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INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

PROGRAM – M.A IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

**TOPIC OF RESEARCH : THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN POLITICS AND
GOVERNANCE IN KENYA**

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**A research submitted in partial fulfillment of the Degree of Master of arts in
International Studies**

DECLARATION

I Kenga Catherine hereby declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or Institute of Higher learning.

Signed Date.....

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This research paper has been submitted for examination with my approval.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to especially the Government of Kenya for enabling its citizens have the freedom of worship. I hope the findings of my research will be of great importance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to the Almighty God for this far I have come in my journey in search of knowledge. My sincere appreciation goes to my Supervisor Dr. Martin Ouma, lecturer at University of Nairobi for his support, encouragement and constructive criticism and steering me in the right direction which I would not have produced quality research work.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my parents Mr. Robert Kenga and Charity Robert Kenga , my husband Yonah Mukanda Wafula and my son Zuriel Amani Wafula , my sister Florence Chiku Kenga, my brother Erick Tony Kenga and my boss Hon, Harrison Kombe – Member of Parliament for Magarini Constituency.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Afro-Asian Association
AMS	African Muslims Society
ANC	African National Congress
CAA	Coast Arabs Association
CPP	Coastal People's Party
HCK	Hindu Council of Kenya
IPK	Islamic Party of Kenya
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KCLFC	Kenyan Christian Leaders Constitutional Forum
NCCK	National Council of Churches in Kenya
NFDLM	Northern Frontier District Liberation Movement
NUKEM	National Union of Kenyan Muslims
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
PEV	Post Election Violence
PNU	Party of National Unity
SUPKEM	Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
UECK	United Evangelical Churches of Kenya
UJCC	Uganda Joint Christian Council
UMA	United Muslims of Africa

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.

1.0 Introduction

Religion forms part of an individual's identity and in turn influences the world in which they live in. This study investigates the influence of religion in the politics and governance of Kenya and demonstrates that religion and politics are two inseparable realms since humans are both material and spiritual beings.

This chapter provides insight information on background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, research justification, literature review, theoretical framework, research methodology as well as scope and limitations of the study.

1.1 Background

All religions have multiple denominations and sects that vary greatly geographically and culturally. In respect to politics and governance with reference to christianity, the Old Testament shows the relationship between the church and the state as one that is closely linked. Prophets such as Samuel, Elijah, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Nathan acted as God's messengers challenging the political leaders of that era¹. While in the New Testament, Jesus' words: "Render unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and unto God what belongs to God."² Have been interpreted to mean religion and politics are two separable realms. Islam blends politics with military might for instance *jihad* is a religious and political slogan that suggests a violent course to make others submit to the Islamic faith.

¹Mbiti, J. (1968). *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann. p.27.

²English Standard Bible Version, Mark 12:17.

Religion plays a key role in global politics. The current order of International system where nation-states are the main actors was largely shaped by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. The treaty ended the 30 years of war in Europe which was triggered by religious domination by the Austrian-Hapsburg Empire resolve to impose Roman Catholicism on its Protestant subjects in Bohemia³. The war involved Catholics and Protestants fighting each other in European states including: Germany, France, Sweden and Denmark. The Treaty resolved that each state could keep its own religion without outside interference and also separated religion and politics by stating that all states will no longer be governed by religious leaders. This practice has been observed for centuries now with few exceptions in the Middle East where there are state religions for example instance the Islamic Republic of Iran which voices that it is under divine authority⁴.

Religion has been used globally as a political tool for various reasons and in most instances to gain and retain political territories. The Ottoman empire (1300-1922) which was inspired by Islam and Islamic institutions existed for such a long period for only three main reasons: incorporating Islam in its state structure with the Sultan being regarded as the protector of Islam as well as the Islamic ideology of increasing muslim territory through Jihad. Finally the millet system was adapted of which each religion was allowed to elect their own religious leaders and enforce their own religious rules example Jewish millet and Orthodox Christians millet. The Sultan exercised control over these areas through the elected leaders⁵.

The Facist regime in Italy used religion for political advantages. The Facist Italy under Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran pact with the Roman Catholic church which granted Vatican City statehood and placed it under Church law, by the same token, catholic was

³ ibid

⁴ Lostislamichistory.com/non-muslim-rights-in-the-ottoman-empire/. Retrieved on 6th April 2016.

⁵ Ibid.

recognised as Italy's state religion. This was aimed at influencing the Roman Catholics to accept a fascist government by also persuading ideas of the church by making swearing in public a crime, disapproving the use of contraceptives and wanted to outlaw divorce in Italy⁶.

The 21st Century has witnessed the a surge in Islamic movements that use violence to achieve to instill fear and some sort of retaliation for issues that they have been violated. Some examples are the 2009 terrorist attack in Newyork by Alqaeda, Hamas in Palestinian territory and Hezbollah in Lebanon, Taliban regime in Afghanistan which was overthrown by the USA government for supporting terrorism and gross human rights violations, Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Boko Haram in Nigeria . Religion in global politics has been manifested in the following ways: Catholics globally recognise the Pope as the final arbiter on issues appertating to church doctrines; In the 1994 United Nations Conference on Population and Development the Vatican and conservative muslim states opposed abortion and birth control⁷; Lastly in the USA where the church and state are formally seperated, religion is key in the political discourse, in recent years the Christian Evangelical Movement has been a main factor in the success of the Republican party.

Africa has diverse religious systems that influenced the political life in the pre-colonial era . During this period political rulers such as Kings, Queens, Chiefs and Community elders were viewed as earthly representatives of God.⁸ Colonialism came alongside the spread and growth of Christianity and Islam in Africa. In some parts of the continent religion was an effective tool for colonial adminstration as was the case in Northern Nigeria where the British used indirect rule to administer the territory through *emirs* of the Fulani aristocracy who had

⁶Robert.O.Paxton.2005.*The Anatomy of Fascism*.London;Vintage Publishers.p.120.

⁷Ibid

⁸Mbiti,J.(1968).*African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinemann. p .12

long governed the Sokoto caliphate using Islamic law⁹. The education brought by missionaries was instrumental in the struggle for Africa's liberation.

In the post-independence period to date, religion still plays a big role in politics and governance. In South Africa during Apartheid some church leaders sided with the poor and called for the end of the apartheid example Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In Liberia, religious institutions have been involved in conflict resolution; during the Liberian war the head of the Lutheran church was asked to be the vice president of the state while efforts were being made to end the war. In Uganda, churches have formed the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) to speak on social and political issues in the country, to provide civic education as and monitor elections.

In Kenya, different religions are practiced but Christians are estimated to form 83% of the population followed by Muslims at 11% while other religions such as Hinduism, Bahai, Buddhism and African traditional religions account for the remaining 4% while 2% do not believe in any religion¹⁰. These religious groups have formed organisations that serve as their mouth pieces. They include: The National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCCK), The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) and the Hindu Council of Kenya (HCK). The 2010 constitution states that there shall be no state religion and guarantees religious freedom and equal protection to all religions¹¹. This implies that Kenya is a secular state. The 1961 Independence constitution also provided for the freedom of worship.

Individual religious leaders have been vocal in demanding human rights of Kenyans to be respected by the government they include : Sheikh Balala, Late (rtd) Bishop David Gitari, Archbishop (rtd) Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki, Reverend Timothy Njoya, the late Bishop Henry

⁹Michael Crowder.(1964). 'Indirect rule: French and British Style in Africa'. *Journal of the International African Institute*, vol.34, no.3, July 1964. p.197-205.

¹⁰ CIA-The World Factbook-Kenya

¹¹Establishment Clause and Article 32 of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya.

Okullu and the late Bishop Alexander Muge. With Christianity as the dominant religion, the church has played a key role in the politics of the country. However, not all christian denominations in Kenya are involved in politics including: The Seventh Day Adventists, Salvation Army, African Inland Church and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God which have distanced themselves from the NCCK. This lack of involvement in politics gives an impression that God is only concerned with the salvation of peoples souls and not their socio-economic welfare.

1.2 Problem Statement

Religion plays a vital role in the binding and supporting a society. This study observes that religion is an integral part of humanity and hence a key variable in the politics and governance of Kenya. *As a democratic state Kenya guarantees the freedom of worship to all religions and no one is to be discriminated on the basis of the religion they profess. Kenya is a secular state, but in the practice of politics and governance in Kenya are religion and politics two seperable or inseperable realms?*

Christians form the largest religious group in Kenya and mainstream churches play a key role in the politics and governance of Kenya from a historical perspective . Example during Daniel arap Moi's era, Kenya was a one party state under Kenya African National Union (KANU) and nepotism, tribalism, human rights abuse and corruption was the order of the day. Viewed as at that time as the only credible and organised network with extensive outreach in Kenya, NCCK alongside the Catholic Episcopal conference with the backing of the political opposition and the international community pushed for the repealing of section 2A of the 1963 Independence constitution that eventually ushered Kenya into multipartism in 1992.

In the reign of Mwai Kibaki, observers have opined that mainstream churches Anglicans, Protestants and Catholics were reluctant to criticise his first tenure because they had been partners with them against the KANU regime. This implies that they were compromised and viewed as partners in governing for instance Reverend Mutava Musyimi who was the secretary general for NCCK was appointed the head of the steering Committee on Anti-Corruption hence compromising his ability to point out massive corruption in government independently. In 2007 he resigned from NCCK to seek a parliamentary seat under the ruling party Party of National Unity (PNU) and he won.

In 2005 the Pentecostals rallied themselves and their members alongside the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) to reject the Bomas Constitution draft during the November referendum. The church rejected the draft because it provided for abortion and Islamic Kadhi courts. When the Committee of Experts drafted a new constitution which was published by Parliament the NCCK and the Catholic Church called for the removal of clauses allowing abortion and Kadhi courts hence wanted all religions to be treated equally. Christian denominations formed Kenyan Christian Leaders Constitutional Forum (KCLFC) to oppose the draft by carrying out rallies and its symbol was color red which was used to signal danger. However 67% of Kenyans accepted while 30% rejected it resulting into the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010.

In the run up of the 2007 general elections churches were openly partisan along ethnic lines depending on their leaders' ethnic backgrounds. On the other hand prominent church leaders gave conflicting 'prophesies' on who will emerge victorious in the elections and even anointing them in public to signify that God had chosen them for presidency this to a large extent contributed to the 2007-2008 Post election violence (PEV) alongside other socio-economic grievances and unaddressed historical injustices. Many churches were also burnt down in the violence while their efforts in stopping and mediating in the conflict were largely

unsuccessful as the public no longer viewed them as neutral arbiters. After PEV there was an inter religious national prayer day that called for healing and national reconciliation.

The government of Uhuru Kenyatta has attempted to regulate religious practices with the aim of weeding out rogue preachers who abuse the freedom of worship provided for in the constitution. The law will affect all religion practiced in Kenya for instance all religious organisations must be registered and declare their sources of income.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 Main Objective

- To analyse the role of religion in the politics and governance of Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- To examine when and why religious identities are politically mobilized in Kenya.
- To investigate the role of religious convictions in elections in Kenya.
- To investigate the nexus between religion and governance in Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the political impacts of religious mobilization in Kenya ?
2. Do religious convictions have a role in Kenya's political elections ?
3. What is the link between religion, politics and governance of Kenya?

1.5 Hypotheses

- Religious convictions influence voters behaviour in election and referendums.
- Religion and politics are inseparable realms in Kenya.

1.6 Research Justification

1.6.1 Academic Justification

This study adds to the existing knowledge on religion and politics by demonstrating that religion is not only concerned with the spiritual well being of people but it also impacts on their political lives and behaviour hence alters governance in Kenya.

1.6.2 Policy Justification.

The study observed that religion is a key aspect that should always be considered in the formulation of government policies relating to politics and governance in Kenya. This may also be applicable in other African states.

1.6.3 General Public Justification.

By collecting information directly from the people and different religious organisations, this study provides a precise impression on how religious convictions impacts politics and governance in Kenya.

1.7 Operationalization of key terms and concept

Religion- Religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power especially a personal God or gods

Governance - The way, mode, or coordination of governing through formulation of policies and adherence to them

Politics - This is an antagonism between contending interest clusters for supremacy and governance .This is achieved through individuals exercising their democratic right in an election.

Kenya - A country to the East of Africa that attained independence from the British rule in 1963

Nairobi - This is the capital city of Kenya inhabited by people of diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds.

1.8 Literature Review

The thematic literature review covers the following areas: Intersections of religion and politics, Religion and political mobilization, Government policies on religion as well as Political conflict and Religion.

1.8.1 Intersection of Religion and Politics.

In the history of humanity, religion and politics are seen to be inseparably linked. Christianity, Islam and Buddhism are the dominant religions in the world. Religion is a diverse and multifaceted phenomena that is constantly changing and evolving with societies. Religion has international dimensions such as: ideology, resources and shared networks in the world. Global religions such as Christianity and Islam are practiced domestically at state level and impact the national political systems.

The different religions have diverse views concerning politics for instance Islam is a complete religion which guides the social, political and economic spheres of life. Thus from its inception Islam and politics are inseparable realms for instance Muhammad the prophet was Allah's messenger and at the same time he was the leader of the State of Medina. The ultimate purpose of mixing the two is to create an Islamic state governed by *sharia* law¹². The non-muslims are not to hold government leadership positions but can occupy some high administrative positions of the state¹³. In this case, religion provides the justification, mandate and limits of governance hence gives authority and legitimacy to governments.

¹²Ibid:116.

¹³Ibid:67

In the era of political authoritarianism in Latin America ,through a religious hegemony the Catholic church prevailed. Thus a religious ideology can be used as an alternative political ideology to protest failure of government. It can also be used to justify government decisions as exemplified by George.W.Bush move to host a Christian Evangelist Billy Graham at White House where they prayed together for the success of Gulf War 1, and its after this meeting that President Bush went ahead to invade Iraq in 15th January 1991.¹⁴

In pre-colonial Kenya, the coastal strip was part of the Sultan East Africa Dominion that also covered the coastal region of Tanzania upto Zanzibar. The Sultan dominion comprised of muslims and non-muslims free to practice their religion of choice . Rulind was a preserve of Arab muslims who practised Sunni Islam¹⁵.This is a key reason as to why african muslims supported the view of a unitary Kenya.

The coastal and northeastern parts of Kenya are predominantly inhabited by muslims while the hinterlands are largely christian. In post-independence Kenya, the regimes of Kenyatta,Moi and Kibaki worked to create a multiethnic and a multireligious Kenya. In Africa today including Kenya, many people believe that churches should act as the conscience of the national in regard to government matters such speaking against corruption. At the sametime, churches are compromised because of ethnic division of their leadership and also do not criticise the government for the purpose of gaining material goods.

1.8.2 Religion and Political Mobilization.

During regime crisis, religion has played a critical role and has been used as tool of condemning social marginalisation and political repression. From a political end, religion can influence the party which an individual supports or campaigns for. While from the

¹⁴Haqnavi SH.(1995).*Islamic Fundamentalism:TheologicalLiberation and Reinnaissance*.Durban:The Centre for Islamic,Near and Middle Eastern Studies Publishers.p.18

¹⁵Ndzovu Hassan.(2012).*Religion in The Political Culture of Kenya*. p-227.

religious end, political views can play a role in a person's religious conversion thus people can change their religion to fit their political beliefs¹⁶.

In the United States of America, religious organisations are actively involved in politics example the Conservative wing of the protestant church has since 1973 had religious influence on politics. Jimmy Carter invoked religious emotions of Americans during the 1976 general elections so as to win the presidential seat¹⁷. He claimed that as a born again christian, when elected he would revive ethical and family values in the secularized American society¹⁸.

Sub-Sahara Africa has faith based organisations which cater for more than 50% of all health and education services. Just like in Europe, religious mobilization is a key political tool used in supporting a particular candidate or in creating political parties that advance political ideologies consistent with their religious convictions example the Christian Democrats in Europe.

In Kenya, politicisation of religion has occurred on several occasions. Muslim activists and preachers sort support from veteran politicians in the public realm to address their perceived political disadvantage. In the colonial era, British administrators favoured Arab muslims resulting to discontentment from African muslims and its for this reason they opposed the secessionist agenda of Arab muslims by joining nationalist political organisations such a Kenya African National Union (KANU) and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU). The racial as well as ethnic identities within the muslim community have continuously hindered their political unity and strength.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Haqnadvi SH.(1995).*Islamic Fundamentalism:Theological Liberation and Reinnaissance*.Durban:The Centre for Islamic,Near and Middle Eastern Studies Publishers .p.19.

In the immediate Post-independence era of Kenya, the mainstream churches were not involved in political activism and largely maintained the status-quo¹⁹. In the late 1980's democratization wave in Africa, mainstream churches including those in Kenya took a pro-democratic stand by speaking against authoritarianism, holding conferences that created new constitutions as well mobilizing their church members to join in the call for a democratic reform.

During president's Moi regime, some churches including the Seventh Day Adventist, the Salvation Army, Friends church, African inland Church alongside pentecostal churches under their umbrella body United Evangelical Churches of Kenya (UECK), stood against the multipartism course and supported the authoritarian regime.

1.8.3 Government Policies on Religion.

The existence of global, national and local communication networks facilitate the exchange of ideas and resources between international religious groups such as Muslims and Christians across the globe.

Jonathan Fox research provides an index showing the extent to which states offer preferential treatment to some religions as well as discriminates others. His analysis of 175 governments in different regions of the world notes an increased trend in regulating religions globally, but this regulation is more limited in Africa.²⁰ Most African states are accomodative to different religions hence no preference to a particular religionis noted . However few exceptions exist such as Zambia and Malawi whose official religion is Christianity. Secular muslim states in Africa are Senegal, Mali and Burkina Faso.

¹⁹Rachel Beatty Riedl.(2012).*Transforming Politics,Dynamic Religion:Religion's Politicalimpacts on Contemporay Africa*.Indiana University Press.p. 37.

²⁰World Christian Encyclopedia 2015.

States that observe a religious policy ensure the an interaction between state politics and religion. In Muslim states like ,Islamic Republic of Iran, religious leaders have a decisive voice in political affairs. The Monarch in Britain is the head of state as well as the head of the Protestant Church,. The Prime Minister heads the governemnt and partly then appoints the Canterbury Archbishop. It should be noted that doctrinal changes in the Church of England must be approved by Britain’s parliament directly or through a delegation²¹.

On the other hand, many states have adapted a secular policy which formally demarcates politics and religion. In a liberal secular policy, religion is viewed as a significant resource with a role in politics, this is where Kenya lies. The Marxist secular policy which was practiced from 1917 in the Soviet Union and from 1949 in China²² is however the opposite of the liberal one, as it views religion negatively as it aims at completely removing religion from the minds of people and they are only left with politics. According to this view only political power can create social order and unity within a state.This policy is always challenged by citizens since human beings are inherently religious.

States with a general religious policy are viewed to operate in middle ground.This is because the state is guided by religion but is not institutionally tied to a particular religion for instance, in Indonesia one of its five pillars of state ideology is the belief in God.

1.8.4 Political Conflict and Religion.

Religious beliefs and practices potentially support politics and hence are a possible cause of conflict. All religions comprise of dogmatic beliefs which followers are expected to accept without any questioning. This inturn leads to intolerance towards the religious beliefs of non-followers. Scholars have noted that religious extremists contribute to conflict escalation by seeking their own interpretation of God’s will and do not accept religious moderation as is

²¹ Mazrui Ali.(2003).*African Islam and Comprehensive Religion:Between Revivalism and Expansion*.Ibadan:Spectrum books ltd.p.78.

²²ibid

the case with Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine who claim to observe the Islamic tradition by citing that all people owe obedience to Allah.

Missionary activities of both Christians and Muslims have different goals. The Islamic activities focus on making Islamic populations to be more Islamic while radical Islam encourages Muslims minorities in different countries to rebel against the government. Whilst Christian activities mainly focus on the private sphere of individuals through welfare services such as education.

Religious movements have an impact on national politics and in most platforms used by politicians as a tool to maintain power hence support oppressive regimes and at times resulting to international conflicts for example the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Adolf Hitler influenced religion and was shaped by Nazi attitudes which resulted into the Holocaust. 28 Protestant groups in Germany were merged to form the National Reich Church in 1936. Catholic churches and monasteries were shut down and a member of the Nazi party was elected Bishop and non-Aryan ministers were suspended²³.

In Africa, Sudanese Islamists were the force behind the creation of the Islamic Republic of Sudan by receiving governmental support through the introduction of *sharia* law in 1983. The implementation of this law was a major cause of conflict between the Muslim dominated north and the Christian dominated south and eventually led to the secession of South Sudan in 2011. To date Islamism is still the official ideology in Sudan.

In the independence struggle in Africa religious beliefs were also in conflict as was the case in Tanzania where the Catholic church was alarmed by Muslims political domination after the merging of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. To counter this they encouraged young

²³ Alan Farmer. 1998. *Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust*. Hodder and Stoughton, p.115.

educated catholics to be active in Tanganyika African National Union(TANU)²⁴. Given the large muslim population in Tanzania muslims are actively involved in politics example in 1993 they demonstrated using anti-christian slogans while destroying christian owned bars and butcheries for selling alcohol and pork which are forbidden in Islam.

1.9 Summary of Gaps in Literature Review.

Inadequacy of research on the role religion plays in the politics and governance of Kenya has been observed .Gaps are meant to be filled through providing information on when and why are religious identities mobilized in Kenya at the individual behavioural level.The research also demonstrates that religious convictions influence voters behaviour during elections and referendums in Kenya thus a key determining factor in voting outcomes.Finally it further expounds on how individuals' religious convictions impact on politics hence influence how they relate with the ruling regimes and other political leaders such as members of the opposition.

1.10 Theoretical Framework.

This study uses the Structural Functionalism theory, which states that human societies are complex systems comprised of different parts working together to attain stability and unity just like the human body is made up of skeleton, muscles and various internal organs that function independently to help the entire human being to survive .Structural functionalism asserts that people are guided by relatively stable social structures that guide social behaviour²⁵.This is what shapes our lives and preserve societies²⁶.The stable social

²⁴Ibid

²⁵ibid

²⁶Uwazie Earnest.2003.*Conflict Resolution and Peace Education in Africa*.Newyork;Lanham Boulder.P.56

structures include: Families, schools and religious organisations. Herbert Spencer and Robert Merton are accredited to this theory.

Relevance to the Study.

The theory is relevant in this study because aids in explaining how religious beliefs such as Christianity and Islam, have an important role in the lives of Kenyans through socialization and social placement which in turn impacts on the politics and governance practices. It also helps in explaining how disruption of religion and religious beliefs in Kenya also disrupts the political landscape since religion and politics are interrelated parts.

1.11. Research Methodology

The study used mixed method approach by using qualitative and quantitative research designs. Primary data consists of written down information collected from respondents and guided interviews and questionnaire while secondary data is obtained from available written documents on religion and politics in Kenya.

1.11.1 Study site and Population sample.

The researcher used purposive sampling to interview 100 Kenyans living in Nairobi county. Nairobi is a metropolitan city with inhabitants of diverse religious backgrounds. People to be interviewed include, current serving Members of Parliament, members of SUPKEM and NCKK and a section of the general public.

1.11.2 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher incorporated both primary and secondary data.

The methods for collecting these data include filling in questionnaires and having face to face interviews using an interview guide with citizens, members of parliament, officials from SUPKEM and NCKK.

Observation techniques were used by the researcher to look for situations indicating that religion and politics are inseparable realms.

Finally, library searches were used to obtain secondary data. Sources used were : internet, journals, books and dissertations.

1.11.3 Data Analysis Methods and Representation

The data obtained from the research was analyzed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of statistical analysis. Qualitative data collected aided in explaining the obtained quantitative data so as to determine the credibility, consistency and validity of collected information.

1.12 Scope and Limitations of the study.

The researcher interviewed 100 Kenyans drawn from different organizations and religious backgrounds an activity which was time consuming. However, this was mitigated by sending the questionnaire via email to the targeted interviewees.

The financial costs involved was a hinderance but was averted by emailing the questionnaires to intended respondents.

The challenges of collecting data from a society that feels betrayed by its leaders hindered the success of this research. This was solved by protecting the identities of the interviewees to gain their trust hence cooperation.

1.13 Chapter Outline.

Chapter One: Introduction and Background

This chapter introduces the study of the topic and by provides background information, problem statement, research objectives, questions and justification, thematic literature review, summary of gaps in literature review as well as the research design, scope and limitations of the study.

Chapter Two: Religious Identities and Politics in Kenya

This chapter gives an indepth information on the role of religious identities in politics.

Chapter Three: Religious Convictions and Elections in Kenya

The focus of this chapter was to look in details at how religious convictions influence voting behaviour and outcomes in general elections.

Chapter Four: Nexus between Religious and Governance in Kenya

This chapter seeks to provide indepth information on nexus between religion and governance.

Chapter Five: Summaries, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter provides in depth summaries and conclusions of the research findings and give recommendations on areas that require further research.

CHAPTER TWO

RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES AND POLITICS IN KENYA.

2.0 Introduction.

This section examines the role of religious identities in the politics of Kenya from a historical perspective from the spread of Islam and Christianity in Kenya, the colonial era, independence struggle and in the post independence era. Christians make up 80% of Kenya's population and have always dominated political and social institutions in Kenya and it is for this reason that the researcher demonstrates when, how and why religion especially Islam in Kenya has been invoked in politics, governance and national security issues in Kenya.

2.1 Definition of Politics.

This study established that it is imperative to explain the meaning of politics before delving into the discussion. Etymologically, the word politics is derived from the Greek word '*polis*' which refers to a community thus politics refers to the laws, methods and practice by which a community makes its decisions. Over 2000 years ago the great philosopher Aristotle stated that: "man is a political animal" which means human beings cannot attain complete happiness except in social and political dependence on fellow human beings thus politics.

This study observed that the term politics has various definitions. In its broadest sense politics is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend general rules governing their lives²⁷. David Easton defines politics as a political system designated as those interactions through which the authoritative allocation of values occur in a society²⁸. Max Weber defined politics to be political associations whereby enforcement of orders are carried out continually in a given territory through threat and application of physical force. This study will however adapt the Laswellian definition of politics as the process of who gets what, when and how thus politics as the art of distributing scarce resources.

Politics is divide further into two modes which are conflict and cooperation. By conflict we mean competition between opposing forces which is a reflection of diversity in opinions, preferences, needs or interest. Cooperation means working together and achieving set goals using collective action.

2.2 A Global Overview of Religion and Politics.

Mohandas Gandhi made the famous observation that: “.....those who say religion has nothing to do with politics, do not know what religion is.”²⁹ A glance at the history of the current world affirms this view. The study observed that religion has been used as a powerful tool for inspiring: nationalist identities, anti-colonialist movements not only in Africa but across the globe and violent revolutions. Religions make strong claims on people’s allegiance with universal religions make this claims beyond a particular community. Religious beliefs and practices support politics in many ways.

The study established that the enlightenment period led some sociologists to predict that religion would wane as cultural force influencing politics with the rise of modernity³⁰. This

²⁷ibid

²⁸ibid

²⁹ibid

³⁰An Overview: Politics and Religion. Encyclopedia of Religion, 2005.

has not been the case, because from the mid-20th century religion re-emerged as a powerful force impacting global politics, social structure and transnational economics. For instance the 1979 Shi i muslims revolution that made Iran an Islamic republic, rise of liberation theology in South America, Hindu fundamentalism in India, the Conflict between Israel and Palestine as well as international terrorism inspired by radical islam across the globe.

The study observed that religion has been used as to challenge political power using violent and non-violent means. Example Martin Luther King used Christian rhetoric and disobedience during the Civil Rights movement and in 1963 Thich Quang-Duc a Vietnamese monk burnt himself to death to draw the world's attention to the sufferings of the people of Vietnam.

2.3 The Spread of Islam and Christianity in Africa.

The study observed that diverse native African religions dominated Africa before the spread of Islam and Christianity. In Africa Christianity was brought by European missionaries that in some parts preceded colonialism while in other parts it was accompanied by colonialism. Despite independent missionary efforts, the expansion of christianity was essentially an aspect of western colonialism in Africa.

This study established that in Kenya Islam was a companion of trade thus the east-west oceanic trade that linked parts of Kenya's coast to Arab and India³¹. The sultan of Oman colonised parts of the East African Coast with Zanzibar as his capital and launched trade routes into Kenya's interior with a quest for ivory and slaves and to some extent also spreading Islam. It is in 1895 when the predominantly muslim coastal strip was declared a British protectorate based on agreement with the Sultan in Zanzibar. Colonialists and

³¹Bjorn Moller.2006.*Political Islam in Kenya*.DIIS Working paper no. 2006/22.

christians encountered a fairly well entrenched muslim community mainly along Kenya's coast including Mombasa and the former North Eastern province of Kenya.

2.4 Religious Identities and Colonial Administration.

The separation of politics and religion is a product of European enlightenment and the rise of the modern nation-state system and their domination in the international system. African societies did not separate the state in this case political rule and religion. While in non-western cultures across the world religious and political spheres were typically indistinguishable. In their conquests of the Americas, India, Africa and other parts of the globe, European colonialists categorized newly discovered cultures in terms of their beliefs, superstition and their distance from a rational, modern and 'civilized' state³². For instance those societies that did not separate religion and politics were referred to as 'primitive' or viewed to be in a despotic confusion of religion and political power, example Islam.

The study established that religious diversity in Kenya has always been present. During the colonisation period in Kenya, racial rankings saw Europeans as the supreme race followed by Indians then Arabs and lastly Africans³³. At the Coast region to avoid interfering with the established Islamic traditions and mores, British administrators assigned kadhi courts the role of upholding personal and family law³⁴. The Arab muslim authorities continued administering various institutions including madrasas for the education of their children. Arabs were viewed as the principal muslim political players despite the fact that there were non-Arab muslims in Kenya. This discrimination affects the relationship between Arab muslims and non-Arab muslims to date in regard to political matters as shall be discussed in subsequent sections.

³²ibid

³³Hassan.J.Ndzovu.*Muslim Relations in the Politics of Nationalism and Secession in Kenya*.Moi University,Kenya,PAS Working Paper no.18

³⁴Ibid.

2.5 Religion, Independence struggle and Politics of Secession in Kenya.

The study observed that in Zimbabwe's independence struggle nationalist politicians joined forces with their ancestral religions to create a powerful liberation movement that heavily from the traditional religious beliefs of the Shona people. The guerillas and the local mediums (represented the presence of their ancestors in the liberation struggle) shared the mission of returning land to the peasants³⁵.

The study established that right from the genesis of being granted independence, religion in Kenya has always been politicised and used as a medium for expressing grievances especially by the minority Muslim community. In Kenya as mentioned earlier, racial and ethnic identities have weakened a united Muslim's voice in political issues affecting them. For instance Arab Muslims opposed African nationalism since it threatened their privileged position in society and instead aggitated to seceed from Kenya and be enjoined with Zanzibar because historically they had been a dominion of the Busaidi Sultanate and practiced Islam just like muslims in Zanzibar. The Arab-muslims opposed being ruled by the Christian political elite.

The study obsereved that African non-muslim political leaders such as Ronald Ngala and Francis Khamis who was an editor of a local newspaper the 'Baraza' argued that the coastal region had greater affinity with other Africans in the colony than Zanzibar. To them Arabs at the coast were imperialists just like the British colonizers.³⁶ Africans and non-Arab muslims feared that being united with Zanzibar would mean subjection to Arab rule. In 1958 the Afro-Asian Association (AAA) a Swahili dominated party wrote a memorandum to British adminstrators opposing the claim that they support the Arabs secession objective³⁷. They

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid

³⁷Hassan.J.Ndzovu.*Muslim Relations in the Politics of Nationalism and Secession in Kenya*.Moi University,Kenya,PAS Working Paper no.18

instead argued that Kenya's coast belonged also to the Swahilis, Mijikendas and other native inhabitants.

This study has observed that The Coastal Peoples' Party (CPP) that was dominated by Digo muslims who wanted the complete autonomy of *Mwambao* thus Kenya's coast but KANU and KADU had already established themselves at the coast opposing this. It is during the 1963 London Conference that it was agreed Kenya would adopt the federal system of governance with one central government and six regional governments as incorporated in Kenya's 1963 independence constitution. The Arab muslims viewed this as an escape from domination by christian elites and dropped their secessionist claims thus the coastal strip became Kenya's territory and the Sultan of Zanzibar was to be compensated for surrendering its sovereignty in the coastal strip. However Kenya embraced a unitary state until the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution that provided for a devolved system of governance comprising of 47 County governments and one central government.

This study established that in the former Northern Frontier District thus the present day North Eastern part of Kenya Somalis wanted to secede from Kenya and be joined with Somalia whom they share a common language,culture and the islamic faith. At the dawn of Independence in 1962, the British colonialists conducted an informal referendum whereby an overwhelming majority voted to join the newly formed Somali republic. This resulted into the Shifta wars between 1963 to 1968 in which ethnic Somali men joined Somalia backed Northern Frontier District Liberation Movement (NFDLM) in an attempt to secede from Kenya .Kenya's security forces suppressed them leading to a three decades long state of emergency in the region³⁸.

2.6 Political relationships between the State and Religions in Kenya.

³⁸ibid

This study observed the tendency of portraying some religions as having an upper status than other in various states of the world. For instance in Britain the Anglican Christian faith has been universalised at the expense of the existing religious diversity³⁹. While in the Islamic republic of Iraq Islam is the state religion. In Africa, for example in Sudan, the Islamic fundamentalist North fuelled war with the Christian south in the 1980s that imposed the Islamic Sharia law that made Sudanese Christians unable to pray in churches fuelling a guerrilla war that eventually led to a military coup in 1984. While in Northern Africa which has been a centre of Islamic civilisation for centuries fundamentalist Islamic sects have been demanding a new political order based on Sharia law.

This study established that African states have to a large extent been influenced by tactics used by European colonialists by using religion in seeking religious and political domination in their colonies; African states have not been merged to express shared values⁴⁰. Colonial powers marginalised minority religious groups and this lack of their integration continues in the post-independence era⁴¹. The general African experience is that some religious identities enjoy a positive political and state attention compared to other religions because religious practices have a critical bearing on the political interests of the states⁴². Independent Kenya ignored Mau Mau fighters who (they practice the indigenous Agikuyu religion that was disliked by missionaries and colonialists) had been instrumental in Kenya's liberation struggle.

The study observed that Ndeda argues that Catholics and Protestant movements in Africa propagated control, domination and exploitation. They also had teachings to deliberately

³⁹Beckford 1999 p.12.

⁴⁰Mildred Ndeda. *The Struggle for Space: Minority Religious Identities in Post-Independence Kenya*.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Greg Guma (ed). *Towards Freedom from 1987-1988 and 1994-2004*. The International Affairs Publication. January, 1987, vol.36.no.1.

waterdown African cultural values including polygamy and clitoridectomy which assisted the state in recommending Western variants of development⁴³.

The study observed that in Kenya the church and state play complimentary roles. After independence religious groups influenced the direction of Kenya's public affairs. This led to marginalisation of traditional African religions, African instituted churches and non-conformist islamic sects despite religious freedom being enshrined in the constitution. Scholars and political analysts have explained that this may have been brought about by the fact that some minority religious groups lack discourses on critical issues such as constitutionalism and human rights making them easy to manipulate.

The study depicts that in Africa, the acquisition and use of state power for political purposes results into the political power holders amassing wealth. Semi-religious figures associated with the state use their positions to benefit their religious groups while members of the minority religious groups despite peaceful coexistence with the state voice against this marginalisation propagated by the state. Main christian churches in Kenya have played independent and critical political roles including demanding for an opened political space, speaking against corruption, negative ethnicity and human rights violations perpetrated by former President Moi's authoritarian regime. The church opposed the abolition of the secret ballot that would ensure no opposition leader would be elected. They joined the Law Society of Kenya in condemning the *mlolongo* voting system. In response the government black listed some churches and banned conducting open air religious meetings and prayers without permits. President Moi pressurised christian clerics to resign or refrain from politics⁴⁴.

2.7 Politicisation of Islam in Kenya.

⁴³ Mildred Ndeda. *The Struggle for Space: Minority Religious identities in Post-Independence Kenya*.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

This study established that estimates indicate that Muslims account for 10% of Kenya's population. However they do not form a homogeneous Muslim community. In North Eastern region which is inhabited by ethnic somalis who practice islam they prioritize ethnic identity over religious identity⁴⁵. While muslims inhabiting the coast are divided into Bantus, Swahilis and Arabs while the rest of Kenyan muslims are scattered across Kenya.

This study observed that Kenyan muslims and partly the government have initiated efforts to achieve a collective muslim representation in politics. Political functionalists are of the view that those initiated by the government only serve to articulate and channel muslim interests using a legitimate means but also contribute in the implementation of authoritative decisions of the government hence reflect the legitimacy of the government and cannot challenge incumbent leaders. In 1968, the National Union of Kenyan Muslims (NUKEM) was formed and headed by two junior members of the KANU government. It articulated views of the government and christian churches while maintaining links with Saudi Arabia and Libya⁴⁶. In 1973 the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims was formed and tightly linked to the government. President Moi recognised it as the only legitimate representative of Muslims in Kenya. SUPKEM has district councils throughout Kenya and it is affiliated with 150 Muslim organisations. However its legitimacy among the muslim population is questionable.

The study established that the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK) was not registered as a political party reason being it was deemed as a religious political party which are illegal in Kenya. Sheikh Balala spoke about muslim grievances included the under development of Muslim inhabited areas and under representation in Muslims in government and state institutions. Balala also called for the toppling of President Moi⁴⁷. In response the KANU regime formed

⁴⁵Stephen Ellis and Gerriet ter Haar. 1998. Religion and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa. *The Journal of Modern African studies* 36,2, pp 175-210.

⁴⁶ibid

⁴⁷ ibid

the United Muslims of Africa (UMA) citing it was african unlike IPK that was Arab dominated.

The Islamic kadhi courts have been enshrined in the constitution to perform judiciary functions and also plays advisory function as the chief kadhi serves as the advisor to the government on muslim affairs. The introduction of multipartism, resulted into political parties presenting muslims candidates for various political seats. Example in Mombasa, mayors have been habitually muslims.

The study established Kenyan politicians have always made symbolic gestures to the Muslim community for instance by attending Eid ul fitr celebrations that mark the end of Ramadhan the fasting period for muslims that is usually a national holiday. Kenyan muslims view themselves as part of the global muslim *umma* and have occasionally protested against what they term anti-islamic actions led by the west specifically USA and often politically supported by the government of Kenya including Israeli offensive against Palestinians and USA's attacks against Afghanistan and Iraq.

2.8 Political Conflicts with a Muslim element in Kenya.

The study observed that Kenya has experienced political violence pitting muslims against the government or other parts of the general public. In 1992 violent unrest initiated by the IPK erupted in Mombasa in response to government's arrest of IPK activists and seven imams⁴⁸. This was followed by mass demonstrations and attacks on public buildings the security crackdowns resulted into the killing of some demonstrators and injuring of several others.

In 1992 and 1993 supporters of IPK and UMA clashed on several occasions leading to a general strike in Mombasa. Homes and offices belonging to both IPK and UMA were set a blaze alongside several public buildings. While in 1997 there was widespread violence in the

⁴⁸Bjorn Moller.2006.*Political Islam in Kenya*.DIIS Working paper no. 2006/22.p.17

Kenyan coast suspected to have been instigated by the ruling KANU regime and security forces supporting militant youths supporting KANU for fear that just like in the 1992 elections the electorate in this region would support the political opposition. According to the International Human Rights watch more than one hundred people died and over 100,000 were displaced.

2.8.1 Radical Islamism and Terrorism in Kenya.

This study observed that Kenya has been a victim of various terrorist attacks starting from the 1998 bombings of USA embassies in Nairobi and Daresalaam, Tanzania; the 2002 Kikambala hotel bombings, the 2014 Mpeketoni and Mandera massacres, the 2014 Westgate mall terror siege and the 2015 Garissa university massacres among other terrorist attacks. Islamic communities in Kenya have been predominantly *Sufi* and generally peaceful, however *salafism* and *wahhabism* forms of radical islam have been gaining ground in Kenya⁴⁹. This has been through scholarships that have resulted to visit and study in Saudi Arabia where youths are exposed to radical islamism, construction of mosques and madrasas where wahhabism is taught and the presence of Islamic charity organisations financed by Arabic states advocate radical islamism and even sponsor terrorism. However general opinion surveys show that the Kenyan muslims are not inclined towards terrorism.

This study established that terrorists have been targeting christian civilians and pro-government muslim leaders in their attacks in Lamu, Mandera and Garissa counties. While the government has repeatedly used a counter-strategy that involves massive arrests of ethnic Somalis and Muslims example the 2014 *Operation Usalama Watch* in Nairobi and Mombasa forgetting that they are also victims of terror attacks. The Anti Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) has also been accused of killing radical muslim preachers. By the same token, Kenyans have also formed their own perceptions on who is responsible for terror attacks as exemplified in

⁴⁹ibid

the June 2014 Mpeketoni attacks in Lamu county. Despite Alshabaab claims of carrying out the attacks, two gunmen retaliated by killing four people and distributed leaflets threatening former Prime Minister Raila Odinga and the Luo people who were blamed for the attacks⁵⁰.

This study observed that the Alshabaab terror group in its public statements and propaganda videos continually frame their attacks in Kenya around:religious,ethnic and territorial grievances.They claim that for decades the government of Kenya has been marginalising and abusing the human rights of ethnic Somalis and muslims in general.At the Coastal region Alshabaab adopts narratives used by the predominant muslim inhabitants that from independence the government has allowed other communities and christians to usurp land belonging to the indigeneous inhabitants of this region.

Imams at the coast have been criticised for continuously failing to defend Muslim communities adequately against the longstanding political and economic marginalisation.The 2014 operation usalama watch was marked by ethnic and religious profiling, extortion and physical abuses. During police raids at Swafaa, Musa, Sakina and Minaa mosques in Mombasa one man was killed and over 250 youths arrested.The Deputy President William Ruto stated that any muslim leader who criticised the operation would be questioned by state authorities implying that sympathy is equivalent to extremist thus putting muslim leaders between a rock and a hard place.

2.9 Chapter Summary.

This study opined that religious identities and politics in Kenya are closely linked. The link dates back to the colonisation period and the spread of Islam and Christianity into Kenya.

⁵⁰Ibid.

Kenyans continue to invoke their religious convictions in political matters even though Kenya is a secular state and does not have a state religion. Christians in Kenya dominate the central government, political institutions and registered political parties a key factor that has led to the politicisation of Islam as muslim seek to establish their political voice.

CHAPTER THREE

RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS AND ELECTIONS.

3.0 Introduction.

This chapter investigates how religious convictions with particular reference to Islam, Christianity and African traditional religions impact electoral outcomes in Kenya. Having discussed religious identities and politics in Kenya in the previous chapter, this chapter starts by analysing the three religions view on voting as a political process before discussing their influence on voters behaviour and elecotral outcomes.

3.1 Religious Views on Elections.

The concern of this subsection is to discuss the view of Christianity and Islam which are global religions in regard to elections. Traditional African religions view on elections which are not homogeneous will also be analysed.

3.1.1 Christianity.

The study observed that the practice of election is reported in both the New and Old Testaments of the Bible, for instance casting of lots which is an ancient election method. While God's act of choosing Israel and making a covenant with them in the Old Testament is also viewed as an election because God preferred them to other nations of that era. Scholars have also pointed out that the choosing of King Saul and King David to rule the Israel nation is a form of election since God looked at the attributes they possessed and discussed it with Prophet Samuel.⁵¹

The study established that elections have been a Christian practice from the Biblical times up to this present age. Catholic bishops elect the Pope who is the head of the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church bishops also elect their Archbishop. Christians view taking part in an election as a civic duty and a demonstration of good citizenship which is emphasized by their religion.

3.1.2 Islam.

The study established that Islamic scholars posit that the *Qu'ran* and *Hadith* do not make a categorical statement concerning elections. However, mutual consultations in political matters and governance is encouraged in the Quran through *shura*⁵². A reason why they term elections not to be an un-Islamic process as elections are also held in predominantly Muslim states including Egypt, Iran and Pakistan.

3.1.3 Traditional African Religions.

The study observed that traditional African religions vary from one community to another but a general observation was made in their relation with politics and that in the pre-colonial Africa, traditional political rulers were appointed after consulting communal gods and

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²ibid

mediums. Example in Nigeria, the Yoruba kings were elected by a group of people referred to as the king makers after consulting the Ifa oracle on the proposed potential kings⁵³.

3.2 Religious Convictions and Political Decision.

This subsection investigated if people usually relied on their religious beliefs when making and defending their political decisions.

The study established that a 2011, research by the University of Missouri on Germany, USA and the United Kingdom revealed the following: Germans were perceived to be moving away from religious voting, USA recorded an increase in religious voting while in the United Kingdom religious voting remained steady⁵⁴.

The study observed that religious beliefs and convictions are always used to motivate voters in different parts of the world. For instance in American politics the Christian right which comprises of: white evangelical protestants and christian political groups is characterised by a strong support for conservative positions. They usually deliver a point of view in issues that strongly matter to them with an extra-ordinary turnout during polls. They advocate for school prayers while are against: abortion, homosexuality and pornography⁵⁵. In South Africa, before his 2009 election to be the president, Jacob Zuma stated that christianity is the foundation of his political beliefs⁵⁶. In his campaigns for the African National Congress (ANC) mostly in the rural areas he urged voters to elect the ANC party citing that a vote for the ANC party was equivalent to choosing to go to heaven⁵⁷.

This study observed that across the world and the African continent is that religion is often used to determine a flag bearer, running mate and candidates for various political posts in

⁵³O.O Familusi.2012.*Religious Factors in the Electoral Process and the Quest for an Enduring Democracy in Nigeria*.IDOSI Publications.p.7-8

⁵⁴ibid

⁵⁵Kent Greenwalt .1987.*Religious Convictions and Political Choice*.Oxford University Press.p.143.

⁵⁶ibid

⁵⁷ibid

areas with large muslim or christian populations. By the same token, religion influences voting behaviour and patterns. Religion can be used to rally support for a candidate or dissuade them from voting for a particular person. This is the reason why a christian will not vote for a muslim candidate and viceversa for example Northern Nigeria is predominantly inhabited by muslims who vote for muslim political leaders. Politicians usually seek divine intervention from religious leaders or witchdoctors to ensure they emerge victorious in the polls.

The study that observed in elections, religion is used by politicians in churches, mosques and other places of worship to acknowledge God's faithfulness in ensuring the defeat of their political opponents even if the elections were fraudulent. For this reason religious leaders have been accused of being partisan because ideally they should speak against rigging which is an evil practice.

3.3 Religion and Elections in Kenya.

This study observed that elections and their outcomes in Kenya are not purely influenced by religion. Other factors which determine election outcomes are: initial social condition economic performance of the incumbent, ethnicity, challengers, electoral system, historical and geographical factors.

Whilst the 1963 Independence constitution allowed the freedom of religion while the 2010 constitution declares that Kenya has no state religion⁵⁸. Religion has however played a critical role in elections right from the colonial era and post-independence Kenya.

3.3.1 Religion and Elections in Colonial in Kenya.

This study established that Muslims and Christians have always participated in Kenya's democratic processes from a historical perspective. Ethnic and racial differences among

⁵⁸Article 8, 2010 Constitution of Kenya.

Muslims in Kenya that originated from colonialists favouring Arabs over Indian and African muslims have led to different muslim political associations, ideologies and voting patterns.

This study established that Coast Arabs Association (CAA) was formed in 1921 to oppose the inadequate representation of Arab-muslims in the Legislative Council. CAA held a public meeting in Mombasa and resolved that Arab-Muslims should be given two seats in the Executive and four seats in the Legislative Council⁵⁹. British administrators agreed to offer them only two seats in the Legislative Council in 1927 and the Arab-Muslims refused to allow Swahili-Muslims to vote for occupants of the reserved two seats in the legislative council because Arabs considered the Swahilis as African⁶⁰. In 1952 the Swahilis were recognised as Arabs enabling Swahili-muslims to register as Arabs for the 1957 and 1961 general elections.

This study established that in the coastal region, colonialists reserved administrative and elective positions for Arabs. In 1958 African-Muslims formed the African Muslims Society (AMS) and sent a petition to Governor Evelyn Baring to protest the exclusion of African Muslims in the legislative council. The petition was opposed as the colonial government claimed that appointments in the legislative council were not made on a religious basis and Asians and Arabs races were minorities deserving special seats while Africans could contest elections in any constituency⁶¹.

3.3.2 Religion and Elections in Independent Kenya.

This study has established that in the reign of Jomo Kenyatta 1963-1978 religion played an indifferent role in the development politics of Kenya. It is during the tenure of President Daniel arap Moi (1978-2002) that religion took a front seat in the in development policies

⁵⁹ Hassan Ndzovu.2009.*Muslims and Party Politics and Electoral Campaigns in Kenya*.ISITA-Working paper series.p.2-3.

⁶⁰ibid

⁶¹ibid

and programs in Kenya. Moi clamped down the civil society thus forced religious organisations and professional bodies alongside the political opposition to be the government's watchdog and condemned the regime's excesses.

This study observed that the Catholic church, the Anglican church of Kenya and the Presybeterian Church of East Africa and the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK) opposed the one party system and demanded for a more open democratic space. However IPK was locked out the 1992 general elections because it was not registered as it was termed to be a religious party. To gain support from African-muslims in the elections, President Moi engineered the formation of the United Muslims of Africa (UMA) and divide Muslims against racial lines citing that IPK was an Arab party that excluded African-Muslims.

This study that observed the government of Kenya during the reign of Jomo Kenyatta, formed a commission to reform inheritance laws to ensure gender equity and justice in inheritance thus bring Islamic law and African customary law in harmony with the English Customary Law. The draft bill granted men and women equal inheritance rights⁶². Muslims and followers of traditional african religions lobbied against the bill and it was never passed into law. In 1981, the government of President Moi the Succession Act was passed into law despite a strong protest by the muslims who viewed it as a violation of the Islamic practice of inheritance as provided for in the Quran. In a bid to win Muslims support against multi-party democracy and gain their support in the 1992 general elections, President Moi allowed a concessional amendment that excluded Muslims from the Law of Succession⁶³.

This study established that the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was the only party for all Kenyans irregardless of their religion. With multi-party democracy, Muslims and Christians have vied for presidential, parliamentary and county assembly seats using various

⁶²Janet Kabeberi. 1995. *Women, Laws, Customs and Practices in East Africa*. Nairobi. WLEA Publications. p-95.

⁶³ibid

political parties. Christian leaders in Kenya usually speak on political issues and also urge their flock on how to vote. They also allow some politicians to use their pulpits during prayer services to promote their political agendas and woo voters.

In a bid to ensure that Muslims backed KANU in the 2002 national elections, President Moi announced that the government would stop screening ethnic Somalis who are predominantly muslims before issuing them with identification cards and passports and that instead the government would rely on local leaders to verify Kenyan Somalis apart from illegal Somali immigrants and refugees from Somalia. Political scientists have described this as a calculated move that was done four months before the elections to appease Muslims to vote for KANU.

This study observed that, christians supported the election of Mwai Kibaki in the 2002 elections. The church then became silent when President Mwai Kibaki failed to honour the pre-election pact and in the face of massive corruption. Its implicit to note that christians leaders in Kenya serve narrow political interests depending on their ethnic backgrounds.

The study observed that in the 2005 and 2010 referendums religion was used a mobilization tools by those supporting and opposing the proposed constitutions. The Bomas draft was opposed by the NCKK and Evangelical churches in Kenya who rallied faithfuls in opposing it because it allowed abortion and its inclusion of Kadhi courts and this was interpreted to granting special treatment to Islam despite Kenya being a secular state. Even in the 2010 constitution they opposed Kadhi courts by claiming that Kadhi courts had the ultimate objective of turning Kenya and Africa in general into an islamic state since they were a stepping stone to the introduction of Sharia law⁶⁴. Despite their efforts the the 2010 Constitution was passed in the August 4th 2010 referendum with 67% of voters supporting it. Kadhi courts continue to operate in Kenya to date.

⁶⁴Jesse Kamau et al Vs Attorney General.2010.eKLR .p-5

This study observed that in the 2007-2008 Post election violence (PEV) many churches were burnt down in the violence while church leaders efforts in stopping and mediating in the conflict were largely unsuccessful as the public no longer viewed them as neutral arbiters because they took political stands in supporting or opposing various politicians. After PEV there was an inter religious national prayer day that called for healing and national reconciliation.

3.4 Chapter Summary.

This study surmise that secularity of Kenya and its separation of the state and religions does not translate to the complete exclusion of religious convictions not influencing voters behavior and election outcomes. As discussed above, Christianity, Islam and Traditional african religions allow the practice of elections. In Kenya, religious convictions are a key factor in rallying voters for elections and in turn influence election outcomes from the colonial period upto this present age.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE NEXUS BETWEEN RELIGION AND GOVERNANCE IN KENYA

4.0 Introduction.

This chapter investigates the role of religious mobilization in governance from a philosophical as well as a practical point of view. The researcher examines the sources of authority for religion and political governance then concludes by discussing constitutionalism and religion and the resulting government practices.

4.1 Human and Supra-Human Sources of Authority.

Religion and politics appeal to different sources of authority. Religion is identified with the sacred while political governance is identified with the profane. For instance political power and authority is demonstrated through a hierarchy of authority, instruments of control, domination strategies and enforcing order in societal relations⁶⁵. Max Weber noted that a state is simply a community which claims the monopoly to legitimately use force and violence in its territory.

This study established that religions get their authority from transcendent sources beyond the human realm. The appeal to a transcendent authority leads to the formation of communities

⁶⁵Ibid.

with distinct practices and institutions that reaffirm the claim to a transcendent authority⁶⁶. Religion has been termed as the ultimate motivator for individual and collective action as its appeal to authority beyond the human realm can lead to legitimizing of temporal political power. This appeal has also been used by different religions to critique and challenge a political order thus governance. At the same time, religious institutions rely on the patronage, financial support and physical protection of political powers because legitimate violence can be used to silence or suppress dissident religious voices.

Islam combines both religious and political authority in what some have interpreted to be manipulation of religion for political ends. The sharia law governs all aspects of life from the family, social, political, governance and war thus the divine law is sovereign to political authority.

4.2 Intersection of Religion and Governance.

This study established that in the era of Protestant reformation, European societies sought to define what role should religion and the state play in each others spheres. The western ideal of separating the state and church is not shared by most states in the world. India, Israel and muslim states have their national identities with deep religious roots and mythic narratives. In Tibet Dalai Lama in Vajrayana Buddhism served as a religious and political leader; the Dalai-Lama religio-political institution survived for over 500 years before the Communist invasion of Tibet. Some states have conferred official status to a religion example in England, the monarch is the official head of the Anglican church while the Archbishop of the Canterbury by the Prime minister. In Africa Zambia is the only state with an official religion which is christianity.

⁶⁶ibid

This study observed that religions may have a privileged role in national political ceremonies such as presidential inaugurations and opening of parliament . Robert Bellah terms this as ‘civil religion’ whereby a particular religion lacks an official status yet the state uses its concepts publicly⁶⁷. For instance Abraham Lincoln used the christian imagery of slavery and freedom in the justification of the American Civil war. USA has separated the state and religion but are committed the ideals of “In God we trust” and “One nation under God”.

Democratic states usually remain neutral on matters religion because they term it unfair for the government to intentionally favour or disadvantage citizens on the basis of religion and appeal to the freedom of worship. Arguments forwarded to support this stand include: Its unfair to use taxes paid by citizens to fund religious institutions and communities that they would otherwise not support. Secondly placing a political role on religion may corrupt the faith community and their mission.

4.2.1 Interdependence and rivalry of Religious and Political power.

In medieval Europe the relationship between religion and political power was not stagnant as it involved rivalry,tension,competition and symbiosis⁶⁸.

This study observed that in Saudi Arabia,Wahhabism which a form of fundamentalist Islam united tribes in Arabia using military force.Wahhabism as a religious ideology was used to guide political activity that resulted into the formation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which is intact to date.This inspired the Taliban in Afghanistan to establish an islamic state.

4.2.2 Political Power over Religious Authority.

⁶⁷Robert Bellah.1967.*Religion and Governance*.Oxford University press.p.3-4

⁶⁸ibid

This study established that political regimes usually control, restrict or at times completely suppress religions because their appeals to superhuman authorities is viewed as a potential threat to political authority. This was the case in China whereby authorities viewed Buddhism as a subversive force and during the Chinese Cultural Revolution 1966-1976 public display of religion was stopped, consequently temples were destroyed and churches with religious symbols were purged. In Albania, from 1949 to 1990 religion was banned during the reign of Enver Hoxha.

4.2.3 Supremacy of Religion over the state.

This study observed that states with a dominant religion that controls the state and state institutions as well as providing social services example education and health services; can use these social services to compel other people to embrace their religion. This is the case in monarchs built around religious convictions and mobilisation as was the case in medieval Europe and Traditional African societies. In that era, the religion of the monarchs determined the laws that govern a particular domain.

Currently radical Islamists and terrorists want to establish Islamic Caliphates governed by the Sharia law as is the case with Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria.

4.2.4 Withdrawal of Religion from the Political Sphere.

This study observed that in oppressive governance regimes, most religious groups disengage or completely withdraw from the political realm. Citing politics are worldly hence can be ignored. Example Christians use Jesus Christ's statement that His Kingdom is not an earthly one to justify this.

4.3 Tolerance of Religious beliefs and Practices.

John Locke argued that to imposing religion on people or restrict religious beliefs will interfere with the rights of others. He instead champions for diverse religious communities this no religion is superior to the other and hence not threatening established political order⁶⁹. On the contrary, Thomas Hobbes termed religion as a dividing factor in society and thus heads of states should to some extent determine religious practices. This then ensures that religion does not become a threat to political stability and hence civil peace is maintained.

This study established that despite allowing freedom of religion, states are usually confronted by the question of ‘Does the right to practice a particular faith exempt a person from obeying the laws of a state?’ For instance some religions object medical procedures like Jehovah Witnesses claim that their religion rejects blood transfusions even if one’s life is at stake. Quakers preach peace hence are against the recruitment of their followers into the military. While other religions perform rituals using illegal substances example bhang or sniffing tobacco.

States across the world including those in Africa use education to ensure decent lifestyles for their citizens. Education in this case is a process of teaching children values labelled important by the state for their citizens to possess. Education has become a tool that directly challenges various religions example the evolution and big bang theories to oppose that human beings and the world were created by a supreme being. France has a law prohibiting students from wearing religious adornments such as hijabs and turbans so as not to divide its citizens based on religion. Scholars and religious activists however termed the move a state’s interference with freedom of worship⁷⁰.

4.4 Marxism and Neo-Marxism on Religion and Governance.

⁶⁹John Locke. 1796. *A letter Concerning Toleration*.

⁷⁰An Overview; Politics and Religion. Encyclopedia of Religion, 2005.

Karl Marx viewed religion as the mask of the underlying economic and political interests. According to him, religion is an ideology for isolation and self-deception. In modern capitalism he argued that it is human beings who make gods and not vice versa this makes them alienated themselves the sweat of their labour. States use religion to justify the domination of the wealthy over the weak and the poor by making it appear that this has been divinely ordained. At the same time Marxism holds that religion can be used to console oneself in oppression and protest domination.

4.5 Religion and Constitutionalism in Kenya.

Defined broadly, constitutionalism is the doctrine that government's must act within limitations of a known written or unwritten constitution⁷¹. Constitutionalism is an ongoing process of altering constitutional provisions thus an explanation of why: not all governments are necessarily constitutional.

This study observed that across Africa various states have declared their state religions. Example Mauritania proclaims Islam as its official state religion and declares that only Muslims can aspire to be the head of state⁷². The Malawian constitution declares that Christianity is the state religion but does not limit presidency to Christians only. Ethiopia, Benin, Angola and Ghana have separated religion and state in their administrative duties. Angola is a secular state and all religions are respected and protected by the government for as long as they follow and respect the laws of the country.⁷³ Ethiopia is a secular state but has no state religion and thus no interference with the affairs of each other⁷⁴. Benin on the other hand is a secular state and its constitution in article 156, goes ahead

⁷¹PLO Lumumba, MK Mbonyeni and SO Odero. 2010. *The Constitution of Kenya: Contemporary readings*. p.78.

⁷²ibid

⁷³Article 8, Constitution of Angola.

⁷⁴Article 11, Constitution of Ethiopia.

to prohibit any constitutional amendment that could undermine its republican form of government and secularity of the state. Finally, Ghana forbids its parliament from legalising programs or objectives of religious nature⁷⁵.

This study established that Kenya has no state religion and all Kenyans are entitled to human rights including the freedom to worship and freedom from discrimination irregardless of their sex, religion, race or ethnicity. Generally Kenya's government respects religions as provided for in the constitution. However, its mandatory for all religious groups to be registered by the Registrar of societies who reports to the Attorney general's office⁷⁶. While the Ministry of information and communication must approve the licenses of all religious radio and television stations operating in Kenya.

4.6 Government Practices and Religion across Africa.

This study observed that in Africa, religious practices have great impact on social as well as governance issues. As summarised by Allen Bergin a professor of Psychology "....governments use religion and religious institutions to address different social problems including: sexual permissiveness, teen pregnancy, suicide, drug abuse, deviant and deliquent acts..."⁷⁷.

The apartheid regime in South Africa was justified by Afrikaners claim to their divine supremacy over African hence their racist and supressive system of governance⁷⁸.

This study established that a 2010 research conducted on several states of Africa revealed the deep nature of religion among Africans on governance matters. Majority of muslims interviewed said that sharia law should be their official law similarly a large percentage of Christians interviewed favoured the use of the Bible as the law. In Nigeria 70% of christians

⁷⁵Article 56, Constitution of Ghana.

⁷⁶ibid

⁷⁷ibid

⁷⁸L Henkin.1998. '*Religion, Religions and Human Rights*'. Journal of Religious Ethics. p.229-239.

interviewed favoured biblical law,71% of muslims interviewed favoured sharia law.In Uganda 64% of christians wanted biblical law;66% of muslims wanted sharia law.In Ghana 70% of christians supported biblical laws;58% of muslims wanted sharia law.While in Liberia 63% of christians favoured biblical laws while 52% of muslims preferred sharia law.⁷⁹

4.6.1 Government Practices and Religion in Kenya.

This study established that the Government of Kenya usually consider the following religious holidays as national holidays:Christmas,Good Friday,Easter Monday,Eid ul fitr and Diwali.

The Kadhi courts are mandated to adjudicate civil cases using sharia law in cases where all the involved parties are muslims.This includes cases involving; personal status, marriage, divorce and inheritance. This is limited in that, the High Court still has jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases and accept appeals on the decisions of the Kadhi courts.

Government's institutions of learning sometimes prevented students from putting on religious attires such as hijabs, turbans and head scarfs. They argue that putting on these attires is a violation of their school uniforms policies. In September 2012, The High court in Nairobi ruled in favour of the Kenya High school that banned muslims from wearing hijabs and the Akorinos from using head scarf while in school.

This study observed that Muslim leaders argued that the 2009 census results intentionally under-counted muslims in Kenya to reduce their political power. At the same time the government in its fight against terrorism has made it almost impossible for muslim youths to acquire national identity cards which is compulsory in registering as a voter and in

⁷⁹Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life Tolerance and Tension;Islam and Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa 2010.

voting, accessing financial and government services. The muslim leaders have also accused the government of unfairly arresting and deporting muslim scholars in the name of curbing violent extremism and terrorism.

4.7 Chapter Summary.

This study surmise that the state and religion appeal to different sources of authority. They however interact with each other in different ways including: interdependence and rivalry, political power over religious authority, supremacy of religion over the state or total withdrawal of religion from political governance. States in Africa have defined their relationships with religions in the constitution with some having state religions while other maintain secularity. The government of Kenya has practices that impact on religious practices even in the secular nature of Kenya.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.0 Introduction.

This chapter gives a detailed summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the research study. The study had centred on three specific objectives which are: To examine when and how religious identities are politically mobilized in Kenya; To investigate the role of religious convictions in Kenya's political elections and To investigate the nexus between religion and politics in Kenya.

5.1 Summaries

Based on the specific objectives, the research established the following:

5.1.1 Religious identities and politics in Kenya.

Religious identities and politics are linked and play complimentary roles in Kenya from the colonial to the post-independence era as exemplified by faith based organisations offering education and health services in Kenya. In political matters, religious notions are usually

invoked even though Kenya is a secular state. Islam has been politicised in Kenya to challenge Christians' domination in the central government, political institutions and political parties.

5.1.2 Religious convictions and elections.

Christianity, Islam and Traditional African religions allow the practice of elections. While in Kenya religion has been used to influence voting and election outcomes not only in independent Kenya but also in the era of British colonial rule in Kenya.

5.1.3 The nexus between religion and governance in Kenya

Religions place their authority in supra-human beings while the authority of governments is based on their legitimate use of force and violence in a given territory. In Kenya, religious denominations have a privilege in national political ceremonies, presidential inauguration and opening of parliament in spite of Kenya not having a state religion. In Kenya it is compulsory for all religions to be registered by the Registrar of societies. There are religious holidays in Kenya which are usually national holidays in Kenya they are: Good Friday, Easter Monday, Christmas and Eid ul Fitr. Kadhi courts are constitutionally mandated to resolve cases of personal status, marriage, divorce and inheritance involving Muslim parties. While the government's fight against terror has unfairly targeted Muslims and ethnic Somalis.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concluded that although Kenya is a secular state, religion is a key variable in the politics and governance of Kenya.

Even though election outcomes have been influenced by religious convictions and mobilization, other factors that affect outcomes of elections in Kenya are : ethnicity, historical factors, geographical location, presence of challengers and the political and development records of political aspirants.

5.3 Recommendations.

The Researcher proposes the following areas for further research:

- Religion and socio-economic development in Kenya.

- Religion as a counter narrative for radical islamism and terrorism in Kenya.

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APPENDIX A.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your religion?.....
2. Does your religious convictions influence or motivate your political choices during elections and referendum?(Yes or No).....Explain your answer.....
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.....
.....
.....
3. When policies are formulated by the government on various issues (for example policies on education and counter terrorism issues),do you analyse and critique them from your religious convictions?(Yes or No).....Why?.....
4. In the formulation of government policies at the national and county levels,should religion be taken into account? (Yes or No).....Why?.....
.....
.....
5. Do you think that in the practise of politics and governance Kenya is a secular state as provided for in the constitution? (Yes or No).....Explain your answer.....
6. Do your religious convictions determine whether you support or oppose the government in power?(Yes or No).....
7. In relating with the members of the Opposition and their political parties in terms of supporting or opposing their ideologies and undertakings is it as a result of your religious convictions ?(Yes or

No).....Illustrate citing an example.....
.....

8. Do you think that religious organisations and institutions such as National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCCK),Hindu Council of Kenya (HCK) and the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEM) among others play a key role in nurturing national cohesion and development?(Yes or No).....Explain.....

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What religion do you profess?.....
2. Do you think religion can be separated from politics and governance? (Yes or No)

Explain your answer

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3. Does religion influence your way of voting?

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4. Is religion involved in policy making both at national and county level?.....

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5. What role should religion play in politics and governance? Explain

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