

YOUTH IDENTITIES IN AN URBANISING AND ETHNICALLY
FRAGMENTED SOCIETY: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a
Masters degree in Political Science and Public Administration
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DECLARATION

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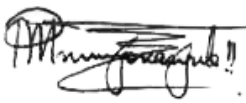
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DEDICATION

To my wife Judy Awuor

And children

Muchigi, Jamalla, Rading and Ailah.

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ABSTRACT

This research looks at youth identities in an urbanizing and ethnically fragmented society like Kenya. The objective of the research is to see whether ethnic identities are constructed by circumstance and are not innate and fixed. The justification for the research is to explore a new approach to nationalism that is grounded on an overarching and unifying philosophy that transcends ethnic identities. The research was informed by the constructionist theory of ethnic formation which asserts that human beings construct their identities contrary to the primordialist thinking that ethnic identities are innate and determined. The research used secondary data from a youth survey conducted by the Agha Khan East African institute. The Youth survey had adopted a descriptive survey design that used face to face interviews. The survey interviewed 1,800 respondents from every region in Kenya. Sample sizes per region were calculated by application of the population proportion size method using Kenya 2009 census figures. Data analysis used descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The researcher sought permission from the Agha Khan East African Institute to use their data. Findings showed that environment in urban and rural Kenya are quite different especially in the amounts and quality of information the youth are exposed to. The study also found that the youth identify themselves variously as Kenyans, young people, children of God/Allah, by family and tribe in that order. These findings are consistent with the constructionist theory that identities are constructed. The findings also infer that a national identity can be constructed through public policy. The study urges the Kenyan government to use deliberate socialization policies to inculcate a sense of nationalism by using narratives that transcend ethnic identities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Like countries that have a multi ethnic population, Kenya has evolved a toxic form of identity politics that has become an existential threat to the nation. To address the inherent instability, Kenyans have sought to create long term solution by making constitutional changes that define and protect ethnic and group rights. However, despite promulgating a new constitution in 2010, the country found itself again mired in ethnically divisive politics during 2013 and 2017 election campaign season suggesting that the legal changes were not effective. In fact in 2017, the extent of disaffection was so strong that for the first time in Kenya's history, communities in opposition parties started agitating to secede. Just like previous occasions, after some truce was hammered out between the ruling party and the opposition, the aftermath of the 2017 elections was followed by agitation for changes to the constitution in order to fix the same issues that had prompted constitutional changes in the past.

This thesis is prompted by the idea that the cycle of election violence will continue as long as Kenyans solution to her endemic instability limits itself to fixing legal and constitutional clauses instead of drilling down to the underlying sociological causes. In this regard, the research takes the alternative approach of seeking solution in the sociology of ethnicity with the view of finding shared characteristics that can be used to unify Kenyans. In line with this thinking, this research interrogates how youth identify themselves with the aim of finding universal traits that are shared by humanity and which can form the bedrock of a shared national character. This approach is informed by the liberal philosophy which argues that the shared characteristic of humanity is an evolving consciousness that actualizes by interacting with the environment. According to this worldview, the cultures and religion found in a community at any given time are merely temporary markers that are a reflection of the experience of human consciousness in time and space. In that regard, a society has to drill down to understanding the nature of the human essence that creates the markers. This chapter starts by giving the historical background to ethnic conflicts in Kenya in order to contextualize the enormity of the existential threat posed

by ensuing identity politics. The background will lay the foundation for presenting the research question and objectives: justification and the scope of the research.

1.1 Background to the Study

Historically, ethnic identities have both been an asset as well as a liability in modern and independent African states. As an asset, ethnic identities have provided African communities a strong sense of pride and rootedness in a world that is constantly changing. As a liability, ethnicity has been a destabilizing factor which has engendered conflict and inhibited evolution of nationalism. In African democracies where competitive politics has taken root, the political class has often exploited ethnic loyalties with promises that their victory will secure jobs and economic development for the community that supports them. By linking prosperity of an ethnic group to governance, the ensuing competition for public office has inexorably mutated into destabilizing intra-ethnic struggle to control political power.

To resolve the ensuing conflicts, African countries have resulted to promulgating various ethnic policies best exemplified by Nigerian and Ethiopian constitutional amendments. Nigeria for instance has provided in her constitution the Federal Character Principal or FCP which aims to ensure that the composition of the public service is inclusive and reflects the face of the nation. The FCP provides for equitable allocation of political offices across ethnic groups in order to achieve integrity, protection of minority rights and equity. However despite these constitutional provisions Nigeria continues to experience socio-political instability. Prominent cases include sustained calls for secession by the Igbo community for alleged denial of political equality and demands by communities along the Niger Delta to control regional resources. Other ethnically rooted conflicts include those between Hausa-Fulani peoples and Yoruba-speaking peoples of the southwest as well as tensions stemming from conflicts between the Southern Christian and Muslim north (Yahaya, 2018).

Like Nigeria, Ethiopia sought the constitutional route to foster a stable ethnically diverse and equitable society. In regards to Ethiopia, the country opted for ethnic Federalism to address the challenge of unifying a society comprising close to 80 ethnic groups that are also divided along cross cutting issues such as religion. Despite these constitutional provisions, Ethiopia's political

history continues to be marred by cyclical ethnic violence as well as threats of secession by various communities due to inability to resolve the challenges of resource and political equity (Negosie, 2018).

Like other African countries, Kenya's multi ethnic character has both been an asset as well as a liability for although citizens are proud of their disparate ethnic identities the country has often degenerated into ethnic based violence. Like other countries cobbled together from many ethnic groups, political competition invariably leads to conflict due to political mobilization along ethnic lines. Typically, ethnic tensions ratchet upwards during periods of heightened political campaigns (Eifert, Miguel, Posner, 2010) which balkanize the country into ethnic voting blocs that produce election results that are no better than an ethnic census (Bratton, Kimenyi, 2007). In many cases heightened ethnic polarization has exploded into violence over disputed election results with the most serious incident occurring in 2007 when Kenya nearly descended into civil war.

In the Kenyan case a number of factors in pre-colonial and colonial Kenya have contributed to the ethnic conflict. Firstly, the onset of colonialism saw most of the territory that is now Kenya falling under British administration with the establishment of East African Protectorate in 1895. The Protectorate was renamed Kenya colony in 1920 and comprised current boundaries save for 10 mile Coastal strip which was merged at independence (Hornsby, 2012). The colonial period was the turning point in ethnic relations due to colonial land policies, settler occupation and the impact of new social economic order. A classic example of colonial policies that has to this date continued to influence ethnic relations was restriction of communities to administrative regions. For ease of managing and administering a vast territory with diverse communities and cultures, the colonial administration divided the new protectorate along ethnic lines into eight provinces with each having an ethnic majority. Each province was divided further into districts which again were based on ethnic groupings. As a result of this distribution, the Luos are the dominant community in Nyanza which is also settled by the Kisii community. The Luhyas are associated with Western Province and the Kikuyus with Central Province. Other communities such as the Somalis and other Cushites are associated with North Eastern Province while the Kalenjins and Masais are associated with the North and South Rift Valley respectively. The Miji Kenda are the

dominant communities in the coastal province while Kambas, Meru and Embu communities are associated with the Eastern Province. To this day this regional settlement of communities has not changed much except in the big urban centers such as Nairobi and Mombasa. The effect of this administrative colonial policy was to associate communities with regions so that besides cultural distinctions ethnic identities were fortified by geographical or territorial dimension (Ogot, 1967). The regional settling of communities has also continued to impact ethnic relations because it provides boundaries for measuring and comparing economic prosperity. Since a region is associated with a community, its level of economic development is often used by tribal kingpins as irrefutable evidence of how an ethnic group has been treated shabbily by the government of the day. In the hands of a wily tribal Kingpin the regional economic disparity becomes an effective instrument for ethnic mobilization.

The settlement of Europeans was also to have a profound and lasting effect on Kenyan politics and ethnic relations. Between 1902 and 1915, the colonial government appropriated 20 per cent of the best land in the Kenyan Highlands and declared it Crown Land reserved for the white immigrants (Hornsby, 2012). By the time of independence the areas of white settlement were better developed because of preferential treatment by the colonial government resulting in uneven regional development. Since Kenyan ethnic communities were settled regionally, the fact that some areas were better developed bequeathed comparative economic advantages that have contributed to extant regional inequalities to this date.

Besides disparities that resulted from differences in unequal regional development, colonialism also resulted in unequal development in human capital along ethnic lines in what is referred to as cultural division of labor (Hechter, 1974). The cultural division of labor as explained by Hechter refers to a pattern of structural discrimination where ethnic groups are assigned specific occupations supposedly due to their cultural predispositions. After independence, such division of labor led to ethnic tensions not only because it created regional disparities but also because it created ethnic enclaves in both the labor force and workplaces. In addition, the change from traditional to modern capitalist economies exacerbated the comparative regional development because various tribal modes of production began to be displaced by a capitalist system that is based on competition over factors of production and resources (Leys, 1975). The fact that

communities were at different levels of capitalism at independence meant that the Kenyan population was cultural differentiated from the onset with some able to adopt better to the emerging economy than others. Moreover, since each region is endowed with different climates and natural resources, the free market economy enabled some areas to take off and others to remain moribund.

After independence, various factors including, economic development policies, treatment of land formerly occupied by white settlers and post- independence security were to affect ethnic relation. Regarding economic policy, the government development strategy as delineated in Sessional Paper Number 10 of 1965 advocated for channeling of investments to areas that would give the highest and quickest returns to the country's economy even if it meant unequal treatment of the regions (Hornsby, 2012). Given the historical inequalities of the various regions, the effect of the developmental strategy was to exacerbate regional economic disparities such that, to this day, the sessional paper is cited as the primary cause of economic inequalities and ethnic marginalization in Kenya.

Government land policy was another factor to stoke ethnic feelings especially in the Rift Valley. As noted earlier, for administrative reasons, the division of Kenya into ethnic enclaves by colonial government had the effect of adding a regional dimension to people's identity. The strong sense of entitlement to a certain region became a source of conflict because the locals felt the non-indigenous communities should go back to their County of origin. On their part, the non-indigenous communities felt that the right to own land anywhere in Kenya was enshrined in the constitution and none has a right to kick them out of land they had purchased on willing buyer willing seller basis. The conflict of indigenes and foreigners was further exacerbated by supply and demand issues. From the demand side, land is a much sought after economic resource because subsistence farming is the primary source of income for close to 80% of the Kenyan population and many consider owning land as an inalienable right. On the supply side, only 10% of Kenyan land is arable. Considering that the mainstay of 80% of Kenyan is agriculture, the supply and demand factors makes land a catalyst for ethnic competition.

The uneasy relationship between the indigenes and the non-indigenes land owners took a turn for the worst with the advent of multi-party politics. The rise of ethnic parties immediately rendered the loyalty of the immigrant land owner suspect and provided excuses for settling long simmering issues. During the 1991-92 political campaigns, such suspicion resulted in the cleansing of “foreigners” in order to ensure that the local candidates were elected with little opposition. Ethnic cleansing was especially rampant in the Rift Valley because unlike other parts of Kenya where indigenous communities took over the land left by departing white settlers, the government chose to open the Rift Valley to land buying companies. This created resentment amongst the indigenous community and resulted in calls for mass eviction of the new settlers (Kakai, 2000). The 2007 post-election violence which resulted in the killings of 1,200 people and displacement of 350,000 is often attributed to these unresolved historical injustices (Nyanchonga, 2008). The irony of the situation was that, even before the creation of ethnic enclaves by the colonial administration, few of the so called local communities had lived on the land long enough to claim it (Hornsby, 2012). History shows that few of the ethnic communities had settled on the land for long and where this happened, their occupancy rights was legitimized by the universal principal of conquests, purchase and labor investments (Hornsby 2012). By all standards, the ethnic cleansing of immigrant land owners from the Rift Valley accentuated ethnic cleavages and demonstrated the polarizing nature of political parties.

When multi-party politics resumed in 1992, politicians in the multi-party era formed ethnic parties in order to mobilize ethnic bloc votes. As a mobilization strategy the elite used the pitch that was tested during the single party era that voting for the tribal candidate would bring development. Another strategy used to mobilize ethnic voters was to appeal to the sense of pride of a community by selling the idea that it would bring great honor and prestige for anyone from the tribe to occupy a position of high office such as the Presidency. The net effect of these strategies for mobilizing ethnic blocs was to fragment Kenyan communities even more by raising the stakes associated with a community capturing executive positions in the government. Legacy of the adverse effects of identity politics has been cyclical violence during elections and calls for cession by opposition leaders.

To address the cyclical violence endemic in its multi ethnic society, Kenya like Nigeria and Ethiopia promulgated a new constitution in 2010 that divided the country into devolved units. Since Kenyan communities are settled regionally, the division of the country into counties had the effect of creating ethnic Bantustans where communities could exercise political hegemony. With each county being allocated funds from the central government according to an agreed formula, Kenyans thought the constitutional innovation would bring an end to cyclical violence that had been engendered by complaints over distribution of national resources. However and notwithstanding the new constitutional guardrails, ethnic violence erupted again after Kenya's 2017 elections indicating that the safeguards built into the 2010 constitution did not address the fundamental problems. Ominously and for the first time in Kenya's history, election losers started agitating for cessation because they felt that the system had failed their communities again.

As the preceding review of Kenya's political history illustrates, despite the fact that ethnic competition has been the primary source of instability in Kenya, solutions to cyclic violence has focused on designing appropriate legal solutions without interrogating the nature of the ethnic person the solutions are supposed to benefit. In mathematics, such an approach is analogous to trying to solve an algebraic equation prior to defining the key variables. In the Kenyan political context, the unknown variable that is never interrogated and which contributes to cyclical violence is the nature of ethnic groups: their origins and implication to the philosophy of man.

The importance of understanding the philosophy of man is best illustrated in its centrality in both Marxist and liberal thought. For both Karl Marx and John Stuart Mill, the fathers of Marxism and liberalism respectively, a human being was conceived as an evolving essence that requires unfettered freedoms to actualize his specie being (Sibley, 1970). While Karl Marx considered the route to human actualization being freedom to access productive resources, John Stuart Mill considered provisions and protection of inalienable liberties as key to personal actualization. In both cases, the need to help the human spirit actualize to full potential became the moral imperative for constructing Marxist and liberal democracies. Long after the death of both men, the fate of both Marxist and liberal political systems have depended on their ability to create a suitable environment for the human spirit to thrive. While communism failed because of inability

to organize society according to Karl Marx conception of man, liberalism has endured the test of time because it was able to protect the freedoms that enabled the human spirit to thrive.

Taking the queue from the stability evidenced in liberal democracies, this thesis therefore argues that, instead of constitutional amendments, Kenyans must harken back to the philosophy of man in order to develop lasting solutions to the problem of ethnically inspired political violence. This idea mirrors the thinking of African founding fathers who subscribed to socialist ideology which they considered consistent with African conception of man and society. Tanzania's founding President Nyerere for instance sought to introduce an African version of socialism which he regarded to be closer to African conception of society. Accordingly, the President promulgated the Ujamaa economic experiment which sought to organize citizens into communal villages with the aim of replicating local lifestyles before advent of colonialism. Towards the end of his presidency, Mwalimu had to abandon his Ujamaa experiment because it was not giving the expected results.

Despite being the preferred ideology in many African countries immediately after Independence, African socialism was abandoned across the continent when it did not bring the expected economic results. Part of the reason for the failure was the fact that, even from a Marxist perspective, the culture found in a society in any given time is a product of prevailing circumstance. Effort by African leaders to build a social system that replicates the past was therefore the engineering equivalent of trying to build a house on quicksand. Mindful of this history of African socialism, this thesis therefore proposes a solution to African instability that is grounded on the philosophy of man rather than his culture. To that end, the research aims to interrogate how youth from different backgrounds identify themselves to see whether ethnic identities are fixed or variable. The research is informed by constructionist theory of ethnicity which argues that, ethnic identities are constructed and a product of dialectical forces in an environment (Anderson, 1983). The constructionist theory was chosen for two reasons: firstly, the inference that ethnic identities are evolutionary aligns African conception of man to liberal thinking. Secondly, the alignment provides ideological lenses to explain and organize African politics.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Like other African countries, Kenyan political history has been characterized by political instability due to ethnic competition especially around problems of how to share economic resources. To eliminate ethnic competition, Kenya like other independent African states has banked on constitutional provisions to arbitrate the process of how to allocate resource. Inherent in the legalistic solution has been a primordialist conception of ethnicity that is premised on the idea that ethnic identities are given and innate and the only option for a country under such circumstance is to use the legal system to allocate resources. However despite promulgating a new constitution in 2010, Kenya found herself mired in election violence again in 2013 and 2017 elections suggesting that the legalistic solutions were not working. Moreover, using the visible hand of the legal system to address inequalities has had the additional adverse effects of entrenching and reifying ethnic identities and therefore exacerbating an already bad situation. Strangely, although it is recognized that the underlying source of conflict is ethnic fragmentation, proffered solution have not tried to interrogate how African conceptualizes ethnic identities. If anything, ethnic identities have been considered both innate and determined and all that is required is an appropriate legal system to maintain ethnic harmony.

To bring an end to recurrent ethnic conflicts, this study seeks to focus on the theory of ethnicity which have been overlooked so far. The thesis is informed by the social constructionist theory which argues that ethnic identities are mental constructs that are a product of the way people are socialized. Taking this argument further, the thesis hypothesizes that, if ethnic identities are constructed then it is possible to construct a shared national identity that transcends ethnic identities. To that end, the research aims to study how Kenyan youth, with urban and rural backgrounds, identify themselves with the hope of seeing whether identities are constructed or innate. Evidence that youth from urban areas see themselves differently from their rural counterparts will be interpreted in two ways. Firstly the fact that youth identify themselves differently will be construed as confirmation that ethnic identities are not determined or inherent in the genes. Secondly, indication that youth from urban areas identify themselves differently from their rural counterparts will be considered as proof that the environment influences human identity. Taken together, the inference that ethnicity is constructed will provide the confidence to

argue that it is also possible to construct a shared national identity as a solution to ethnic fragmentation and strife.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of the research is to interrogate whether youth identities are fixed and innate or whether they vary in time and space. This objective seeks to validate the social constructionist theory which argues that ethnicity is not innate or fixed but nurtured by the environment. The specific research objectives will be:

1. To examine if there are differences in the social environment in rural and urban settings in Kenya.
2. To examine how youth in urban and rural Kenya identify themselves

1.4 Research Questions

The two research objectives will be interrogated by the following questions:

1. Is the state of education, upbringing, information, value systems and sense of civic responsibility different in urban and rural centers in Kenya?
2. Are the way urban and rural youth identify themselves determined by factors such as age, education, work experience, gender, religion and political environment?

1.5 Justification for the study

The aim of the research is to present evidence to align African philosophy of man with the liberal philosophy of man. According to the liberalism of John Stuart Mill, man is an evolving essence that actualizes himself through interaction with his environment (Mill, 1976). According to this liberal concept of man, the culture and history of a community at any given time is a synthesis of the interaction between man and his environment. By affirming that ethnic identities are both constructed and change in time and space, the research hopes to make an important linkage between African culture and liberalism.

The significance of the linkage with liberalism cannot be gainsaid. To start with, African ontology gleaned from disparate traditional mythologies views man as a created being whose possibilities are determined by divine design. This creation theory engenders many problems because as determined beings, humans cannot have the free will to operate in a liberal economic

and political system. As determined beings, it means that the economic question of who gets what has to be resolved constitutionally through the visible hand of the government rather than the invisible hand of the market. As the history of Kenya's multi-party politics shows, negotiations around how to equitably share resources often leads to ethnic polarization at great risk to the national stability. Affirmation of a universal African identity that changes in time and space aligns African philosophy to capitalist free market ideas of how to allocate resource. The linkage with liberalism also opens the way towards development of much needed ideological and issue based politics.

An equally important consequence of the research is the fact that the pervasive conception of man as a determined beings means that the African is trapped in his ethnic identity and culture. Over the years this has created conflicts and existential confusion as the African tries to hold on to his culture in an environment that is clearly changing due to advances in technology and science. Affirmation that human beings create their culture and history helps to resolve and advance this important cultural debate.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focused on youth cohort between 18-35 years of age from all the 47 counties in Kenya. This is as representative as one can get with a study whose aim was to capture a wholesome picture of national trends. The research used secondary data that was collected by the Agha Khan East African institute in 2016. The choice of the youth cohort and the timing are important in answering the research question. The age group is important because it means that the oldest respondent was born in Kenya within the last 35 years. More than any other generation this cohort has grown up in an environment with heightened social influences due to globalization, urbanization, increasing use of the social media and a more inclusive education system. The generation is therefore an ideal sample for finding whether ethnic identities are innate and fixed or constructed and dynamic.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

The chapter reviews literature on ethnic identities as well as the theoretical framework that informs the research. The literature review, addresses itself to the research question of whether ethnic identities are innate and therefore determined or dynamic and a product of the environment. The research question is informed by a constructionist theoretical framework that holds that ethnic identities are constructed and that different social environment inexorably produce people who identify themselves differently.

2.1 Literature Review

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a chapter on literature review summarizes the works the researcher consulted in order to understand the research problem. In this respect, the literature that was consulted for this research can be divided thematically into four areas of interest as follows:

1. African conception of man
2. Origins of African ethnic groups
3. Impact of the environment on ethnic identities
4. Theories of ethnic identities in Africa

2.1.1 African conception of Man

The thesis is informed by the idea that a human being is an evolving essence that constructs its identity and history as it interacts with the environment in time and space. Since this is a libertarian conception of man, the research was keen to find an indigenous equivalent because the problems being addressed are situated in Africa. Literature reviewed focused on works by Imafidon (2012) and Mbiti (1969). According to Imafidon, human beings in the African context were considered an extension of a holistic world that included the sensible (material being) and a non-sensible world that included the gods and the world of ancestral spirits (Imafidon 2008). Man's existence was conceived as part of the range of existence arranged in a hierarchical order with the Supreme Being at the apex, followed by ancestral spirits and then the living. Imafaden's

is a mystical world where human destiny is determined and controlled by the supernatural. However while this conception of man could have made sense in pre-scientific Africa, it is woefully inadequate in the modern setting. The concept of man as a created being also suggest a population whose culture and identity is determined and constant. The African cultural experience so far has however been anything but static. Turning to works by Mbiti, the African concept of man is glimpsed in the context of traditional mythologies. In the Abaluhya creation mythology for instance, Mbiti points out that the community believed that God created man so that the sun would have someone to shine on. Similarly, the mythology on the origins of the Kikuyu community holds that God created the first couple and settled it along the slopes of Mount Kenya to live and multiply. In some creation mythology, God was also associated with creating disparate cultural and religious practices. Like the Kikuyu community, the Lozi claimed that God was still on earth when he created the first man while the Lugbara say that God created the first men, husband and wife. In some theories of creation, God was also responsible for creating disparate cultural and religious practices. Thus according to the Lozi, God made different people, each with its own customs, language and values (Mbiti 1969).

The inference from works by Imafidon and Mbiti is that the African conceptualized man as a created being who's potential for change is circumscribed and limited by divine creation. Considering the tremendous changes that have been witnessed in African due to modernization and globalization, the static concept of man that emerges from African mythologies is clearly incapable of explaining his evolving history and current realities.

2.1.2 Origins of African ethnic groups

Literature on how ethnic groups evolved is quite extensive. Studies by Kenyan historians such as Muriuki (1974), Ochieng (1974), Ogot (1967), Were (1967) argue that pre-colonial Kenya was occupied by a mixture of different communities moving and assimilating under the pressures of food shortages, war, population growth and diseases such that community boundaries were constantly changing (Hornsby, 2012) . According to these historians, Kenyan Ethnic communities evolved through a process of encounter and interaction that was still on-going as recent as 1850 resulting in the emergence of highly hybridized Kenyan communities (Ochieng, 1974). An example of such ethnic construction are the Dhuluo speaking community whose fifty

three constituent clans evolved from interactions between plains and highland Nilotes as well as Bantu communities (Odhiambo, 2002). Similarly historical evidence shows that Kikuyu community was a fusion of Gumba, Maasai, Athi and the Okiek communities (Muriuki 1974). Other communities that exemplify ethnic construction in Kenya include the Kalenjin, Maasai, Samburu, Meru, Akamba, Abagusii, Abakuria, Oromo, Somalis, Taitas and Mijikenda (Kakai 2010). The result of this miscegenation was evolution of highly hybridized communities with blurry and constantly changing boundaries (Ochieng 1974; Hornsby, 2010).

A recent example of how communities formed is illustrated by studies of the Wadavidas (commonly known as Taitas) by Bravman (1998). In his study, Bravman observed that, in the later seventeenth and mid eighteenth centuries, the Wadavida were originally discrete groups that were not only socially distinct from each other but often antagonistic. Evidence shows that although the groups spoke different (although related) dialects, over time, inter-regional migration and interaction brought the communities together to form the Wadavida ethnic group.

2.1.3 Impact of the environment on ethnic identities

Literature on how the environment has impacted ethnicity looked at the influence of modernity, politics, economy and technology. According to Gakuru (2002), onset of colonialism brought about new forms of education, economy, politics and even religion that fundamentally changed pre-colonial ethnic identities. The establishment of modern Kenya, first as a British colony and later as independent nation, influenced traditional value systems by bringing together diverse ethnic and racial groups under reengineered political and economic system. Additionally, development of a new education system as well as new ways of earning a living introduced a culture of merit and capitalist values at variance with historical indigenous traditions. These changes were further augmented by introduction of Christianity and liberal political systems that disorganized traditional power centers. A classic example of how these social changes impacted communities was depicted by Fratkin (2001) in his study of pastoralist in East Africa. In his study, Fratkin noted that political and economic challenges resulted in cultural changes to pastoralist culture resulting in increasing social stratification and economic disruption of their way of life. The impact of technology was researched by Karitu (2013) in a study entitled

“Media construction of identity in Kenya”. The study concluded that media exposure does shape individual and group identity.

Various studies also showed that the quest for political empowerment affected ethnic identities in Kenya by encouraging communities to unite in order to increase their bargaining power. The Luhya and the Kalenjin are examples of communities that formed out of the need to empower themselves politically. Thus before colonialism, the many subgroups of the Luhya such as the Maragoli, Wanga, Bukusu and Banyole existed as separate entities (Were, 1974). Similarly, until 1940, the Kalenjins were still referred to as Nandi speaking people consisting of Kipsigis, Nandi, Tugen, Keiyo, Pokot, Marakwet, Saboat and Teriki. The construction of the new community took place during the post-independence period when the Nandi speaking communities came together in order to bargain for political power (Karenga-Munene, 2010).

The critical impact of urbanization on ethnic identities has been researched in various African and Kenyan studies. Studies by Coleman (1954), Schildkrout (2007), Freund (2007) and Kasfir (1979) show that urbanization creates a large population operating outside the direct control of the family and ethnic communities and greatly weakens traditional communal set ups and relationships. By agglomerating people together, urbanization relaxes kinship ties, accelerates social communication between detribalized ethnic groups and in general contributes to national integration (Coleman, 1954). Coleman’s observation was reinforced by various studies by Freund, (2007) and Kasfir (1979). In these studies the researchers noted that Africans have often assimilated into larger ethnic groups in order to find security in confusing urban environment. Examples of such ethnic constructions include the Ibo of Nigeria, Jola of Senegal, Duala of Cameroon and Mijikenda of Kenya. Similar forms of assimilation and ethnic construction was witnessed when ethnic groups from Northern Nigerian became Hausas in Southern state of Ibadan and the ethnic minorities who became Batswanas when they immigrated in urban centers in Botswana.

In studies conducted in South Africa by Rhodes Livingstone Institute, overwhelming evidence showed that ethnic identities changed when groups migrated to the city. In many cases, urban ethnic categories did not correspond to rural “tribal groups” and that new social identities

emerged in the urban setting (Epstein, 1958). Similar research on urban immigrants in Ghana by Schildkrout (2007) found that, while immigrants abandoned many traditional forms of behavior on moving to the city of Kumasi, they did not become assimilated into the local Ashanti society. Instead a new identity emerged that fused Islamic values and some Hausa culture due to the numerical, economic and political pre-eminence of the Hausa in Kumasi. This process of ethnic construction was even more pronounced in subsequent generations that grew up in the city because their reference culture was totally city bred.

In East Africa, a study by Marylyn Brewer (1968) sought to measure what happens when ethnic groups live in close proximity. The concept of social distance was first defined by Professor Park of the University of Chicago who described it as “the grades and degree of understanding and intimacy which characterize personal and social relations generally”. The concept was adopted by Professor Emory S. Bogardus of the University of California who developed the first acceptable scale for measuring inter racial attitudes. The social distance scale comprises a list of sentences describing common social interactions such as family, dating, marriage, employment, church and neighborhoods. Respondents are scored on their position on each statement and each score is analyzed accordingly. The social distance survey can be customized to any society as long as the social cues are known. In East Africa, the study by Brewer (1968) sought to determine the factors that contribute to social distance amongst various tribes. According to the study, social distance toward other ethnic communities increased in direct relation to perceived cultural differences and physical distance. The social distance research was an affirmation that ethnic cleavages can be reduced when communities interact with each other. Although Brewer’s social distance surveys validated the theory that communities become more tolerant when they live in close proximity to each other, it did not give insights into what happens to their identities and whether they can change, which is the gap this research aims to study.

Recent studies in Kenya also confirm the ability of urbanization to influence ethnic identity. In a recent post graduate project, entitled, ‘Youth Socialization in Ethnic Politics in Nairobi City County: The case of Kibra Constituency’, Nyarieko (2017) argued that tribal politics in urban areas contributes in reifying ethnic identities amongst the youth. Giving the experience of one of the respondents, the author illustrated that ethnic conflicts in urban centers causes the youth to

discover identities that were hitherto hidden. In the study, the author gives an example of a respondent who claimed his moment of ethnic awareness occurred when different communities in Kibra started fighting over rent. According to the social identity theory, the sudden awareness of ones identity as a result of a memorable incident is classic example of how ethnic identities are formed. Another important research that sheds light on how Kenyan youth identify themselves was conducted by the Agha Khan East African institute. From the research, Agha Khan East African Institute found that, although conventional wisdom holds that Kenya suffers from deep ethnic cleavages, less than 5% of Kenyan youth identify themselves with their ethnicity first. The institute noted that the study points to an emerging Kenya first identity that could trump tribal forms of identity (Awiti and Scot, 2016).

2.1.4 Theories of ethnic identities in Africa.

The last category of literature the research consulted looked at studies that used a constructionist theoretical framework to explain ethnic origins in Africa. According to Amone (2015) most studies on ethnic origins in Africa were informed by primordialist thinking until the 60s and 70s when it was replaced by constructionist theoretical framework that consider identities as a product of the dialectical forces that are to be found in a community in time and space. This constructionist perspective was investigated by Amone (2015) and Negosie (2018) whose studies look at the evolution of ethnic identities in Uganda and Ethiopia respectively. According to Amone, who studied the Acholi ethnic group in Uganda, the evolution of the community resulted in the coming together of various communities to defend themselves from raids by slave traders. Not only did this shared need for security lead to evolution of a new ethnic group, it also led to evolution of a whole new Acholi language. On his part, Negosie (2018) used an integrated approach that included the primordialist, instrumentalist and constructionist theories to explain how various communities in Ethiopia evolved. For Negosie, none of the theoretical frameworks can satisfactorily explain how African ethnic group originated and one has to use an integrated approach.

In summary, the literature review affirms two dimensions of the constructionist conceptual framework that informs this research. The first dimension is that, ethnic identities are constructed by human interactions and the different social forces that are found in any space and timeframe.

Secondly, the various studies show that the environment does change extant ethnic identities by providing new reasons for individuals to coalesce. This thesis hopes to build on the constructionist nature of ethnic identity validated by the review to propose a solution to recurrent political violence.

2.1.5 Knowledge Gap

The literature review shows that theories of ethnic origins are based on the primordialist theory that one's identity is determined by ancestry. This is despite the fact that disparate studies support the constructionist view that ethnic identities are synthesis of human interactions with the environment. This research aims to elevate the constructionist theory as the best framework to explain disparate ethnic origins. Additionally, the research aims to use the constructionist theory to support the hypothesis that it is possible to construct a shared national identity as a cure for ethnic conflict.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The research is informed by the Social Constructionist theory of ethnicity to address the question, are identities fixed and determined or vary in time and space. Inherent in the research question is the hypothesis that identities are product of the environment and that interrogation of youth from different backgrounds will bring this out. The theory that ethnicity is dynamic is consistent with the views of constructionist such as Weber (1922), Erikson (1991) and Brass (1991) who argued that ethnic identities are situational. The section aims to delineate the salient arguments in the social constructionist theory and its relevance to this research. The section is organized thematically into two sections. The first section looks at the construction of identity at a group level while the second section looks at the same process at individual level.

2.2.1 Social construction of group identities

Social constructionist theory is defined as a theory of knowledge which holds that peoples' understanding of reality is influenced by their interaction with the world (Gergen, 1985). Specifically social constructionist theory argues that ethnic identities are determined or constructed by society and their boundaries are flexible rather than fixed. For a constructionist, ethnic identities are both subjective and objective (Yang, 2000). Ethnic identities are subjective

in the sense that people choose to belong or subscribe to a particular group depending on how they are socialized. At the same time, ethnic identities are an objective concept in that they manifest themselves through overt and objective characteristics such as language and culture. Other perspectives on the subjective formation of ethnicity as well as its overt presentations have come from Tajfel and Barth. According to Tajfel (1978), ethnic groups emerge when discreet individuals who share a common bond coalesce to form a group. Historically, ethnic groups have emerged through aggregation of people who share a common bond such as language, culture, religion and race. Focusing on the objective manifestation of ethnic identity, Barth (1969) argued that ethnic identities are experienced through their overt form such as distinct cultural symbols, language and a membership that is distinguishable by others (Barth, 1969).

Like other theories of ethnic origins, the constructionist school comprises many perspectives. One view by Yancey (1976) is that an ethnic group is an emergent phenomenon that evolves out of the changing social environment. The phenomenon was exemplified by construction of a white American ethnic group from interactions between Italian, Jewish and Polish immigrants during industrialization of various regions in the US. In absence of good transportation system, these groups of immigrants were compelled to live in settlements near the new factories so that they could get to work easily. Thrown together in industrial towns, the immigrants evolved a common pan-ethnic white identity based on shared experiences, similarity in lifestyles and shared interests such as security, churches and schools.

Two other examples of how ethnicity is constructed can be gleaned from works of Jonathan Sarna and Joanne Nagel. Sarna who was a historian, developed what was called a theory of ethnicization (Sarna, 1978) which held that ethnic groups developed due to ascription and adversity. By ascription, Sarna referred to the tendency of assigning ethnic labels to immigrants by government, churches, schools and the media. Examples of this phenomenon was the creation of an Asian American ethnic group from groups comprising the Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese and generally ethnic immigrants from Asia. The agglomerating of the different ethnicities into a single Asian American ethnicity is an example of what Sarna referred to as the capacity of government to create ethnic groups by ascription. Adversity on the other hand, referred to factors such as discrimination, prejudice, persecution and other hostilities that communities are

subjected to and which have the effect of reifying ethnic identities. Sarna's argument was that, any form of adversity creates "them" and "us" divide that has the effect of creating group identities within the ethnic boundaries. Examples of ethnic identities formed from adversity are LGBT communities that have evolved out of discrimination by traditional and mainstream heterosexual world and the African American identity which evolved out of discrimination of blacks in the US.

On her part, Nagel (1999) contended that ethnicity is a socially constructed phenomenon that results from interaction between internal forces and external social forces such as those prevailing in economic and political processes. Using United States of America 1960-1990 Census, Nagel sought to prove her thesis by showing how the identity of Native American evolved due to changing Federal Indian policy, increased American ethnic politics and growing American Indian political activism.

A recent factor that is impacting ethnic identities is the evolution of a ubiquitous new communication technology or NCTS. The rise of the new technology is impacting ethnic identities by breaking geographical barriers and creating a universal society with shared values and culture. Meyrowitz (1985) was among the first people to explore fully the full effect of the new technology on identity. According to Meyrowitz, the new technology weakens or severs connections between physical and social place such that users of the social media feel as one group sharing a common universe. The breakdown of geographical barriers results in propagation of ideas globally leading to evolution of international ethnic groupings united by common values and interests. In Kenya, the increasing awareness of LGBT rights is an example of the impact of globalization and its ability of creating new identities. Similarly, the media has contributed to reifying ethnic identities in Kenya by playing up political stories which are often based on ethnic competition. Ethnic consciousness is especially heightened during election periods due to ethnic mobilization by politicians looking for votes.

The constructionist theory of ethnic origin emerged as the pre-eminent theory for explaining ethnic origins in the 1970s. Prior to 1970, the primordialist theory of ethnic origin was the leading view and as the name implies, it attributed ethnic affiliation to primordial factors such as lineage and cultural ties. To primordialists, it is factors such as kinship, culture and language

(Geerts, 1973; van den Berghe, 1981) that give rise and sustain ethnicity. Just as constructionist can be divided into various schools, Primordialist can be divided into sociobiological and culturalist where the former group emphasizes kinship as the glue that binds an ethnic group. According to sociobiological school, ethnic groups started from a nuclear family that grew into a larger extended family. Culturalists on the other hand claim that ethnic groups are connected through shared culture such as language and religion.

The primary criticism of the sociobiological primordialist is that individuals can become a member of an ethnic group without being blood relatives. For instance, there are many individuals from different ethnic backgrounds that become assimilated into a host community where they have lived for long. Such type of ethnic membership happens through acculturation where individuals start affiliating with an ethnic group by identifying with its values, cultures and norms. An example in Kenya's history was the family of Kikuyu Chief Waiyaki wa Hinga that traces its ancestry from a Purko Maasai from Laikipia (Regeru, 2017).

While the sociobiological perspective of the primordialist theory could not stand up to empirical test the culturalist perspective is still valid and can be categorized under constructionist school in the sense that there are many individuals that aggregate together due to shared culture. Thus the constructionist culturalist perspective would argue that ethnic groups are formed when people who share the same cultural practices come together. The culturalist perspective resonates with many Kenyans because many identify with ethnic groups with similar language and culture. However the socio-biologist is also common in Kenya where many believe that ethnic communities were constituted by cultural and biological ties due to common ancestral ties, values, myths and language. Evidence by historians such as Muriuki and Ogot shows such claims are however not correct.

The retreat from essentialist and primordialist theories of ethnic origins in Africa is exemplified by a study on the origins of the Acholi community by Amone (2015). In the study, the author notes that the Acholi ethnic group evolved from a coalition of disparate communities that were compelled to come together to fight off the threat posed by slave traders.

Although considered as a separate theory of ethnic origin, the instrumentalist view can also be considered as part of the constructionist perspective in that ethnic groups are depicted as constructed by circumstance rather than being innate. For instrumentalists, shared interests, be it political or economic powers, are the primary factors that bring individuals together. The instrumentalist school views ethnicity as a strategic tool for furthering group interests by providing numerical strength that makes it easy to fight and compete for national resources with other groups (Glazer and Moynihan, 1975). A nuanced version of the instrumentalist school is the rational choice theory which argues that people act to promote their social economic positions by minimizing the costs and maximizing the benefits of joining a group. The salient point of this perspective is that, ethnicity is constructed through rational calculation of the economic advantage of joining a social group. In Kenya, the Luhyas and Kalenjins are example of ethnic communities that evolved according to the instrumentalist theory. In a country where prosperity for a community is deemed to depend on capturing executive power, both communities are examples of aggregation of disparate ethnic groups that came together in order to gain numerical advantage in the fight for power.

2.2.2 Construction of individual ethnic identities

The first part of theoretical framework looked at the constructionist theory and how ethnic groups emerge. This section answers the question: why and how do individuals acquire an ethnic identity. As an answer to queries of how individuals acquire ethnic identities, many writers in social science have argued that human being seek ethnic identity in order to achieve some psychological balance (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Some of the earliest proponents of this argument stated that individuals need a strong sense of identification in order to maintain a sense of well-being especially in a multi ethnic society where one can be overwhelmed by a sense of being different (Lewin, 1948). According to this school of thought, people do not seek to find their identity in an ethnically homogenous community because one does not experience the feeling of being different.

The second question that is addressed in this section is how ethnic identities are formed at an individual level. According to Erikson (1968), development of ethnic identity is a progressive process that starts from a point of ignorance to full realization of ethnicity. Phinney (1990)

breaks this process of cultural evolution into three stages: the first stage is the unexplored stage where adolescents or adults that are not exposed to other ethnic identities live in a state of ignorance of the question of ethnicity. The second stage is triggered by an event where an adolescent realizes or awakens to the fact that they are different. In this second stage, realization of individuals ethnic difference triggers a process where they immerse themselves in trying to find more of about their uniqueness. Through this process the individual becomes intensely aware of their identity and even starts to reject previous identities. The third stage is called the achieved stage where the individual is fully immersed and strongly identifies with the new found identity. The degree to which individuals immerse themselves in their culture is strictly personal and varies in time and circumstance. It is possible for instance to find an adolescent who although identifying with their fathers ethnicity, may not be conversant or care about the particulars of that culture. In Kenya the difference in the salience of ethnicity is exemplified in situations where many adolescents do not even speak their mother tongue.

In summary, the primary lesson from theories of identity formation is that an individual's ethnicity is constructed and driven by psychological need to find personal balance. That individual ethnic identity is not innate but emerges in an environment where disparate individuals unite around shared interests. A second point that emerges is that, individuals seek to find their identity on finding themselves in an environment that makes them feel different. Accordingly, ethnic identities are meaningless in a homogeneous society and only emerge in an environment where individuals can distinguish themselves from the outside group.

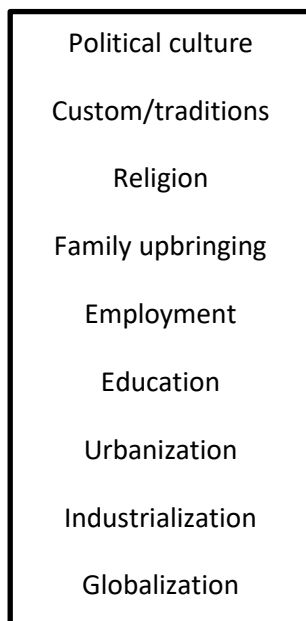
The theories of ethnic origin are indispensable to this thesis in two ways. Firstly they provide a framework to show that ethnicity is constructed by the environment and are not innate. Secondly, the theoretical framework provides various criteria that lend themselves to empirical tests. In the remaining chapters, the study will aim to test whether Kenyan urban and rural environments are different and whether, as a consequence, they create youth with disparate ways of identifying themselves.

2.3 Research Hypothesis

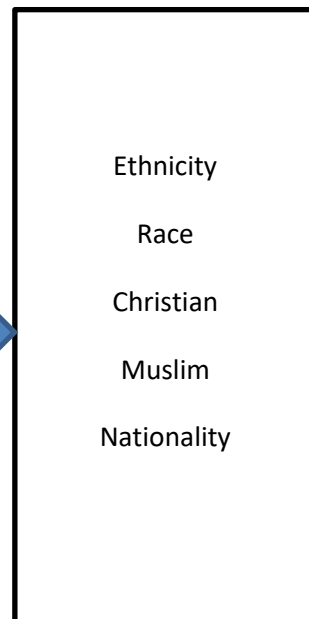
The study hypothesizes that human identities are not fixed or determined and that identity of young people in urban areas will vary from those in rural areas because of the diversity in the two social environments. The hypothesis is consistent with the constructionist theory that the environment influences ethnic identities. Ethnicity for the sake of analysis is the dependent variable while the urban environment is the independent variable.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable



Dependent Variable



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter describes the methodology used in the study. The objective of the research was to find out how Kenyan youth identify themselves and whether how they see themselves is influenced by social interactions and changing environment. Regional disparities in the way the youth identify themselves will be construed as an affirmation that ethnic identities are constructed and dynamic rather than fixed and determined. The research used secondary data from a Youth survey conducted by the Agha Khan East African Institute. The reason for using the secondary data is exhaustively addressed in the data collection section below. The section is organized into the following topics, Research design, Research site and Population, Sampling Method, Data collection, Research ethics and Data Analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The research relied on secondary data from a youth survey conducted by the Agha Khan University East African Institute (AKUEAI) which used a mixed research approach that comprised a descriptive survey as well as focus group discussions. A descriptive survey in this respect involved administering a questionnaire to respondents during data collection. A descriptive survey is the best method where the objective is to collect data on the attitudes, opinions and habits of a community. The method also facilitates analysis of the causal relationship between independent and dependent variable. The independent variable in this case was the environment while the dependent variable was youth identity.

3.2 Research Site and Population

The research site included all the 47 counties in Kenya and covered a youth cohort in the 18-35 years age brackets. This target group comprises a generation that was born in post- independence Kenya that has witnessed many social and political changes. Socially, the lives of this age group has been influenced by improvement in education especially with the commencement of universal free education. More than any other generation, the target population has grown up in a period of unprecedented changes in communication technology that has opened up even the

remotest corners of Kenya to global influences. The political scene in Kenya in the last thirty five years has also been quite tumultuous and ethnically polarizing especially with the return of multi-party politics.

Although the social and political scenes in Kenya have been in a state of flux in the last thirty five years, the effects have not been the same across the country. This is because Kenya is a land of contrast climatically, geographically as well as economically. The contrast between the different social environments is normally more pronounced between urban and rural centers where urban centers usually have stronger economies with more developed social amenities and communication facilities. Countrywide data was collected in order to see whether contrasting environments have influenced development of youth identities.

3.3 Sampling Method and Sample Size

The EAI Youth study set on a sample size of 1,800 while providing a margin of error of +/-3%. The sample size for each region was calculated by application of the Population Proportionate to Size (PPS) method using Kenya national census figures of year 2009. A margin of error of +/- 3% was factored to make allowance for variation in population density in various regions.

Table 1

Detailed Sample Distribution

Region	2009 Census Population (%)	N=1800
Coast	9%	162
N. Eastern	5%	90
Eastern	15%	270
Central	13%	234
Rift Valley	24%	432
Western	11%	198
Nyanza	13%	234
Nairobi	10%	180
Total		1,800
Margin of error +/- 3		

Source: Agha Khan East African institute

Using population figures for each region, the study calculated the sample sizes per region as a ratio of 1,800 or the total country sample size. The sample size per region is shown in table 1 above. The process was repeated to calculate proportion sizes for all the regions for each

country. The sample was further stratified to incorporate proportionate diverse groups of the youth such as female and male, rural and urban, pastoral, poor and affluent. A multi-stage cluster sampling was adopted to ensure every eligible responded had an equal chance of being selected.

3.4 Data Collection

The research did not do any data collection but used secondary data from a Youth Study that was conducted in 2016 by the Agha Khan East African Institute (AKUEAI). The merits of using secondary data were carefully considered by weighing the advantages and disadvantages. The first advantage of using secondary data from the Agha Khan East African Institute was that it matched the objectives of this research in context and target population. For although the objectives of AKUEAI was to capture broader issues such as the values, attitudes, concerns and aspirations of youth in East Africa, the data included information on youth identity which was of interest to this research. Of special importance for the study was comparative data of how urban and rural youth in the 18-35 year age brackets identify themselves. Besides its relevance, the data was quite comprehensive and provided ample comparative data on youth identity by region, education, age groups, gender, employment and faith. The data also facilitated comparison of youth values and civic responsibility both of which helped to give further insights into the nature of the youth identity.

Another important consideration in choosing to use secondary data was the cost in time and money. Since the cost of conducting a nationwide research would have been prohibitive for a private researcher, finding the EAI data was quite fortunate. An equally important consideration in choosing data was whether it was a good representative of the Kenyan population and whether it was current. In this case the sample size of 1,800 (+/- 3) was not only a good representation of the Kenyan population but it also captured information from a wide cross-section of Kenyan society and regions. The data was also quite current being only three years old at the time of doing the research.

The last important advantage that was considered in using secondary data was the credibility of the Agha Khan East African Institute as well as the institution it used to collect the data. In this case, the Agha Khan East African Institute is a well-funded institution that has credibility across

the world. From its profile pages, the institute is a renowned regional policy think tank that was established with the aim of contributing to the development of evidenced based policies. The institute also researches on key policy challenges that arise from multiple interdependent factors that are not readily addressed by traditional policy and decision making. Due to its affiliation with the larger Agha Khan Development network, the institute occupies a unique vantage point to provide a much needed link between policy research and practice. Being part of an international organization, studies are conducted according to the highest international standards and it is able to use pre-eminent professional researchers for data collection and analysis. In the Youth Study, the institute used the services of Infotrak Research and Consulting Limited which is one of the largest research companies in Kenya with a 16 years history and track record of conducting surveys.

The professionalism of the way the research was conducted was quite evident in the data collection. During the data collection, EAI used face to face interviews with representative sample of youth (18-35 years) across Kenya Uganda and Tanzania. The study used Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) method which is an interviewing technique where either the interviewer or respondents uses an electronic device to answer question. The electronic device was loaded with the appropriate questionnaire which for our purpose was semi-structured. In addition to descriptive survey, the study conducted 36 focus group discussions comprising 6-8 participants in order to capture the personal emotions underlying the questions of identity. Within each enumeration areas, selection of households to be interviewed was guided by the left hand rule. After picking a starting point or last interview, the supervisor would use a prior agreed skip interval to select the next house. The skip intervals were five and four for urban and rural areas respectively.

Eight to ten interviews were conducted in each enumeration area. At each sample household, candidates to be interviewed were selected using the Kish Grid. This process required the interviewer to list names of people in the households within the 18-35 age brackets by gender starting with the oldest. The person to be interviewed was identified through a pre-assigned random number that was derived from the Kish Grid. If the selected respondent was not available, the interviewer would visit the house for a second time before moving on to the next

house. The decision of who is urban or rural youth was decided during the face to face interview. Urban youth were defined as anyone born and raised and attended primary and High school education in the city. Rural students were born and raised in rural areas and attended primary and secondary schools in the rural areas.

Notwithstanding the many advantages of using secondary data availed by the Agha Khan East African institute, there were also considerable and constraining disadvantages. One of the primary disadvantages was the fact that the data was collected to meet the research objectives of the EAI Youth study. These objectives were to find out youth perspectives on nine issues that included, ethnic identity, values, political participation, integrity, Government, the future, aspirations, education dividend and employment. Accordingly to be of any use, it necessitated this research to align its research question to available data. While the secondary data did provide useful information to meet the research objectives, it narrowed the scope of this research.

A second disadvantage of using secondary data was the fact that lack of interaction with respondents denied the researcher an opportunity to conduct a qualitative research that would have given some insights into the answers given by the youth. These limitations were however not of substance since what this research mostly needed was quantitative data to meet the two objectives of this research. Specifically, even if the secondary data was collected to meet the objectives of the Agha Khan institute, the data satisfied the objectives of this research in that, first and foremost, it enabled this study to compare identities of urban and rural youth. Secondly, it enabled comparison of social environment in urban and rural areas.

3.5 Data Measurement

The unit of analysis in the research was a young person within the 18-35 age brackets. To measure how youth identify themselves, respondents were given a multiple choice question with possible eight possible answers to choose from as shown below.

1. A young person first
2. A citizen of Kenya/Uganda/Tanzania first
3. An East African first
4. A Member of _____ Tribe first

5. A member of your family first
6. A resident of _____ town/neighborhood etc first
7. A child of God/Allah first
8. Other

The responses for each choice was added up and presented as a percentage of the total sample.

3.6 Data Analysis

For independent researchers, the Youth Survey data is accessible online and through a web based query interface at <http://data.eadialogueseries.org>. The statistical software package allows the researcher to define a youth cohort by country, gender, education, religion, urban, rural and age group. After defining the profile to analyze, the researcher is able to query how the chosen cohort responded to the multiple choice question on identity. The results of the query were presented in tabular or graphic form and the response for each choice was presented as average or absolute numbers. For comparison purposes, the results for urban and rural youth were presented side by side to facilitate comparison. The data could be uploaded on a Microsoft Excel version 2010 for analysis and presentation.

3.7 Research Ethics

The researcher asked for permission to use the Youth Survey data from the Agha Khan East African Institute. The request was through a letter to the Provost of the Agha Khan East African Institute (See appendix 1) outlining the nature of this research. The Institute not only gave their permission but they also made their site accessible.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes and discusses the data from the research. The objective of the research was to find out whether ethnic identities are fixed and whether they are impacted by the environment. To interrogate these objectives, the research analyzed data on how urban and rural youth in Kenya identify themselves with the objective of answering two research questions. The first component of the research question focused on whether the social environment in urban areas is manifestly different from rural areas. To interrogate this question, the research collected comparative data on whether there were any differences in educational, family upbringing and information environment in urban and rural areas. The choice of this set of data was informed by the theoretical framework which asserts that the educational, family and informational environment are critical in formation of personal and ethnic identities.

The second research question addressed itself to whether the social environment in urban and rural areas are so different as to create youth with different ethnic identities. To answer this question the research compared the various ways youth in urban and rural settings identify themselves. Of primary importance to the research was what percentage of the respondents identified themselves by tribe. The question put to the respondents in the Youth survey was: looking at all that makes you who you are, would you define yourself as:

- a. A young person first
- b. A citizen of Kenya
- c. An East African first
- d. A Member of _____ Tribe first
- e. A member of your family first
- f. A resident of _____town/neighborhood etc first
- g. A child of God/Allah first
- h. Other

The research used secondary data that was collected by the Agha Khan East African Institute and accessed through the website <http://data.eadialogueseries.org>. where it is saved thematically under headlines such as identity, values, media use, personality and other virtues. To query this data the researcher was able to test various youth cohorts using various demographic attributes. The query screen was menu driven and the information was presented statistically and graphically. Statistical data was presented in percentages as well as in absolute terms.

4.1 Demographic Information

To address research objectives, the analysis was informed by the constructionist theory of ethnicity that informs the whole research. To achieve the objectives of the research, analysis interrogated and compared the relationships of key demographic variables that included gender, education, age and locality. Since the objectives of the research was to interrogate the impact of the environment on construction of ethnic identities, the analysis compared data collected from urban respondents with those from rural areas in order to see whether change in environment created youth who identified themselves differently.

4.2 Analysis by Gender

Table 2 shows that 1,853 respondents were interviewed comprising 1,017 males and 836 females. While the researchers had set a sample size of 1,800, it was sometimes necessary to conduct some additional interviews in one region in anticipation of possible shortfalls in another. Accordingly, although the research set off with a target sample of 1,800 the total number interviewed had a margin of error of +/- 3 per cent. This had been pointed out in the planning stage.

Table 2

Ethnic Identities by Gender

Gender	Urban		Rural		N=1,853	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Male	350	53.7	667	55.5	1,017	54.9
Female	302	46.3	534	44.5	836	45.1
TOTAL	652	100	1,201	100	1,853	100

+/-3 per cent margin of error

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

Analyzed by locality, 652 people were interviewed in Kenyan urban centers and 1,201 people were interviewed in rural areas. Focusing on urban centers, 350 males and 302 females were interviewed while 667 males and 534 females were interviewed in rural areas. Table 3 shows that a total of 286 youth between 18-20 years were interviewed comprising 15.43% of the respondents and 778 youth in the 21-25 years age group were interviewed comprising 41.99% of the respondents. Similarly 558 youth in the 26-30 years age group were interviewed comprising 30.11 % of the respondents and 231 youth in the 31-35 age group were interviewed comprising 12.47% of the total population sample.

Table 3

Analysis by Age

Age group	Male		Female		N=1,853	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
18-20	141	13.9	145	17.3	286	15.43
21-25	424	41.7	354	42.3	778	41.99
26-30	313	30.8	245	29.3	558	30.11
31-35	139	13.7	92	11.0	231	12.47
TOTAL	1,017	100	836	100	1,853	100

+/-3 per cent margin of error

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.3 Organization of the Presentation

The remaining sections presents the findings according to the following two research objectives.

Objective 1: To find out whether there is a difference in the social environment in urban and rural areas.

Objective 2: To find out whether urban youth identify themselves differently from their rural counterparts and particularly, whether youth in urban areas are more inclined to identify themselves by their tribe than their rural counterparts.

4.4 Analysis of Objective 1

Objective 1 compared social environment in urban and rural areas by analyzing data on education, family upbringing, sources of information, values and sense of civic responsibility

4.4.1 Comparison of educational levels in urban and rural Areas

The objective of comparing the educational levels in urban and rural areas was to find out whether there are comparative differences in regional literacy levels. The focus on this data

stems from the fact that, education system in Kenya is a major influence in shaping character not only due to its content but also from the fact that the school environment brings together students from different social backgrounds. In terms of how long it takes students to complete the various stages of Kenyan education, Primary education takes 8 years, Secondary education takes 4 years, College 2 years, University takes 3 years and post graduate 2 years. The time youth spend in school has important bearings on the development of individual and ethnic identities.

Table 4 below captures the distribution of respondents across the various educational levels in Kenya starting with primary through secondary, college, University and post graduate studies. The data shows that 86.8% of respondents from urban areas received education beyond primary school. The breakdown of urban figure shows 34.7% of respondents had secondary education, 32.8% were educated to college level, 17.5% had University level education and 1.8% had post graduate education. In the rural areas on the other hand, 72.3% of the respondents had post primary education. Analysis of this figure shows 40.9% of the respondents had secondary education, 23.1% had college, 8.3% had university education and 0.5% with post graduate education.

Table 4

Comparison of Education Levels

Education levels	URBAN		RURAL	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Primary	86	13.2	326	27.1
Secondary	226	34.7	491	40.9
College	214	32.8	278	23.1
University	114	17.5	100	8.3
Post Graduate	12	1.8	6	0.6
TOTAL	652	100	1201	100

N=1,853 (+/-3 per cent margin of error)

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

The conclusion one derives from looking at the educational figures is that urban youth are better educated and on average spend more time at school than their rural counterparts. An important indicator of this conclusion is the University figure which shows that 17.5% of urban youth had University education compared 8.3% of rural counterparts.

4.4.2 Comparison of influencing factors in the family setting

According to social identity theory, the family setting is an important contributor to the formation of an adolescents' identity. Normally, parents influence ethnic identity formation by teaching and passing on the cultural elements of their identity such as language, traditions and values. The family setting is also responsible for maintaining and perpetuating key traditions such as rites of passage, marriage and funeral ceremonies. In Kenya, language and cultural practices remain the primary factors that distinguish a community and these are primarily taught by the parents.

Table 5 compares answers to what respondents claim were the hierarchy of influences by family, extended family and school colleagues. For both urban and rural youth, both parents were the most important influence with 70.8% of rural respondents making the assertion compared to 70.2% of urban youth. Mothers were the second most important influencers with 19.6% of urban respondents making the claim compared with 16.5% in rural youth.

Table 5

Family Influences During Upbringing

Influences	Urban		Rural	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Both Parents	458	70.2	850	70.8
Mother	128	19.6	198	16.5
Father	26	4.0	46	3.7
Extended family	27	4.1	80	6.7
Househelp	1	0.2	5	0.4
Self	7	1.1	12	1.0
School	2	0.3	8	0.7
Other	3	0.5	2	0.2
TOTAL	652	100	1,201	100

N=1853 (+/-3 per cent margin of error)

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

In contrast to the high maternal influence, only 4% and 3.8% of urban and rural respondents claimed their fathers had an influence in their upbringing. Traditionally, mothers are predominantly the main presence in single parent situations or in situations where only one parent is working. Comparatively, the role of the extended family is stronger in rural areas (6.7%) than in urban areas (4.1%) indicating the insularity of urban families. The strong

influence by the extended family in rural areas also means that the influence of cultural and traditional norms is better maintained.

4.4.3 Comparison of Informational Environment

The information environment is important in socialization and inculcation of social values and norms. According to Tajfel & Turner (1986), adolescents evolve their ethnic identity by identifying with a group with distinct values and culture. In an age of advanced technology the media has become an important vehicle for propagating and disseminating news and cultural practices across national borders. Logically one would expect urban youth to have greater access to various sources of information due to technical and cost factors. From a cost perspective one would expect urban youth to have access to all the primary sources of information because their parents can afford it. Technically one would also expect urban areas to have access to a variety of media sources because media and telecommunication companies tend to concentrate in the urban centers.

Table 6 compares the sources of information in urban and rural areas. According to data collected, television is the most important source of information for urban youth with 58.1% of the respondents claiming it is their main source of information. In comparison only 38.1% of the respondents in rural areas claimed television was an important source of information. On the other hand, 48.8% of respondents in rural areas claimed the radio is the most important source of information compared to 17.9% in urban areas.

Table 6

Sources of Information

	Urban		Rural		Variance %
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	
Television	379	58.1	433	36.1	22
Radio	117	17.9	586	48.8	30.9
Print	20	3.1	28	2.3	0.8
Website	25	3.8	28	2.3	1.5
Social Media	100	15.3	85	7.1	8.2
Word of mouth	9	1.4	33	2.7	1.3
Other	2	0.4	8	0.7	0.4
TOTAL	652	100	1201	100	

N=1853 (+/-3 per cent margin of error)

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

Because the television is able to provide audio and visual images, it is considered a more powerful and effective tool for socialization than the radio. The higher exposure to television in urban areas suggests that youthful audiences in those areas are more exposed to disparate cultures and ideas than their rural counterparts. Moreover, in most rural areas in Kenya, most of the radio programs are in vernacular and therefore inclined to reinforce regional values and norms.

According to the findings, social media was the third most important source of information for both urban and rural youth with 15.3% of the urban youth respondents claiming it is an important source of their information compared to 7.1% in rural areas. This is quite a significant disparity considering the strong influence on youth identity as a result of exposure to social media. Turning to print media, data shows that 3.1% of urban youth depended on this medium compared 2.3% of respondents in rural areas. A salient difference between rural and urban youth is the fact that 2.7% of respondents in rural areas stated they relied on word of mouth as their source of information compared to 1.4% in urban areas.

4.4.4 Social Media Use and Online activity

Considering the importance of social media in influencing the youth, table 7 and 8 below compares the extent of use of the social media amongst youth in urban and rural areas as well as the nature of online activity.

Table 7 compares how frequently urban and rural youth use the internet. The table shows that 24% of the youth in urban areas use the internet at least 2-5 hours a day compared to 15% of their rural counterparts. Turning to those who do not access the internet, 17% more rural youth compared to urban youth said they do not use the internet. Considering the vast amount of information the internet exposes its users, the difference in internet use suggests the social media ostensibly has a strong influence on urban youth than their rural counterparts.

Table 7**Use of Social Media**

Frequency of use	% Urban	% \Rural	Variance
2-5 hours daily	24	15	9
5-10 hours daily	9	4	5
Constantly	17	10	7
Do not use	12	29	17

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

The heavy reliance on the social media by urban youth compared to rural youth is best illustrated by looking at the variety of online activities. According to table 8, urban youth use the social media more than their rural counterparts in every respect. For instance the table shows that on average, 46% of urban youth spend time chatting over the social networks compared to 27.6% of their rural counterparts. Other significant variances, for what they mean in terms of socialization, are access to educational sites and news about politics. According to the data 24.4% of urban youth spend their time reading news about politics and current affairs compared to 18.3% of rural youth. Similarly 13.8% of urban youth spend time visiting educational sites compared to 9.8% of the rural youth.

Table 8**Online Activity**

Online Activity	Urban Youth	Rural Youth	Variance
Comment on friends' pages, walls , pictures	49.2	43.5	5.7
Comment on blogs	15.5	11.5	4.0
Chat over social networks	46.0	27.6	18.4
Read News about politics, current affairs	24.4	18.3	6.1
Share Content online	9.8	5.9	3.9
Watch videos, movies, listen to music	10.0	7.3	2.7
Go to educational sites for information	13.8	9.8	4.0
Other	12.4	28.9	16.5
TOTAL	100	100	

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.4.5 Comparison of Values

One way to gauge the impact of the disparate environments in urban and rural areas is to compare the value systems of the youth who have been brought up in the two milieus. According to table 9, religious faith is the most important of youth values followed by family. Amongst the

urban youth interviewed, 86.5% of the youth stated that their religious faith is the most important value compared to 83.7% of respondents in rural areas. Similarly, 63% of urban youth stated that their family is the second most important thing they value compared to 57.5% of rural respondents. On average, the variance between the value systems of the two groups is below 5% except for family and work which show a 5.5% and 9.0% variance respectively.

Table 9

Youth Values

Values	Urban	Rural	Variance
Faith	86.5	83.7	2.8
Country	7.8	6.2	1.6
Work	39.8	48.5	9.0
Wealth	30.8	31.0	0.2
Freedom	28.4	30.4	2.0
Family	63.0	57.5	5.5
Friends	10.4	9.3	0.8
Environment	4.1	4.7	0.6
Art Music/Culture	0.9	2.3	1.4
Integrity	6.9	5.5	1.4

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

An important insight from looking at the data is the difference in the importance youth attach to their faith compared to freedom. For while on average 85% of urban and rural youth identified their faith as the most important, an average of 29.4 % of the youth identified freedom as an important value. The significance of the difference is that, freedom is indispensable to the growth of liberal societies. The fact the religion scored higher is an indication that Kenyan society has invested more in inculcating religious than democratic values. Religious teachings are also bound to propagate the concept of man as determined being as opposed to the free spirited consciousness that is consistent with liberalism. The low score on liberal values is also indicated by low scores in value for country and environmental concerns.

4.4.6 Civic Responsibility

Table 10 below compares the sense of civic responsibility between urban and rural youth. Looking at the column of those who strongly agree, the table shows that the rural youth on average have a higher sense of civic responsibility compared to their urban counterparts. A possible explanation for the difference in civic duty is best illustrated by the fact that, more rural

youth (29.6%) believe they have the power to make a difference compared to urban counterparts (25.6%). More rural youth (23.4%) believe that the government cares for them compared to urban youth (13.5%). The difference suggests an urban youth that is more realistic about what to expect from the government than their more trusting rural counterparts. Such difference can result from the fact that urban youth are more exposed than their rural counterparts to critical views about the government in the local media.

Table 10

Civic Responsibility

Issue	Urban/ Rural	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Intend to vote	Urban	4.0	9.0	12.7	39.1	33.9	1.2
	Rural	2.8	3.7	10.9	33.6	48.4	0.7
I believe I have the power to make a difference	Urban	4.1	10.7	19.5	39.6	25.6	0.5
	Rural	4.1	12.2	17.6	35.8	29.6	0.7
I participate in political or social causes	Urban	10.1	22.2	19.3	32.7	15.0	0.6
	Rural	8.8	16.2	19.5	32.3	22.8	0.3
It is important to vote	Urban	3.1	8.6	12.3	38.8	36.5	0.8
	Rural	2.0	4.2	10.0	33.4	50.0	0.5
My government cares for me	Urban	15.2	18.7	20.1	32.4	13.5	0.2
	Rural	8.3	12.5	21.6	33.5	23.4	0.7
I often discuss or think about issues	Urban	8.6	21.6	17.5	34.2	17.6	0.5
	Rural	7.8	16.2	21.5	30.7	23.6	0.2

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.5 Analysis of Objective 2

Objective 2 compares how urban youth and their rural counterparts identify themselves in line with the hypothesis that ethnic differences are constructed by circumstances obtaining in a specific region. The analysis examines various youth categories in urban and rural areas to gauge whether there is a difference in the way they identify themselves. Categories that were considered included levels of education, gender, employment and age.

4.5.1 Comparative Data on Urban and Rural Youth

Table 11

Identities of Urban and Rural Youth

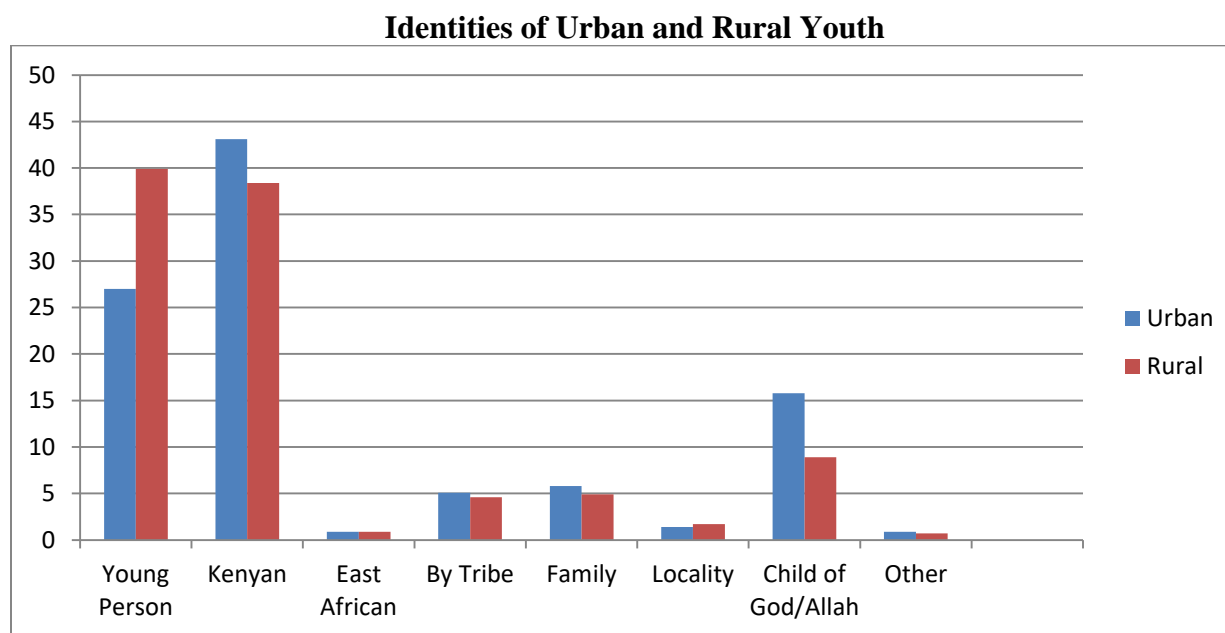
Population	URBAN % of respondents	RURAL % of respondents
Young Person	27.0	39.9
Kenyan	43.1	38.4
East African	0.9	0.9
By Tribe	5.1	4.6
Family	5.8	4.9
Locality	1.4	1.7
Child of God/Allah	15.8	8.9
Other	0.9	0.7

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

Table 11 presents data on how youth from urban and rural areas identify themselves. Research shows that majority of respondents identified themselves as Kenyans, Young persons or by religion, in that order. In urban areas, those who identified themselves as Kenyans were 43.1% of the respondents compared to 38.4% in rural areas. The highest number of respondents who identified themselves as young people were rural youth at 39.9% compared to 27% in urban areas. Religious identity was the third highest category with 15.8% of the youth in urban areas and 8.9% in rural areas identifying themselves as either children of God or Allah. Identity by tribe came fifth after family. Significantly, a bigger percentage of urban youth identified themselves by tribe than their rural counterparts where 5.1% of urban respondents identified themselves by their tribe compared to 4.6% in rural areas. The fact that the salience of ethnicity is higher amongst urban youth is consistent with the assertion that ethnic identity is only meaningful in a multi-ethnic environment where ones ethnicity acquires importance in the presence of other peoples “otherness” (Phinney, 1990; Fukuyama, 2018).

East African identity scored the lowest at 0.9% for both urban and rural youth. The low score could be an indication of low socialization of youth in their East African identity. Diagram 1 below represent the same identity difference in diagrammatically.

Diagram 1



Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.5.2 Comparison by Levels of Education

Table 12 presents data on how respondents with different levels of education identified themselves. In general, the majority of youth at all levels of education identified themselves as Kenyan citizens followed by those who identified as young persons and child of God/Allah respectively. Identity by tribe came fifth after those who identified by their family. Of those who identified themselves by tribe, those with University education were the majority at 7.9% and the lowest were those with primary education at 3.5%. According to Phinney (1990), ethnic identities develop in three stages on a continuum that runs from unexamined, through a period of exploration to committed ethnic identity. According to this model, early adolescents and even adults that have not been exposed to other ethnic groups tend to fall in the uncommitted category. This group, which in the research comprises primary school children, is either not interested in its ethnicity or it simply adopted the parent identity. Older children on the other hand, such as those at the University, display higher levels of ethnic consciousness because of the multi ethnic nature of student population. This is especially the case in Kenya where University students tend to affiliate with ethnic and regional clubs.

Table 12**Youth Identities by Education Levels**

Population	Primary	Secondary	College	University
Young Person	22.1	27.0	30.8	23.7
Kenyan	48.8	48.7	40.2	36.8
East African	0.0	1.3	0.5	1.8
By Tribe	3.5	4.4	4.2	7.9
Family	4.7	4.9	5.6	9.6
Locality	1.2	1.8	0.9	1.8
Child of God/Allah	19.8	11.5	16.4	17.5
Other	0.0	0.4	1.4	0.9
	100	100	100	100

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.5.3 Tribal Identity by Gender

Table 13 shows that, even when analyzed by gender, the pattern of identification stays the same with the majority of both genders identifying themselves as Kenyans followed by those who identify themselves as Young persons and as children of God/Allah respectively. Comparison by gender shows that, on average men in both urban and rural areas are more inclined to identify with their tribe than their female counterparts. According to the research findings, 5.4% and 5.1% of the males in urban and rural areas respectively were more inclined to identify themselves by their tribe compared to 4.6% and 3.9% females in urban and rural areas respectively. The table also shows that youth of both genders in urban areas were more inclined to identify themselves by their ethnicity than youth in rural areas. This is consistent with the theory that youth in multi-ethnic environment have a higher sense of ethnic consciousness as a result of interacting with different communities. The difference is gender salience of ethnicity could also be as a result of the fact that males tend to network more than their female counterparts. Males are therefore bound to be confronted with the challenge of their identity than their female counterparts.

Table 13**Identity by Gender**

Identity	MALE		FEMALE	
	Urban %	Rural%	Urban%	Rural%
Young Person	29.4	40.0	24.2	39.7
Kenyan	44.6	40.0	41.4	36.3
East African	1.4	0.7	0.3	1.1
Tribe	5.4	5.1	4.6	3.9
Family	5.1	4.2	6.6	5.8
Resident City/Town	1.4	1.9	1.3	1.5
Child of God/Allah	12.0	7.3	20.2	10.9
Other	0.6	0.6	1.3	0.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.5.4 Identity in Work Places

Table 14 presents the data on the effect on employment on youth identity. In a society where studies by National Cohesion and Integration commission of Kenya consistently show that hiring practices in many Kenya companies tend to discriminate along ethnic lines, it was important to gauge whether work places have an impact on salience of ethnicity. Table 14 shows that 4.3% of employed urban youth identify themselves by their tribe compared to 4.7% in rural areas. Turning to unemployed youth, 4.9% of the urban youth identify themselves by tribe compared to 4.5% in the rural areas.

Table 14**Identity Amongst the Employed**

Identity	EMPLOYED		UNEMPLOYED	
	Urban %	Rural%	Urban%	Rural%
Young Person	31.5	55.8	26.9	40.4
Kenyan	35.9	29.8	47.4	36.9
East African	0.5	1.4	0.6	0.6
Tribe	4.3	4.7	4.9	4.5
Family	7.1	5.6	6.2	4.8
Resident City/Town	1.6	0.5	1.3	2.3
Child of God/Allah	16.8	2.3	12.7	9.7
Other	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

The fact that more employed urban youth are more conscious of their ethnic identity is again consistent with the theory that multi-ethnic environment tend to heighten ethnic consciousness.

4.5.5 Comparison by Religion

Table 15 interrogates the impact of religion on ethnic identities. The table compares ethnic consciousness amongst Christian, Muslim and all other religions put together. Like all the other perspectives of analysis, most youth identify themselves as Kenyans, young people and Children of God/Allah in that order.

Table 15

Identities by Religion

Identity	Christian		Muslim		Other	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Young Person	27.2	38.0	39.7	61.0	8.5	34.6
Kenyan	43.9	39.7	25.9	19.5	55.3	45.7
East African	1.1	0.8	0.0	0.8	0.0	1.6
Tribe	5.5	4.5	5.2	6.8	0.0	3.1
Family	6.0	5.4	5.2	3.4	4.3	2.4
Resident City/Town	1.5	1.8	0.0	3.4	2.1	0.0
Child of God/Allah	14.3	9.1	24.1	5.1	23.4	11.0
Other	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	6.4	1.6
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

Identity by tribe ranks fifth after family category. Over all, Christians in both urban and rural areas tend to identify themselves more as Kenyans than the Muslim counterparts. The difference could be due to the fact that many residents from northern Kenya have always felt marginalized by consecutive Kenyan governments. Since most Northerners are Muslims, the feeling of alienation may be the reason why many do not identify themselves as Kenyans. Added to the sense of political marginalization is the fact that a majority of Kenyans are Christians. The feeling of being treated as a minority group could also be another reason why a smaller percentage of Muslims may also not identify themselves as Kenyans. On the other hand Muslims in both urban and rural areas are more inclined to identify themselves as young people than their urban counterparts with Muslim rural respondents scoring a high of 61%. Another interesting statistics is that Muslims in rural areas identified themselves more with their tribe (6.8%) than

even their urban counterparts (5.2%). Again one suspects that the rural Muslims identities more with his tribe because of the history of discrimination.

4.5.6 Comparison by Age

Table 16 compares the inclination of youth of various age groups in urban and rural areas to identify with their tribe. The table shows that the primary identification categories are Kenyan, young people and Children of God/Allah respectively. With exception of the 31-35 age groups, urban youth were more inclined to identify with their tribe than their counterparts in rural areas. Age group that identify themselves with their tribe the most are rural youth aged in the 31-35 age bracket (8.8%) and urban youth at 18-20 age bracket (7.7%). Over all, ethnic identity tends to become significant for young adults than their younger counter parts because the question of identity is not that urgent for adolescents.

Table 16

Identity by Age Group

Identity	18-20		21-25		26-30		31-35	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Young Person	30.8	46.7	29.3	44.2	24.9	38.0	20.5	20.9
Kenyan	38.5	26.7	42.9	38.4	46.8	39.7	39.8	50.7
East African	1.1	1.0	1.5	1.4	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.0
Tribe	7.7	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.9	4.2	6.0	8.8
Family	4.4	6.7	4.8	3.8	7.8	5.7	6.0	4.7
Resident City/Town	0.0	1.0	0.7	2.0	2.4	1.4	2.4	2.7
Child of God/Allah	17.6	12.8	15.4	6.1	11.7	9.9	25.3	10.8
Other	0.0	1.0	0.7	0.4	2.0	0.6	0.0	1.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Agha Khan East African Institute Youth Survey

4.6 Summary Findings

The objective of this research was to find out whether ethnic identities are determined and fixed or constructed and variable. For practical purposes, the research divided the objective into two: the aim of the first objective was to find out whether the social environments in urban and rural areas are different. The second objective was to compare how youth in urban and rural areas see themselves. The research was informed by the constructionist theory of ethnicity which asserts that ethnic identities are constructed by the environment in time and space such that people

brought up in different environments will invariably have different identities. The following is the summary of the findings by each research objective.

4.6.1 Summary of Key Findings Relating to Objective 1

The aim of objective 1 was to enquire whether the social environments in urban and rural areas were different by comparing literacy rates, state of information and influence of various care givers during upbringing. Data analysis shows that the youthful population in urban areas is on average better educated than their rural counterparts with many having obtained post primary education. In addition to formal education, the research found that urban youth have diverse sources of information. The disparity in the state of information was best exemplified by the fact that the main source of information in the rural areas was the radio while the leading source of information in urban areas was the television. Of particular note was the fact that communication by word of mouth was more prevalent in rural than in urban areas. Turning to the social media, urban youth not only spent more time on social media but they used it more for news and education. The import of the disparity in access to information is that, not only are urban youth better informed, they are also more exposed to outside influences through access to foreign ideas and culture. On family influences, it was noteworthy that the extended family paid a bigger role in the upbringing of youth in rural than in urban areas. Higher involvement by extended family in youth upbringing means maintenance of family and cultural values is stronger in rural than urban areas.

4.6.2 Summary of Key Findings Relating to Objective 2

The aim of objective 2 was to find out whether youth in urban areas identified themselves differently from their rural counterparts. The comparison analyzed responses from respondents by categorizing them by education, gender, employment, religion, age group and by country. Analyses of data from all youth cohorts in both urban and rural areas shows they identified themselves in various ways with the three leading ways being Kenyan, young people and children of God/Allah in that order. Those who identified themselves by tribe ranked fifth after family. The fact that the youth displayed multiple identities is a negation of the sociobiological primordialist theory which argues that ethnic identities are innate and fixed. If ethnic identities were inherent and determined then all the youth would invariably have identified themselves

with their ancestral identity. Similarly, the fact that ethnic identities were not the primary way of identification refutes the idea that people are determined to identify with their tribe. Conclusion from the research is that ethnic identities are constructed and variable rather than innate or determined.

A second key finding from the research was that ethnic identity is more pronounced amongst the 31-35 age brackets. This is consistent with the theory of identity development which asserts that ethnic identities develop with age (Phinney, 1990). According to this theory, ethnic identities amongst adolescents develop in three stages as they age. The process starts from a point of ignorance, an enquiry stage and finally a stage of full realization and maintenance. Again, if the sociobiological theory was correct, adolescents would identify with their tribe right from day one. Evidence that ethnic identities change with time is further affirmation that ethnic identities are constructed and variable in time and space.

Another important fact that emerged from the research was that urban respondents were on average more inclined to identify themselves by tribe than their rural counterparts. This is consistent with the social identity theory which asserts that youth in multi-ethnic environment display higher salience of ethnicity because interaction with other tribes compels one to confront their own identity. The fact that urban youth are more ethnically conscious was surprising because one would have expected ethnicity to be of less importance. However, according to identity theory, the opposite is true; individuals are compelled to confront their identity when they interact with other identities. Accordingly salience of ethnicity was less prominent in rural areas because the ethnic identities are comparatively homogeneous. The fact that one is more aware of their ethnicity does not necessarily mean that they are less tolerant of other communities.

While the research showed Kenyan youth identified themselves in many ways, it also showed their faith was ranked at the top of their value totem. The importance of religion is not surprising because Kenya's education system puts a lot of emphasis on religious teachings to inculcate moral values. However what is of interest is that the high ranking of faith amongst the values that are important to the 18-35 age group contrasted sharply with the low ranking of freedom. Since

in a democracy, freedom is considered indispensable to individual rights, its poor ranking shows that Kenyans have not invested in liberal values as they have done in religious teachings. The strong influence of religion can also influence the determinist concept of identity because Christians believe in the creation theory.

CHAPTER` FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The chapter summarizes the findings of the research whose primary objective was to find out whether ethnic identities are constructed or innate and therefore determined. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) the chapter should provide a brief summary of the whole study with particular reference to the research problem, research methodology, main contribution of the research and recommendations for future work. Accordingly the first section of this chapter provides a summary of the research problem, the methodology and findings as preamble to the conclusions and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of the Research problem, Objectives and findings

This research was prompted by the problem of cyclical ethnic violence that has marred the stability of independent Africa countries and which is caused by the fact that ethnic identities trumps emerging nationalism. In view of the challenge, Kenya, like other African countries, has consistently tried to resolve the problem of cyclical violence legalistically by making constitutional provisions to safeguard competing ethnic interests. In this regard, prompted by the need to address the existential threat posed by ethnic competition after 2007 post-election violence, Kenyans promulgated the 2010 constitution that divided the country into 47 ethnic counties. The 2010 constitution also provided legal guidelines for sharing national resources in order to address the problem of regional inequalities. Despite creation of what amounts to ethnic enclaves, subsequent Kenyan elections were again marred by ethnic violence confirming that the legalist approach was not effective. Embedded in the legalistic approach was the theory that, ethnic identities are fixed and determined and the only way of creating peace amongst the competing identities is by making appropriate constitutional provisions.

Given the failure of the legalistic approach, this thesis sought to interrogate an alternative approach that is premised on the theory that an enduring solution has to address itself to theory of ethnicity. Using the constructionist theory of ethnicity, this research set out to interrogate the

hypothesis that ethnic identities are constructed by the environment and are not fixed and determined as hitherto assumed. This constructionist thinking echoes the liberal theory which considers a human being an evolving essence that actualizes by interacting with the environment. By proving that ethnic identities are constructed the thesis therefore hoped to infer that even a shared national identity can be constructed.

To interrogate the hypothesis that ethnic identities are constructed, the research set to investigate how youth in urban and rural areas identify themselves with two objectives in mind. The aim of the first objective was to find out whether the environment in urban and rural areas are different while the second objective set out to interrogate how youth identify themselves. Evidence that youth identify themselves differently in time and space was to be considered as proof that ethnic identities are neither fixed nor determined.

Under the first objective, the research found that the social environment in urban and rural Kenya are quite different especially in relation to educational levels as well as the sort of information the youth are able to access. According to the findings, youth in urban areas have wide spectrum of information sources that include the social media, the internet and television. Rural youth on the other hand do not have as much access to social media and rely more on the radio and even word of mouth. Similarly, urban youth were found to be better educated than their rural counterparts with many having obtained post primary education.

In relation to the second objective, the research found that the youth identify themselves in many ways that include, young people, Kenyan, children of God, family and tribe. In fact according to the findings, ethnic identity ranked fifth for both urban and rural youth. The research also indicated that salience of ethnicity increased with age which is consistent with the identity theory which argues that individual identity matures with age. A surprising finding was that more urban youth tend to identify with their ethnicity than rural youth. According to identity theory however, such an outcome is consistent with identity theory which argues that people tend to be more conscious of their identity in an environment where they are constantly interacting with other identities.

In summary the research proved that ethnic identity is neither fixed nor determined but vary with circumstances and time for if ethnicity was fixed and innate, then all the young people would invariably have identified themselves by their ethnicity. The fact that identities varied with place and age cohort was evidence that ethnic identity is variable and constructed.

5.2 Conclusion

The conclusion from the findings is that ethnic identities are constructed like everything else about man. This is consistent with the liberal conception of man which argues that a human being is an evolving essence that actualizes through interaction with the environment to create its identity and history. In relation to the larger of objectives of peace building, these findings have far reaching implications in the way Kenyans organize themselves politically and economically. To start with, the fact that ethnic identities are clearly constructed means that it is also possible to construct a Kenyan nationalism that transcends ethnic identities. Considering that much of ethnic conflict stems from political mobilization along ethnic lines, the constructionist approach provides a new a strategy for building national cohesion.

Further, using the constructionist theory of ethnicity to explain ethnic origins aligns African political thought to liberalism which also considers a human being an evolving essence. For Kenya this is especially important because it provides a readymade ideology for a country that has been seeking to evolve an ideologically based political culture. Additionally, the linkage with liberalism provides an economic ideology that is consistent with the capitalist system Kenyans inherited from colonialism. Since a lot of Kenya's political instability stems from disagreements of how to share economic resources, the alignment with liberalism provides a framework for framing and defusing this economic debate.

From the Social perspective, another problem that is settled by constructionist conception of ethnic identities is the question of whether African cultures should embrace social changes engendered by globalization and advancement in science and technology. The research affirms that the culture of a community changes in tandem with evolving social economic environment such that new cultural practices are the norm rather than the exception.

A valid criticism against constructionist theory of ethnicity is that, it tends to ignore the ancestral foundations of ethnicity. Accordingly it makes ethnicity sound like an abstraction that has no connection to peoples lived experience. Notwithstanding this criticism, knowing that ethnic identities only exist in our minds provides the framework and moral authority for re-engineering the society. The efficacy of this approach is supported by evidence from Tanzania and Rwanda which have managed to achieve political stability by employing deliberate policies on ethnic relations. Indeed findings from the Agha Khan East African Institute Youth study, shows that none of the respondents in Rwanda identified themselves by tribe because it is illegal for one to do so. Similarly, few respondents in Tanzania identified themselves by their tribe because right from independence, the government promoted a national ideology that discredited ethnic identities. Out of the three countries, Kenyan youth were more inclined to identify with their tribe because unlike Rwanda and Tanzania, the government has never instituted a policy to suppress ethnic identities. If anything, Kenyan politics is so ethnically divisive that ethnic consciousness is much stronger than in the other African states. The difference in the way Youth in Tanzania and Rwanda identify themselves is confirmation that it is possible to use government policy to shape national identity.

5.3 Recommendations

- a) Kenyan Government should employ deliberate policies even propaganda to construct a common identity.
- b) There is need to harmonize information, economic as well as education opportunities in urban and rural areas in Kenya in order to standardize the way children are socialized.
- c) Kenyan mainstream media should be sensitized about how their reporting influences formation of ethnic identities. The media should be co-opted in building Kenyan nationalism.
- d) The government should develop an education system that will help to instill democratic values. For instance all University programs should include core courses in political theory, sociology, philosophy and economics.

- e) The US government routinely conducts social distance analysis to audit whether race relations are improving. Since ethnic identities change with time and place, Kenyans should also conduct frequent social distance analysis studies to track their progress in overcoming ethnic cleavages.
- f) Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration commission research has focused on trying to identify tribal balances in workplaces. Such reports only help to feed ethnic resentment and exacerbate polarized relations even more. The reports are especially misleading since they are solely informed by politics of victimhood and overlook other factors that cause economic inequalities such as climate and geography.

5.4 Recommendation for Future Research

The research only surveyed youth in the 18-35 age bracket. It is important to conduct the same research on adults to see whether the constructionist theory will hold.

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APPENDIX 1

19th June 2019

The Provost
Agha Khan East African Institute

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY TO USE DATA FROM YOUTH SURVEY

My name is Githieya Kimari and I am a political Science Masters student at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a research to interrogate the theory that ethnicity is a mental construct that is molded by the social environment people find themselves in. To test the theory, the research will restrict its scope to the impact of urbanization to answer the question: Is urbanization changing ethnic identities? The research is conducted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements of a Master's degree at the University of Nairobi.

For this project, we have elected to use data from the EAI Youth study focusing on the questions of identity. Given the large sample population in the Youth study, we feel the data collected is more representative than we can ever achieve with limited resources. We also find your data is appropriate for our research since it covers respondents from different social backgrounds and literacy levels. Of interest for our research are answers on identity from urban and rural youth of different literacy levels.

We wish to kindly request for your formal concurrence to use the data and confirm that the information provided will be used solely for research purposes. If you have questions regarding this research, please feel free to contact my supervisor on mwongelimutuku2@gmail.com.

Yours faithfully

Githieya Kimari

Cell: 0722306039, email: githieyakimari@gmail.com

Kindly append your signature below to show your consent

Signed _____ Date _____