is majorly Kikuyu have a collective fear for their physical safety due to the ethnic conflicts that they have experienced in their past. In the light of these fears, they seem to have used the rationale choice whereby they do the costs–benefit analysis of voting for their ethnic patrons vs. the cost-benefit analysis of voting for representatives who don't other campaign strategies other than ethnicity.

In addition, Koigi's (2003) discussion of negative ethnicity in Africa can also be used to analyse the behaviour and attitude portrayed by the Kenyan youths. It can be concluded that negative ethnicity has created philosophies and ideologies that have been entrenched deep in the minds of the youths. One such philosophy is whereby the youth in their ethnic cocoons believe that it is their time to eat and their time to rule.

It is also apparent that negative ethnicity has created "Us vs. Them" syndrome whose results have been disastrous both to the ethnic groups and the nation at large (Koigi 2003).The "us vs. them" syndrome is evident when the Kikuyu elite feels that they are dominant to the other communities and their community supports them in doing anything to protect the power they have gained. The other communities are guilty of the Anti- Kikuyu ideology, which as we have seen above, is built on stereotypes and a perception that all the Kikuyus, whether rich or poor, have benefited from having Kikuyusas presidents.

In addition, some of these communities believe that they are poor because the Kikuyus are rich (ibid). Moreover, it is understandable why the youth cling on their ethnic kings as their saviour in the belief that when they get into power, things will change for them as an ethnic group. Traditionally, power was concentrated in the state, and it is the state that had the primary responsibility of dividing the national resources. This was done based on ethnicity and loyalty to the head of state. Throughout Kenya's history, all groups and, in this case, the ethno-political elites always have through their political parties, fought to control the so-called "national cake" (Oloo, 2005). This then makes the anti-Kikuyuism ideology the reality of some other tribes.

However Koigi (2003) negates the fact that all or most of the ordinary Kikuyus or Kalenjin have benefited from having their own as presidents, some of them has suffered in the hands of their tribesmen. Therefore, ethnicity and power have not necessarily benefited ethnic communities. It can be concluded that dwelling on the ethnic identities and looking at them as inherently conflictual has killed the spirit of nationalism and patriotism among these young people shifting their focus from class-consciousness. I hold the opinion that Assuming that a particular political leader and a certain political party has a magic wand that will solve their problems as ethnic group is a fallacy to me because the battle for the resources and control mostly benefits the elite, the ordinary folks who, in this case are the youth, use the energy as they continue working as foot soldier in helping the elites in fighting for resources that do not benefit them collectively.

Analysing further on the effects of ethnic division, the ethnic groups end up creating ethnic kingdoms that in turn appoint ethnic kings that are continuously at war to access power and the control of national resources. This ends up creating weak individual ethnic kingdoms which comprise of Kenya's 41 tribes who are trying to fight the established Kikuyu kingdom not realising that this does not only create division but also a weak state, a consequence that has been overcrowded by focus on ethnic identities (Koigi, 2003).

Analytically political leaders in Kenya fit well in the title of political entrepreneurs as presented by Lake and Rothchild (1998). Their primary goal is to seek and maintain political power at all cost. These leaders have perfected the policy of divide and rule that has well been documented through Kenya's political history since colonization (see chapter 4). The policy is practiced with the aim of controlling the political behaviour of the people. These political entrepreneurs are found in all ethnic groups.

The findings on voting behaviour in terms of ethnicity show that these political entrepreneurs have mastered the fact that ethnic identities can be easily manipulated to mobilize masses. The primary strategy that is applied to mobilize the masses is the use of what Lake and Rothchild (1998) refer to as social polarization of the different ethnic groups. They polarize groups by reinforcing fear and insecurity hence continuing a vicious cycle where the groups are in constant suspicion of each other. Some ways in which they do so is through the misinforming the youth about the implementation of relevant policies and through vilify the opponent ethnic causing fear. In their bid to seek power, they capitalize on historical experiences, myths and the emotion of the youth to legitimize their objectives.

In totality, the analysis of the findings shows the effects of the over- politicization of ethnic identities and the social life in Kenya. One of the consequences is the distortion of critical public debates hence neglecting of the deeper societal problems like unemployment, insecurity and most class-consciousness.

5.5 Role of the youths in the election cycle

Analysis of the participation of the youth through the electoral cycle finds out that most of the youth especially in the slums are involved in different activities around the electoral cycle. During the pre – election period the youth in the slums seem to be more active than the campus students. Most of the students in campus seemed uninterested in even what is happening in student bodies in Campus while the youth in the slums seemed to actively participate mainly in the election period. Political parties mobilize the youth to campaign actively for them, especially the case in the slums. In addition, some youth especially the male in the slums, worked as security guards for the different political camps.

Among other roles, the youth protected politicians in their campaign trips while others ensured that the votes of the camps that they were working for are not rigged. On the Election Day, some of them voted while some of them had a role in persuading voters to vote for the camp that they were working for while others who worked in different gangs played the role of coercing and intimidating the electorate.

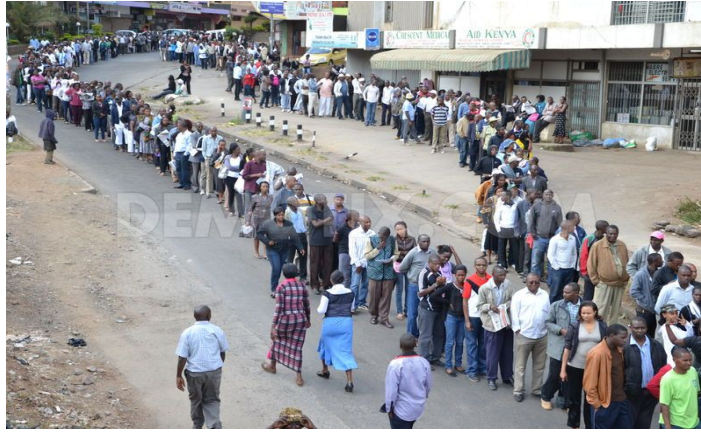


Image 1. Kenyans queuing to vote in 2013 elections

Notably, it was cheap to hire the youth to perform these duties due to their economic status and social status.

“Politicians cheat the youth with money as little as ksh50. They mostly cheat the youth just for that election period and then it's over. After that, you get that you were given kshs 100 and given 100 to vote for someone but your end up achieving nothing.”(Kikuyu, female FGD, Korogocho)

Additionally, some youth worked for electoral bodies where they assisted in the registration of voters and guiding people through the electoral process besides doing other tasks assigned to them as casual employees. The youth also worked for the IEBC in different positions including working as clerks at various polling stations. Moreover, the findings have established that the youth are also active partakers of voter bribes offered by the different camps. Blaming it on poverty and unemployment, the youth especially in the slums, outrightly stated that they follow where the money is. Some of the Kenyan youth during the recent election chose to act as peace ambassadors in light of what happened in 2007/2008. They chose to spread the message of peace through different methods like acting, songs and poetry. Some of them worked for organizations that were spreading the message of peace. Some of the Kenyan youth during the recent election chose to act as peace ambassadors in light of what happened in 2007/2008. They chose to spread the message of peace through different methods like acting, songs and poetry. Some of them worked for organizations that were spreading the message of peace.



Image 2. Kenyan youths spreading the message of peace during 2013 elections

While it is the truth that most of the youth become dormant in the five years before the next elections, it would be unjust to say that there are no youth that are sensitive to what happens in society. Some of them attend meetings in the locale that pertains what happens in their areas. Most of the youth mentioned that they attend meeting and forum that pertain security and development projects in their areas.

As the social activist that was interviewed noted, the classic methods of collective action have proven to be dangerous in Kenya. Some of youth have discovered other methods participation other than the classical methods. One way of participation is expressing the perceived social injustices through Music and art that consists of theatric performances and photography. An example of such a group is the Sarabi band from Mathare, a group of young people who engage politically through their music. Other youth, were actively involved in Kenyan politics through social media where they air their sentiments about different political.

Seemingly, the youth have chosen to follow a line that requires least resistance in addressing problems that affect them as opposed to fighting actively for what they believe in. As from the analysis above, it is my observation that the historical position that the youth have held over the years has changed insignificantly. Some of the youth seem to still hold the traditional role of foot soldiers while others just vote and wait for the next voting period. A notable change is the use of social media as a platform for political participation whose effectively to its contribution in building a strong Kenyan democracy need to be analyzed.

The findings on the youth inactivity after elections leave many questions on how the youth are incorporated in the electoral and governance process.

Chapter 6

6.0 Findings and discussions II: Youth, political parties and political leadership

Relationships are the building blocks of any society. This part of the research will present the findings and discussions about the relationship between the youths, political parties and their perception of political leaders. In addition it will discuss and analyse the barriers that hinder the youth in effectively participating in the Kenyan democracy based on the analysis of all the findings that have been discussed in this study.

6.1 Youths and political parties

In this section of the research the researcher sought to understand the kind of relationship that exists between the youth and the political parties they support. A majority of the respondents (43 out of 45 participants) were not members of the political parties they supported. Those who affirmed membership further observed that their membership was limited to having party membership cards but not actively involved in the activities of the political parties.

The participants in the study posited that during each election, they chose new political parties did not bother to follow up on the activities of the parties after that. When asked to identify specific ideologies that attracted them to the political parties they supported and voted for, the respondents had no clear or conclusive ideology upheld by the political parties. As mentioned earlier most of them did not read the manifesto hence had no concrete policies that they knew the political parties stood for. Those that answered this question gave more emphasis to the actions and ideologies of certain individuals in the parties as opposed to the political parties at large.

The youths mentioned that voting to them was more or less ceremonial where by they just registered to vote; they felt no sense of ownership or belonging to the political parties or their engagements. When asked why they were not members of any political party, they claimed that the political parties they supported were undemocratic in their operations and practices hence not appealing to them. Some of the youth narrated many incidences common during elections and party nominations that ignited their dislike for the political parties.

They perceive political parties as corrupt and lacking in honesty. The response below by one youth is a representation of majority of the interviewee's opinion as far as their relationship to political parties is involved:

"Corruption is everywhere in national elections, party nominations and the issuance of party certificates. IEBC works together with these political parties. Even in these political parties we support. You vote for someone through the secret ballot and you get shocked that this person did not win, and he was the most popular in the area and someone else who we have never seen in campaigns is given the certificate. The person who is well known to these big people in the political parties or the government. That's why we get angry..... that's why I hear most people say that they will not vote again... We are suppressed with the same ODM we vote for down here" (Luo male, 27 from Korogocho).

The respondents also stated that they do not understand the operations of Kenyan political parties. All the political parties were characterized as being majorly active during the election period, especially in campaigning. After elections, activities at the local branches go missing in action in the other stages of the electoral cycle.

This discussion thus took a different direction whereby the participants stopped singing passionately about their ethnic kings and patrons and their ability to save them from their day-to-day challenges to finding flaws in these political personalities and the political parties.

The youths further noted that the reason as to why they had not joined any political party as members is because the parties' majorly recruited members based on ethnicity, thus accusing them as major perpetrators of ethnic division. They argued that such parties lacked national values but had perfected the art of divide and rule. It is in this part of the discussion where class-consciousness started to manifest itself. Almost all the participants changed tone regardless of their ethnic identity. They expressed a sense of dissatisfaction with political parties in Kenya terming them as the main agents of spreading negative ethnicity. The youths perceived party politics as those run by the elite who are by nature corrupt and whose interest goes as far as their selfish desires are concerned.

The youths further noted there was a general lack of information on the operations and activities of political parties due to the lack of active and effective incorporation in the post elections. It was evident from such sentiments that the youths in Kenya vote for particular politicians irrespective of the parties they belonged to but not their respective political parties.

6.1.1 Discussion

The findings of this part of the study reveal a weak party structure in the Kenyan politics in terms of ideology and policies. Even though parties may be running on ideologies, it is evident that such ideologies are unknown by the majority of their followers and supporters. These parties' weaknesses are also demonstrated by how frequently they are formed and dissolved (see chapter 4 on Kenya's history). The arguments of the youths further seem to affirm that the parties are formed on basis of the interests of particular party leaders, convenient class lines and ethnicity, thus it is not strange that Kenyan youths just choose political parties only during elections times and thereafter dissociate themselves from their activities.

It is my observation that Kenyan political system is characterized by the formation and rebranding of political alliances whereby the same old ethnic patrons continue to dominate by hopping from one party to another based on their political, personal interest. Some of these leaders have been there since independence passing their mantle on to the individuals who were the youth in the 1980s while others groom their children and relatives to inherit the political positions they have held. The development since Kenya achieved multipartism in 1992 has shown a high frequency in which political parties have changed names and changed political camps. An important aspect to note is that political leaders and especially the party leaders have remained the same over the years. An example is Moi, who was a Member of Parliament in Baringo constituency for more than 24 years. Currently, the same seat is held by his son Gideon Moi. Another example is Kibaki, who served under Kenyatta and Moi's government as an MP for Othaya constituency and a vice president at some point in Moi's government. After Moi's regime, he became Kenya's 3rd president and served for two terms; after which his son was groomed to take over from him as the MP for Othaya but which he was defeated.

Such examples are endless in Kenya's political arena. One youth noted, "*It is the same forest but different monkeys*".

Though the political parties in Kenya carry names that suggest that they are the chief supporters of national values and national interests their practices, formation and recruitment from the findings above suggest otherwise examples of words that these parties use include hope, democratic movement, labour movement, “mzalendo” meaning patriot, restoration and change, national alliance (Oloo, 2005; Koigi 2013; Khamisi, 2011) From the narratives in the study it can be concluded that these parties and their structures are characterised by ethnocentrism, hereditary leadership and elitism. Ethnicity seems to have shifted the focus of the youth from such factors making them undermine the impact of such political parties and structures.

Oloo (2005) and Khamisi (2011) question the internal dynamics of these political parties and the level in which they create tolerance and trust in a multi-ethnic society as Kenya. These parties are filled with wrangles and most of them characterised by undemocratic processes. According to Oloo (2005), these political parties are owned by individuals whom he described as “standing above the rules and regulations of the party”. The internal wrangles and competition in the parties explains the high frequencies of break ups and defection to other camps. The description above, therefore, explains why it is not a wonder that a majority of the youths are not members of the political parties that they support. It is, therefore, not strange that these young countrymen do not understand the operations of these parties.

Another characteristic that Oloo (2005) points out is the fact that these political parties lack the ability to work together. This characteristic of political parties gains credence with my findings. It is true to say that the weakness of the political parties is manifested through the youth as the electorate. Oloo (2005) states that the political parties lack a clear vision and mission and clear ideologies and policy base. He further mentions that the manifestos of all the political parties are almost the same but written in a different language that explain the void in ideology base. These manifestos have elevated the promise, which the party itself doesn't know how they are going to be achieve. A good example of such a policy that is used in most manifesto is the issue of addressing youth unemployment. If the political parties in Kenya are not clear, organised and democratic in their operations how do we expect the electorate to know what the parties clearly stand for?

Further analysing political parties in terms of ethnicity and interest it can be concluded that most if not all political parties are formed to achieve personal interests in a tribal toga whereby their main motivation is to get into a position where they can control resources (Koigi, 2003).

These parties are formed on the basis of speculation done in terms of ethno-region historical voting patterns and political behaviour. The political entrepreneurs instrumentally focus on ethnic cleavages and manipulation tactics. Some of these tactics include blaming the problems Kenyans face on the non-functional systems that are no longer sensitive to class ideologies. An example is blaming common problems to specific communities (ibid). In turns, such tactics work to their advantage especially in terms of winning the political support of ordinary people. The youth in their various ethnic groups gets socialized into this political culture of blaming the other communities for the problems they face instead of blaming the right instances like the state.

The personalization of political parties summed with the lack of a committed party membership and parties whose primary motivation is built on survival have socialised a young electorate who do not understand what the parties they support or object stand for. Oloo (2005) notes that the ethnic cleavages as experienced in the country summed with the charismatic character of the party leaders in Kenya has wholly restricted the vibration of political parties to act in strengthening the Kenyan democracy in the right direction. Therefore, there is a need for a political parties that have a nation outlook and a positive political culture that internally supports free and fair party elections, constructive policy commitment, registration of membership so that one can encourage ownership into the party activities and accountability and openness in the activities of a party.

In my final analysis of the relationship between the youth and political parties, I would conclude that multipartism or competitive politics is not necessarily a marker of a functioning democracy. If multipartism does not promote coexistence and tolerance in multi-ethnic societies, then the elements of liberal democracy need to be reanalysed. Lack of well-functioning political parties is detrimental to the social and political capital in that these ethnic hegemonies created by the political parties, deny the ordinary youth a chance to look at other alternatives to leadership and politics than what they are used to (Oloo, 2005).

6.2 Trust and political leaders

As Khalid (2013) notes trust, and, in this case, political trust is one of the most important ingredients in the African democracies if Africans are going to establish responsive democracies and leadership. This part discusses and analyses the findings of how the youth perceive their leaders. Leadership in this study is looked at beyond the conventional view that focuses on the elite. I look at leadership as a power relation between the rulers and the ruled.

Attitude towards political leaders from the youth reveals a lot of negativity. In this section of the interview, ethnic identities did not seem to matter as in the discussion on ethnicity and voting. This part of the discussion presented a total contrasting picture of the leaders they were singing praises about. While a majority stated that they distrust politicians, some of the youth said that there are a minimal number of politicians that can be trusted.

The arguments in this section demonstrated an awakening of class-consciousness amongst the youth as opposed to ethnic consciousness as in the previous parts. The recycling of leaders through the electoral cycle and the rewarding political cronies after election stood out as among the reasons for youths distrusting politicians and Kenyan political system.

I can derive from my findings that trust towards politicians doesn't have any partisan dimension. For the youth, politicians are politicians whether they are from CORD, Jubilee or any other party. The respondents categorically describe politicians as people who will never change how they behave. Such sentiments seem to indicate a high level of mistrust towards politicians and political parties at all levels.

The youth pegged their opinions of trusts based on the values reliability, honesty and competence of political leaders. The respondents judged politicians by how they deliver their promises, serve the electorate and how they conduct themselves in public. It is unquestionable in relations to the findings of this research that there is a crisis in relation to trust not only towards politicians but also, as established before, among citizens. The level of trust is low such that the youth doubt the few leaders who deliver their promises. These performing leaders are suspiciously viewed because Kenyan youths doubt the genuineness of their activities.

The youths tend to think that such leaders try to work on their development record with the hope to gain political mileage. The reasons below explain in detail the reasons why the youth mistrust of political leaders.

Lack of integrity: Most youths involved in the study posited that they can never trust political leaders with doing what is in the interest of the nation at large. The youths do not trust Kenyan politicians to follow the code of ethics as provided in Chapter 6 of Kenya's constitution. They associated the leaders with negative traits such as lack personal integrity, unaccountability and indiscipline. In terms of integrity, some of the youths noted that a majority of Kenyan politicians have been involved in corrupt deals, scandals and criminal cases and activities.

A number of these youths cited the example of Uhuru and Ruto, who were accused in the ICC for violation of human rights but still could not be stopped from vying for Kenya's top leadership. Another example is the involvement of Kenyan political leaders criminal gangs such as the Mungiki. The youths in discussion forums further gave examples of numerous scandals raising the question of credibility in the eyes of Kenyan youths.

Some of the commonly mentioned scandals associated with politicians included the Goldenberg scandal, the Kisumu Molasses scandal, the Maize scandal, and numerous land scandals in Nairobi and other parts of Kenya. The youths perceived Kenyan politicians as evil individuals who are willing to do anything to maintain or gain positions of power. The narrations of the respondents linked their distrust of politicians to other institutions in society such as the police force, the courts, and the electoral system.

“They get into power with a mentality that I only have five years and if I don't eat as much as I can then I am done” (Kalenjin female, 18 UON).

“You know at times I look at them and I say to myself, they order for people to be killed, and you cannot talk out. My heart lost all interests. It's not my liking. I just don't feel them). They are on top, and they are untouchable. They are just good at throwing words to each other... there are some things they do you start asking yourself why you voted them in” (Kamba male, 28 UON).

Service delivery: Though the youths vote for political leader in hope that they will “serve them”, the youths noted that majority of them do not fulfil their election promises qualifying the politicians as dishonest in the eyes of the youth. The youths noted that it has become a vicious cycle whereby they elect leaders with the hope for positive change, but instead they notice no significant change. They view politicians as cynical individuals whose personal interest supersede their constitutional obligation to serve the nation. The youth question the politicians’ competence and desire to solving collective problems. They consider them as mere noisemakers whose primary concern are their salaries and the other benefits they draw from being in the advantaged position of controlling resources. They argued that the ethnic philosophy of “it is our time to eat as an ethnic group” that is mostly used during elections, changes to “it is my time to eat” when they get into power.

Some of the Kenyan youths question the effectiveness of the policies that these political leaders have in mind and their competence in the implementation of these policies. The youth mention that most projects and promises are too ambitious, and that information of the projects given selectively to them. Some mentioned that they did not know from where they are supposed to obtain relevant information about the projects. They stated that understanding the intentions of the political leaders is a daunting task because of their mischievous. In addition, some of them look at politicians as being ignorant and misinformed about what the youths really need. Some of the youths observed:

“Kenyan politicians are like a hungry eagle scrambling for meat but when they get satisfied they just relax comfortably. Even when you elect a good person when they get there they just think about themselves” (Kikuyu male, 27 Mathare).

“Most of them are just there for payment. You can even sit and look at how they discuss the issues in parliament most of them take up issues for their own interest. An example is the issue of salaries” (Kalenjin female, 25UON)

Absenteeism and anonymity: An additional reason that the youth gave to justify their lack of trust to the political leaders is that they perceive these leaders to be anonymous and distant to the people that elected them. In these discussions, the youth mentioned that politicians are active during campaigns to woo them for votes.

They give an impression of being so near to the people and very concerned about their problems during campaigns and elections. During this period political leaders dance together with the people, eat with them, shake hands, and buy them goods in the streets. Their telephone numbers are publicly available such that the people can readily access them. According to the youths, the story changes upon assuming office and they get all the power that they had desired. The politicians become inaccessible, and their offices become out of bound surrounded with heavily armed bodyguards. Some youths noted that they have to go through "agents" in their locale if they have anything they would desire to communicate with the leaders and only hope that the agent will take their grievances to the leader who may decide to act accordingly or ignore them altogether. Some of the youths look at the efforts to get their needs fulfilled as a rat race.

These politicians when you go to their offices right now you will never find them but during campaigns they will walk through this same road by foot even when it is muddy. I have eaten bananas bought by politicians when they pass by during campaigns. That one-day that he wants votes is the day we will eat bananas but the next day you won't see them" (Luyha female, 20 Kibera).

6.2.1 Discussion

The above finding shows that that the relationship between the youths and the political leaders is full of distrust based on the things they have seen and experienced. From their perceptions, it can be concluded that there is a leadership vacuum. Political leaders seem to have the wrong motivation to join politics hence a lack the passion for serving the people. Analysing the effects of a non-responsive leadership, I will use Khalids (2013). Khalid states that a non-responsive leadership reinforces the economy of affection whereby the youth and the electoral at large immediately pledge loyalty to some individual politicians who seem to 'reach' to their personal and locale problems at the time of dire need. Therefore, they look at such political leaders as their heroes and consider them as being Philanthropic due to their actions. This is done at the expense of goals that benefit the population broadly and sustainably (Ibid). One such leader that has won in the economy of affection among the hearts of most Kenyan youths especially in Nairobi slums is the Nairobi senator, Mike Sonko. The youth look at him as a role model because he is always present when they need him whereas his style of leadership is giving out handouts.

While discussing the issue of trust and distrust towards political leaders, Krastev (2012) observed that lack of political trust has led to not only to a decline in interpersonal trust but also social costs that can be measured in time, psychological and economic resources that are wasted in the process.

Distrust leads to slowing down the rate at which the public and other actors in the society implement good public policies. This is due to the suspicion these leaders always meet from the electorate. In addition the public use taxpayer's money for oversight, regulation and the formations of commissions of inquiries for the corruption and integrity cases.

Another consequence of such perception and attitude towards politician is the fact that the distrust draws away the young and talented countrymen from participating in politics and governance processes.

One youth noted: *“Like if you go to Dandora phase three the person who was fighting in 2007 is the ward representative in phase 3. So someone likes this politician, what do you expect me to sit down and discuss with them? Just the other day, he is the one who was snatching and stealing money from people in Dandora. On the other hand during elections he was the one distributing money to voters. So what can I discuss with such a person. You can't tell me that this person changed in two years. I think it's only idle people in our area who can go to work with such politicians.* (Kikuyu, 28 UON)

As the saying goes takes two to tango. When the youth were asked why they vote the people, they dislike and distrust so much again and again. Some youths claimed that election euphoria influences their decisions and actions during the election period. They claimed that the politicians have mastered the art of manipulating their emotions such that they feel that the politicians are too convincing in how they present themselves and their interests to the youth. Others don't understand why they vote the political leaders. Some of the youths drew religious sentiments in that when they vote they hope and pray that God will change these politicians, in the long run, such that they remember their duties and perform their roles as representatives of the electorate.

Others seemed resigned to the situation stating that there is nothing much that can be done since someone has to occupy that office in the long run. For them, it is a matter of accepting and moving on with their lives. This group that seems to have resigned to the situation in that they are convinced that this situation is beyond the control of the electorate. They explained that voting for the right person is not as important because he/she will join the same corrupt ways practiced by other representatives. Some other youths argued that they would rather vote for old corrupt politicians than new ones who are hungrier. Majority of them perceived good leadership in Kenyan context as an aspiration or a dream that they hope to achieve one day but not a present reality.

6.3 Barriers to effective and meaningful political participation

With respect to the interviews with the youth, key respondents, my observations and analysis of the interviews I will present some of the barriers that hinder the youth in effectively participating in the Kenyan democracy.

6.3.1 *The youths*

While leaders in Africa have been looked at as the main barriers to effective participation in Africa in most literature, I would like to change the order of the trend whereby I look at the youth as the major barriers to their own political participation. This perspective has been borrowed from Freire (1970) who discusses and analyzes pedagogy of the oppressed. He states that the oppressed look should look at themselves as existing in a dialectical relationship with their oppressor. He states that the oppressed, and, in this case, the youth, exist in a dialectical relationship with their oppressor. The dialectical relationship is explained without the youth the politicians who they consider to be their oppressor would not exist. This study reveals that the youth are not as mundane and clueless in their political participation. They calculate their moves in that they vote and participate strategically in the Kenyan democracy. I refrain from looking at the youth as victims, instead I look at them as active participants in the political decisions they make and then consider them as the main barriers to their participation in electoral and governance processes.

The mentality and attitude of the youth

I consider the mentality of the youth as one of the greatest barriers to their effective political participation.

The youth suffer from failed social and political socialization from their environments that include their families, the church, the education system and their peers and the system at large this has led to a mindset that act as a barrier to participation. However, their socialization should not be looked at as an excuse to some political behaviors. The average Kenyan youth bears habitual thought process that is characterized by fear, anger and the worst blaming others for their woes without reflecting on how their actions impact the society in general. This mentality prevents them from digging deep into the real problems and examining what really hinders them from enjoying the fruits of a functioning democracy.

The defeatist and losing mentality that they possess works against them, the entire population, and the future generations. From the conversation with the youths, it is clear enough that the youths throughout their lives have been wrongly educated to internalize fatalistic attitudes towards the political situation and their political behaviors. Examples of the sentiments they hold include;

- Democracy is for a particular class of people, i.e. the rich and the crooked
- They have no option but to just vote politicians that they distrust
- They are the means to achieve the ends of politicians
- Their misfortunes have been caused by other people and the political leadership in the country
- Other tribes are benefitting more than their own since they have their leaders in power,
- Raila has read the constitution for them, so they don't need to read it.

Though some of the sentiments can be justified, I hold the opinion that such attitudes hold them back from negotiating and fighting for their rightful position in the different arenas.

The youth carry a mentality, which Okpalike (2014) refers to as the African mentality. The internalization of the sentiments above makes them look at themselves as weak and helpless, savages, slaves to the system. Such attitude affects how they act and view themselves hence looking at themselves as instruments to achieve specific goals. They have internalized the attitudes exploiters hold of them depreciating themselves as individuals. They end up distrusting themselves and their capability to cause change since they relate their situation to fate or “the will of God (Freire 1966).

Moreover, the youths carry a self-righteous attitude when it comes to ethnicity and poor leadership. The youth do not freely accept the role they play in spreading negative ethnicity. The self-righteous attitude prevents them from reflecting upon their actions and how their actions contribute to their current predicaments. They blame others of negative ethnicity, but they practice it themselves by electing leaders from their tribes. They blame others for the violence, but they receive money to fight their neighbors on the basis of ethnic identity. They blame the leaders for being corrupt, but they will voluntarily sell their votes or "eat" from the politicians during campaigns and elections period. They will vote for their ethnic king but still wonder why the system does not work and why Kenya is divided on tribal lines. They accept to be used by the politicians to execute political violence, defending their acts on the poverty they wallow in every day but still blame insecurity and on the same politicians. They enjoy being in the comfort zone but expect the people they refer to as their oppressors to freely relinquish the goods and services. They have been miseducated to accept reality differently, a reality, that seems to make them loose in many ways.

Lumumba (2014) looks at Kenyans in general and, in this case, the youths as coauthors of their misfortunes. I believe in the same school of thought. Borrowing from his analogy he states that Kenyans are given a blank cheque every election to buy what they want in the political arena. The youth buy a "tuk tuk" from Indian but expect it to behave like a Mercedes Benz. From the findings of their perception of political leaders and political parties it is clear that they elect thieves, hyenas and individuals that they do not trust in the belief that there is no better alternative but still complain about them. They forget too fast on the role they play in upholding poor democratic practices. This goldfish memory, act as barriers to their holistic examination of leaders and political systems prior to making some important political decisions.

Youth portray inactive criticism whereby they use a failed state method of choosing and following up their leaders, they do not do background checks or do not deliberately select their leaders and they act and react out of information failures even when they have an option to access the right information (Dada, 2007). Most of the youth interviewed were literate, and they had opportunities to read Manifestos and secure information.

They seem to be well reflected on what is happening in the country but seem to miss the lessons of the experiences they go through. With such an attitude, they act as incentives to the leadership experienced in the country and the vices that come with such leaderships hence acting as a great barrier to their participation.

Identity crisis or a misplaced identity

The stage of being a youth is one that is challenging. This is the stage whereby they try to form an identity and a belief system that further guides them on the path that they are to follow political or otherwise. As the research has established it seems like the youths are in an identity crisis not only politically but also socially. They suffer an identity crisis in that they have been socialized into a belief system and political philosophies that shift focus away from positive collective values. The youths focus more on ethnic consciousness when they are making important political decisions and remember of their class struggles when lamenting of their sufferings. National values and philosophies that build on unity and cooperation have become less attractive to the youths posing a real challenge for them to cooperate for the common good.

They lack a clear vision of where they are heading politically apart from negative ethnicity, lack of trust towards fellow Kenyans including their immediate neighbors, government institutions and the leaders further erodes the identity of the youths making it a barrier to their political participation. The research has established that, they form youth groups based on their ethnic identities but still have trust issues in the same groups. They are afraid to act or take part in activism and other methods of participation due to the fear of being sold out by members of the groups or because of the fear of losing their lives. The lack of trust and the different factors that seem to divide them rather than unite them has affected their ability to organize themselves into social movements that have a common goal, interest and collective identity hence affecting their solidarity to their common interests.

This in turn affects how they participate in political activities and the matters that are common to them with the youths.

Freire (1966) analysis on the Pedagogy of the oppressed best suits the political behavior of the youths that among the major barrier to their participation. The author argued that the youths suffer from a duality in terms of the freedom.

They know in themselves that without real freedoms they cannot exploit their full human potential and development but at the same time they have a fear of freedom due to the pain that they have to go undergo to achieve it. Furthermore they have not completely discovered themselves as the "hosts" to the behavior of the political class. They have therefore internalized the consciousness of the political class whereby they perceive their political woes as a path that has no exist and one that cannot be transformed. This is in itself one of the most challenging barriers to the political participation.

Poverty

The third factor that seems to affect majorly how the youths participate in political activities in the electoral cycle is poverty. Poverty, in this case, is looked at in light of three important determinants, i.e., income, occupation and their level of education. These factors affect how they participate politically. Most the youths are pursuing their education, looking for jobs or trying to make ends meet through their various means of livelihood. Those who are self-employed have to run their business from morning to evening. The youths, therefore, do not have the time or the money that will allow them to participate in political activities or follow up on the governance processes. Furthermore, poverty makes money the primary motivating factor for them to participate in activities. The youth also look at politics as non-beneficial to the daily struggles and a danger to their lives if they become too involved therefore explaining why they do not prioritize constant participation in governance processes

Poverty in terms of education seems to affect the youths both at the university level and the other lower levels. The absence of knowledge in terms of civil awareness, which allows the youths to acquire information on how government work is in itself a barrier. As the research has established most of the youth are still confused on how devolution works and how they can benefit from it making them poorer in terms of knowledge. The education they get gives them poor preparation on how they can deal with the bureaucratic aspect of participation in terms of what they are expected to do, the duties and the responsibilities of the representatives, budgetary allocation, and follow up. Moreover, the youths show a lack of critical and holistic reflection on

how political activities affect their other facets of life. The behavior and attitudes described above affects how they do their follow up both at the local and the national level.

6.3.2 *Socialization Agents*

The role of other agents of political and social socialization in the lives of the young adults cannot be ignored. As the research has established, the most important agents of socialization in the lives of the youths have affected their political behavior. The most critical, in this case, is the family, school, religion and the media. These agents of socialization have played a significant role in how the Kenyan youths think and how they interact with their environment.

This includes how they behave and relate to their neighbors from different ethnic groups, the political leadership, and the institutions of governance. in turn it has influenced their relationship with other citizens, voting behavior and their political engagement, and as has been established which political parties and political leaders the youths pledge loyalty to.

While these institutions are expected to nurture values tolerance for other ethnic groups, enlarge the perception of the youths on democracy and patriotism and build values of nationalism which encompasses inclusion, integrity, honesty, accountability, responsibility, empathy and morality, I can conclude that they from the findings that the they have done the opposite.

In addition, these instances have failed to build platforms that allow the youths to regularly reflect critically and have conversations on what is actually ailing Kenya and long-lasting solutions to the problems. It would be a fallacy of the citizens and, in this case, all these agents of socialization to expect political change that they yearn for to happen without them taking action.. These agents of socialization have refused to learn from their experiences and pass these lessons down to the young generation hence acting as barriers to the participation of the youths in the country's politics.

Furthermore, these agents of socialization also hinder the participation of the youths by making them believe that they are leaders of tomorrow and not today. Looking at the youth in the manner above make them reluctant to take bold political steps. The internalization of this message keeps them in a waiting state. The participant youths mentioned that in most gatherings their opinions are either shut down or not taken seriously in the belief that they are either too young or not

respecting their elders. Growing in a culture where obedience of the elders is valued, the youths at times follow rules and decisions passed to them in forums or projects or at home without looking deeply into the effects of the help they get from the many projects that are supposed to empower them, which acts as a barrier on how the youths engage in political activities.

6.3.3 Political leaders and the institutions

Political leaders and institutions of governance act as barriers to participation of the youths in different ways. First, the Kenyan political leaders and institutions have failed to live to the real definition of leadership that calls for servanthood. They lack the political will on their side to bring tangible change in the lives of the youths. These leaders have shown a lack of the political will to fight vices like corruption, negative ethnicity and rent seeking behaviors hence acting as negative role models to their followers. Opelika (2014), quoting Professor Pat Utomi, refers to the actions of such political leaders as those that are guided by the *scarcity mentality*. Political leaders have severally been accused by youths of accumulating too much wealth to a point that it does not benefit the political leaders anymore causing a scarcity of resources that would have otherwise benefited the population. Analyzing the scarce mentality Further, I argue that that the political leaders end up having both political and economic power while the electorate lives in despair for a lack of resources. Resource scarcity causes unrest, insecurity and makes political manipulation of the masses an easy task. The population will be willing to compromise its values for survival purposes. The political manipulation capitalizes on the desperation that high levels of poverty and unemployment presents. Such leaders think small by focusing on themselves and what they can gain for themselves as opposed to the interests the society at large. They possess a mentality that allows instant gratification of short-term needs that do not benefit the whole society.

Another angle to look at how political leaders and institutions act as a barrier to effective participation is the fact that these leaders have carried forward the colonial mentality in that they use the youth as their means to an end. Lack of a sense of integrity among the political class is a major barrier to the effective participation of the youths in elections and governance processes. Moreover, it ends up building a legacy based on false generosity to the masses.

Political leaders undermine the elements of classic democracy when through their foot soldiers they intimidate and humiliate anyone who challenges the status quo.

The youth fear to demonstrate due to police brutality, they fear to report any wrong doings or they fear holding their leaders accountable because their involvement might be too costly, sometimes leading to loss of lives. The intimidation and the lack of performance have caused the youths to either resign to their situations or keep away from governance processes.

This acts as a barrier to the youth who would want to act good citizens in good faith. The lack of confidence in public institutions like the judiciary, the electoral bodies, and the police act as a barrier to the political participation of the youth. The lack of impartial ability and professionalism in performing their duties cause more damage than good in the relationship between the youth and the institutions.

Political leaders and political institutions have gained legitimacy by completely throwing away the historical lessons. As some of the youth pointed out, the political leadership in their positions of influence has been gaining legitimacy by using a model of democracy copied from other nations, notably their colonizers instead of looking for models that effectively addresses the multiethnic diversity, the complexity of the different ethnic interactions and beautiful values that come with these cultures. Lack of originality on what works for the Kenyan context acts as a major barrier to how the youth participate.

This study looks at the barriers to participation in political activities among the youth primarily as caused by the mindset of the Kenyan people. This mentality can be seen in projects that are designed to empower youths, bodies that carry out civic education and empowerment and in other institutions that socialize the youth. As Albert Einstein states, we cannot solve the problems with the same mind that created it. This calls for a paradigm shift in Kenyan politics where everybody takes responsibility for their own actions.

CHAPTER 7

7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This conclusion summarizes the major empirical findings of the study. It will also integrate the various issues examined in this study. It will give recommendations for areas of future research. Finally, it will highlight some recommendation for the youth, their educators and the political leadership of Kenya.

7.1 Conclusion

This research was set out to explore how the youth perceive Democracy and their engagement in the same. It provided the researcher and the respondents an opportunity to reflect on three major components of the Kenyan democracy, including (1) voting and civic engagement of the youths after voting, (2) leadership and political parties and (3) the barriers that the youth face in their participation. Through the examination of the youths' political behavior, the study analyzed their engagement and involvement in Kenyan democracy and governance. The research concludes that the participation of the youths in Kenya's democracy regardless of their education background is not the problem but how they participate. Most of the youths vote along tribal lines where the interplay of clientelism and strategic and well-calculated political behavior characterize most of their political engagement.

7.2 The main findings:

The study has revealed that Kenyan youths perceive democracy in terms of the classical elements of freedoms offered in the definition of liberal democracy. It shows that there is a difference between the ideological understanding of democracy. It is apparent from the arguments and observations of the youths that democracy in Kenya is something the country hopes to achieve but not a present reality. Youths, just like many other Kenyans, are both victims and perpetrators in the widespread violation of essential democratic elements by the same political leaders that they elect to office. Political leaders, on the other hand, use their acquired power to manipulate elections, policies, distribution of resources, and Kenyans' rights among other violations making democracy an illusion. Among the themes that make youths feel Kenya is undemocratic country include negative ethnicity, use of power and wealth to manipulate justice, leaders undermining of

justice, oppression of the poor, and having corrupt leaders and others involved in scandals but still in office.

Such findings reveal the immunity offered by liberal democracy questioning whether the model of liberal democracy is the best option for Kenya. Seems that people in power can get away with almost anything. The results of the study questions the democracy element of rule by majority, where majority in Kenya means the dominant ethnic groups, The study has shown that rule by majority is not necessarily the answer if democracy does not serve the and protect the rights of its people. It also concludes that voting is not necessarily a marker of a well functioning democracy.

Moreover, the study does not see education as a primary determinant of political behaviour. Youths, with the different levels of education, tend to behave in the same way in relation to voting of leaders along ethnic lines and participation in election malpractices such as receiving tokens and gifts to vote for political leaders. The only difference might be fluency in the English language in most campus students. The research did not go deeper on analyzing the gender perspective in relation to political behaviour of the youth hence an area of interest for future researchers

The study reveals that youths in Kenya are actively involved in pre- election and post-election activities. The involvement with and participation in issues of democracy and governance after elections is weak. Ordinary youth seem to still hold their historical role of voting and working as foot soldiers for political leaders. They propagate electoral fraud through accepting bribes and tokens during campaigns. While the youth have other reasons for voting, the empirical findings show that ethnicity plays a significant role in their political behaviour. From the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that any political regime that comes into power through the manipulation of ethnic identities will put ethnicity before the merit. Governments will be formed and run not on merit but by rewarding cronies that are not necessarily qualified. The future of Kenya seems to be in the fate of Kenyans and, in this case, the youth who are willing to reflect on the action in propagating negative ethnicity.

The study reveals a weak party structure that is void of ideology. The political parties are built on the basis of convenience and personal interest where recruitment takes place on ethnic basis. The youth has very little knowledge on party manifestos. In addition, the youth are not members these

political parties. They don't have information or knowledge on how political parties operate. Hence acting as a major barrier to Kenya's democratic developments.

Looking at their relationship with the political leaders they elect, the study shows that the youth don't trust the people they elect based on their integrity issues. They see politicians as political entrepreneurs who use them in achieving their personal interest hence not believing in them to deliver election promises.

The youth mentality stands out as one of the greatest barriers to effective political participation. The attitudes they bear are formed at family level and they continue to build up as the youths are exposed to the same defeatist and losing mentality by different social actors. The African mentality of colonized mind also influence the youths hindering their participation in democracy, thus necessitating the need to change the thought process.

The findings also affirm the fact that a good constitution, the best policies and the best written documents are not facilitators of change if there is lack of conscious political will by the electorate and their political representatives to change the status quo. The study therefore sees a need for an awakening especially where all actors including the electorate take a moral responsibility for their action. The primary focus should, therefore, be the building of national values that encourage the building of the values of peace, love and unity, cohesion rather than division.

Moreover, it reveals the power of the thought process. As a the youth become what they think rather than perceive themselves as victims the youth need to look at themselves as victors and active actors in the lives and the society in general. The change process begins with the youth acknowledging their role in building the Kenyan democracy and how they contribute to the leadership vacuum in the country. A paradigm shift on how civic education and empowerment of the youth that will encourage the rise of a revolutionary electorate. Therefore different social actors or educators that work with empowering the you need to change on focusing on understanding how they youth think and thereafter using dialogue to encourage critical reflection on the synthesis of their problems and how they relate to other facets of their

7.3 Recommendation for future research

The study offers a qualitative study of the youth perception of and participation in the Kenyan democracy that is descriptive and analytical in nature. As a direct consequence of this the nature of the study a number of limitations that can guide future research need to be considered.

First, the time and cost factor made it impossible to use a large sample size that would have made the study more credible and easy to generalize to all Kenyan youth. Second, being a novice researcher has also been a limitation in itself especially in the collection and analysis of data. Though the level of education and gender were among the major characteristics in the analysis of the research questions, I admit that I didn't do a deep analysis in relation to education. Exploring the characteristics mentioned above in future research themes can facilitate a deeper analysis of the perceptions and participation of the youth. This research has been a learning process for both the researcher and the respondents.

7.4 Recommendations

- Educators i.e. all the agents of socialization need to re-educate themselves on how to educate the Kenyan youths. Their aim should be to pass the knowledge that transforms the way young people think and act and as well as how their actions relate to their circumstances. Changing the thought process will sure have lasting change and positive implications for organizations working with the youth in matters of public participation and accountability
- There is a need for the youth to seek information with the social mission for positive change. The youth, in unity, need to organize themselves in social movements that will act as arenas for the articulation of the collective problems they face and the solutions to these problems. Negative ethnicity is not the answer.
- As for the political leadership of Kenya, "True generosity consists precisely n fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False charity constraints the fearful and the subdued, the "rejects of life", to extend their trembling hands - whether individuals or entire peoples - need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more become human hand which work and working, transform the world (Freire, 1970 pg.. 45.)
- For all – The spirit of Kenya's freedom fighters should live on.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Interview Guides

Interview guide (individual interviews)

1.0 Perception on democracy, good governance and politics

- If I say the word democracy what comes into your mind? What is the meaning of democracy according to you?
- What does governance mean to you?
- Do you think that democracy and governance have any relationship and is there one that is more important than the other?
- Do you consider Kenya to be a democratic country?
- If I say the world politics what comes into your mind or how would you define it? Or how do you perceive politics.

2.0 Democracy and Youth participation

Perspectives or attitudes towards elections

- How would you characterize the recent legislative elections we have had in Kenya March 2013.
- Did you vote in the December 2007 and in March 2013 elections?
- If yes, would you mind to tell which political party you voted for and the motivation behind your choice?
- If no, why didn't you vote?
- Apart from voting how else do you participate in the building the Kenyan Democracy?

3.0 Democracy and ethnicity

- Would you perceive yourself as tribal or a perpetrator of ethnicity?
- Did you vote for a leader from your ethnic tribe in the last elections?
- Do you think that your voting was ethnically influenced? Please explain your answer.

4.0 Attitude towards and relationship with elected representatives

- Do you trust your elected representatives? Why?
- Would you view your elected leaders as persons of integrity?

- Would you vote for the same leaders given another chance?

5.0 Attitude towards political parties

- What are your views towards political parties in Kenya?
- Are you a member of the political party you voted for? What does being a member entail?
- Any political ideologies and platforms you can identify on the party you voted for.
- Did you read their manifestos?

6.0 Political Participation

- Do you experience any barriers to your political participation?
- Are you involved in Kenyan political system in any way?

Interview guide (Key respondents)

What is your perception on democracy, governance and politics?

How would you characterize the Kenyan youth in relation to the role they play in the Kenyan democracy

What are your thoughts on ethnicity in Kenya and the role of the youth in the same?

What do you think are the main barriers to their participation in electoral and governance processes

What are your recommendations do you have in relation to the barriers that you have discussed above?

APPENDIX 2: Consent for Participation in the Interview

Title: Youth and politics

Role of the youth in promoting, Democracy and good governance

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The study is being conducted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters in International Relations at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB).

I willingly volunteer to take part in a research study conducted by Consolata Moraa Makori of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. I affirm that I have been informed and understand that the study will gather information on the Role of Youth in Kenya's Democracy and governance whose purpose is purely academic.

My participation in this study is voluntary and I understand that I will not receive any payment for my services. I may choose to withdraw or discontinue my participation at any time without incurring any consequences.

1. I understand that I have the right to not answer any questions that make me uncomfortable and have the right to terminate the interview at any time during the session.
2. I understand that the research might use a research assistant in the data collection process. I also understand that the interview will be taped and notes may be taken. I have the right to decline to be taped.
3. I understand that I will not be identified by name in any information in this study and that my confidentiality as a participant is guaranteed. All future uses of data and records will be subject to anonymity of individuals' protection policies.
4. I have read and understood all the above information. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and do voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
5. A copy of this consent form has been provided to me

Signature

Name

Date

signature of the Researcher



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