

**« THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN SOCIAL
MEDIA. A CASE STUDY OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN
KENYAN SOCIAL MEDIA.»**

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K50/70555/2007**

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE IN MASTER OF
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project report is my original work and has not been presented for a degree at any other university.


Signature: 

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This research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the candidate's University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Mrs. Margaret Guantai and Dr. Guantai Mboroki. You never ceased to believe that I was going to see the finish line.

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When I began this research project, my thoughts were that it would depend on my individual effort to see it to its completion. As I reviewed the possible topics that I was going to carry out my research in, I realized that I needed the help of so many persons, that the individual effort view faded with every step and mis-step I took. This project is therefore a product of many minds, and although an original work, has the fingerprints of the various people who put their time in it.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CGM	Consumer Generated Media
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TNA	The National Alliance
UDF	United Democratic Forum
UoN	University of Nairobi
URP	United Republican Party

ABSTRACT

Political communications, specifically political campaigns, have one ultimate goal. To convince the voter to cast his ballot for one candidate. Numerous studies have been done to explain voter behaviour, the earliest being the Peoples Choice Study carried out by Lazarsfeld et al. This study looks at how political campaigns can use the new platform that is inexpensive and available to many, and with the ability to influence many a voter. The platform is social media. The study further examines how political communication can use the Facebook and/or Twitter in the most effective manner so as to integrate these new media messages as an essential campaign tool. The study begins with an introduction of what social media and political communication are. Then an attempt is made to link the two together, outlining the possible relationships the two have, and how and why social media is a possible platform for political communication. Literature, both theoretical and empirical, is then reviewed on the use of social media in political communication. Here, a case study of the Barrack Obama campaign is reviewed, where in his first term he used social media for campaigns and fund raising. The project utilizes the survey method to collect data, with questionnaires as the data collecting tool. Both qualitative and quantitative data is collected, but this study remains a qualitative study because it is predominantly a study of human behavior. The data is then compiled and analyzed, then presented in tables for the purpose of interpretation. Conclusions are then drawn on how Kenyans are using social media for political communications, and recommendations on how to further use the said technology effectively and efficiently. People received positively the communication from politicians with personable content as compared to the politicians who posted professional content. This is in relation to the political content posted on Twitter. Ultimately, a politician with a social media site had a significant relationship with the electorate in comparison to those without this presence.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

As with many terms in social science, political communication has also been difficult to define. For instance, Robert E. Denton and Gary C. Woodward in their book *Political Communication in America* characterize political communication in the form of intentions of its senders to influence the political environment. In their words "the crucial factor that makes communication 'political' is not the source of a message, but its content and purpose." Brian McNair provides a similar definition when he writes that political communication is "purposeful communication about politics." For McNair this means that this not only covers verbal or written statements, but also visual representations such as dress, make-up, hairstyle or logo design. With other words, it also includes all those aspects that develop a "political identity" or "image". Political communication is a subfield of communication and political science concerned with how information spreads and affects politics. Since the advent of the World Wide Web, researchers are shifting computation methods to studying the dynamics of political communication.

The fields of political communication concern with two main areas. The first area is Election Campaigns, which is defined as political communication involved in campaigning for elections and the second is Government Operations, a role that is usually filled by the Ministry of Communications, Information Technologies or a similar political entity.

As with any successful communication method, politicians have been reaching out into the world of social media to better connect with voters and constituents. For example, social media played a vital role in grassroots organization and voter registration during Barack Obama's presidential election in 2008 (Metzgar & Maruggi, 2009). Through organization, fundraising, and press coverage, the Internet and other new media technologies have changed the way that politicians run campaigns and govern once elected. It is important to study how politicians are using social media because the platform is based on a two-way communication model, unlike traditional mainstream media.

Combining new political groups and new online technology creates an interesting look at how grassroots campaigns and traditional methods mesh. Because social media is more personal, targeted, and a user-friendly method, effective usage can increase voter participation in political campaigns (Baym, Zhang, & Lin, 2004). Thus, the purpose of this study is to better understand effective usage of new media technology. Monitoring Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter for a one month period provides an outline into the diversity of methods and frequencies with which the sites are being used.

Social media are simplistically defined as media for social interaction. Social media is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Heinlein also define social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of the Web, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Businesses also refer to social media as consumer-generated media (CGM). A common thread running through all definitions of social media is a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value.

Essentially, social media incorporates the online technology and methods through which people can share content, personal opinions, swap different perspectives and insights into world issues and generally discuss the evolution of media in itself.

Social media's definition in a growing online community has been difficult to pinpoint. Fundamentally, social media differs from traditional mainstream media because of its user-to-user format as opposed to top-down news dissemination (Clark & Aufderheide, 2009). Brian Solis (2009) noted that social media should be classified in the social sciences, rather than technological sector, because it looks at human interaction and behavior. Like physical communities, online communities vary based on the format, members, and cultural norms set by the group (Solis). Sweetser and Lariscy (2008) defined social media as a "read-write Web, where the online audience moves beyond passive viewing of Web content to actually contributing to the content" (p.179).

The best way to define social media is to break it down. Media is an instrument on communication, like a newspaper or a radio, so social media would be a social instrument of

communication. Any website that invites you to interact with the site and with other visitors falls into the definition of social media.

For the purpose of this study, social media will be used as an overall term to define online networking sites that are based upon user-generated participation (frequently called Web 2.0). This participation can range from higher involvement (blogging and file sharing) to lower involvement (profiles or comments). These include networking sites, blogging platforms, and content sharing pages. More important than the specific technological devices used, social media demonstrates an all-over change in the ways that people think about news.

A report released by American University's School for Communication found five core areas where these behaviors can be observed. They are choice, conversation, creation, curation, and collaboration (Clark & Aufderheide, 2009). With choice, people can go online to access the news they choose to learn about, eliminating the gatekeeper role of traditional media. Having a choice in media has two main implications. First, it lowers the shared experience by viewers, which researchers have shown occurs when large numbers of people receive their media from the same provider (Mutz, 1994).

In contrast, social media users create their own networks of like-minded individuals and search for information that both aligns with and solidifies their perspectives, a phenomenon called confirmation (Dickson, 1990). Next, both conversation and creation refer to the user accessibility of social media, where users can create content and others can respond. In order to be successful, this continuation of interaction engages both the user and creator (Solis, 2009).

Curation refers to the way people rank the credibility of content, such as a trend toward personal reviews on a product vs. longer consumer reports (Clark & Aufderheide, 2009). Finally, the report cites collaboration, also called "crowdsourced journalism," where even traditional media rely on the audience for interaction through leads, sources, and examples (Clark & Aufderheide, 2009). The forces illustrate how social media is not only changing the format, but also overall media habits.

Besides computers, social networks are also being accessed on mobile devices. In fact, the majority of phone purchases in the coming years will be more for online networks rather than

actual phone call capabilities (Baekdal, 2008). Likewise, social network usage will shift to predominantly phone usage (Baekdal). Instead of phone communications as a one-to-one ratio, content is now trending toward one-to-many sharing. These devices provide an array of benefits to political organizers, such as the ability to cover an issue in real time through text and visuals. On the reverse side, communication blunders can go viral and gain negative media attention just as quickly with constant accessibility to the Internet.

Essentially, social media incorporates the online technology and methods through which people can share content, personal opinions, swap different perspectives and insights into world issues and generally discuss the evolution of media in itself.

Social media website content can come in many shapes and forms: Text is often used to put across opinions or write blog posts. Images and photos can display anything from holiday photos to shots by professional photographers. Audio social media lets you create podcasts for users to download and video sites mean that you'll be able to record a video of your child's birthday for friends all over the world to see.

The most popular types of social media websites are huge at the moment. A few examples of these social media websites are: Twitter. Facebook. Digg, MySpace. LinkedIn to name but a few. The list of social media tools could probably run on for paragraphs, and today's technology changes so rapidly that many industries, including corporations and news media, can barely keep up. In the traditional world, newspapers, corporations, governments, or other types of leading organizations simply had to give out information, and people would consume it by reading or looking at it. But this seemingly tried-and-true method has started to transform.

Simply making information available is not enough for today's public. Today's audiences expect to be able to choose what they read, and most believe they should be able to contribute content and opinions, too. This shift, sometimes called the social media revolution, is not the death of journalism as we always knew it; it's the birth of a democratic movement that emphasizes some of journalism's key factors: transparency, honesty, and giving a voice to the person who doesn't have one.

Many traditional and non-traditional media messages report and comment on how the Internet and social media, especially social networking, have begun to seriously affect organizations and how they operate. Although newspapers currently face a crisis on how to make the news profitable in the digital age, this research project shifts from this perspective. How papers will make money has been talked to death. So, instead, this project will focus on how social media, especially social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook, have begun to affect political organizations (read political parties), and specifically moulded political communication in the digital age.

Political communication is a subfield of communication and political science concerned with how information spreads and affects politics. Since the advent of the World Wide Web, researchers are shifting computation methods to studying the dynamics of political communication.

Since 2013 is supposed to be an election year for Kenya, this study will limit itself to political campaigns, unveiling the trend for consumption of campaign communication as available in the social media.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Social media may have been integral to the Arab revolutions and revolts of 2011. As one Cairo activist succinctly put it, "“We use Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world.” However, there is some debate about the extent to which social media facilitate this kind of change.

It is now clear that Social Media will in this coming election play a more crucial role than before with regard to shaping public opinion and winning support of the masses.

Seeing what social media could do for them, all of the leading presidential candidates now have an official presence at least on Facebook and Twitter. Uhuru Kenyatta, Martha Karua, William Ruto, Raila Odinga, Peter Kenneth, and Kalonzo Musyoka are all present and active, although most updates are limited to updates on their plans and whereabouts. A number of other politicians are slowly joining these platforms as well so this will not be limited to the presidential

candidates but to those vying for Governor and Parliamentary positions as well. Political Parties will not be left out as well.

This study therefore aims to find out how social media can be used effectively for political communication in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine effectiveness of social media to political communication in Kenya taking specific comparison to the entire world.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i) To determine the influence of one's political party inclination in utilization of political communication in social media.
- ii) To assess how the attractiveness of the political message leads to more utilization of political communication in social media.
- iii) To investigate the extent to which looking for political communication drives people to seek political communication in social media.
- iv) To assess what topics in particular political developments influence the use of political communication in social media.
- v) To assess the influence of people's perception on the veracity of the content of political communication to the utilization of political communication in social media.

1.5 Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. How has the inclination in political party influenced the utilization of political communication in the social media?
2. How can the attractiveness of a political message leads to more utilization of political communication in the social media?
3. To what extent does seeking political communication drive people to utilize political communication in the social media?

4. Do particular topics or particular political events influence people to utilize political communication from the social media?
5. How has the people's perception on the veracity of the content on political communication influence the utilization of political communication in the social media?

1.6 Research Hypothesis

The researcher attempt to measure and predict perceptions of online activities as political participation. Considering the strong interpersonal component in interaction-type spaces and activities compared to the consumption-type spaces, the authors suggest that specific interpersonal attitudes openness and interpersonal informational trust may be good predictors for two important aspects of political behaviors and attitudes: perception of online activities as political participation and preferred spaces for political communication (media use and interest in political discourse).

Understanding how citizens perceive online activities as political participation and how these perceptions relate to their interpersonal attitudes, will help one understand the fluid definition of political participation and the relationships between offline and online attitudes.

Considering the interpersonal characteristics of many online spaces and the vitality of interpersonal interaction for many traditional acts of political participation, the following hypothesis is suggested:

1. H_0 = Political party inclination influences the use of social media.
2. H_1 = Political party inclination does not influence the use of social media.
3. H_0 = Attractiveness of the political message influences use of social media.
4. H_1 = Attractiveness of the political message does not influence use of social media.
5. H_0 = Extent to which political communication does not influence use of social media.
6. H_1 = Extent to which political communication influences use of social media.
7. H_0 = Topics on particular political communication does not influence use of social media

8. H1= Topics on particular political communication influences use of social media.

9. Ho= People's perception on the veracity of the content of political communication influences use of social media.

10. H1=People's perception on the veracity of the content of political communication does not influence use of social media.

1.7 Basic Assumptions of the Study

The study takes some basic assumption that the respondents would be open and transparent in responding to the questions. The time allocation for each and every component of this study would be integral to make certain that the results of the exercise were timely. Besides, the sample size and the choice of respondents chosen could be adequate to come up with critical inferences.

1.8 Significance of the study

The study was intended to be useful to all political aspirants in demystifying the social media, and unveiling the hidden potential of the same for political campaigns. The study was also intended to create business opportunities for the innovators in the I.T. field by highlighting the current use of the social media in Kenya, and showing possible areas of exploitation.

The study was also hoped to add in the existing body of knowledge in political communications and the social media. The study further helped the researcher to acquire knowledge and understanding of the critical elements that influence individual behavior in the social media.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

The study concentrated on the major geographical towns in Kenya such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Eldoret and Nakuru where technological adoption in the use of social media among the university students and other working class youth who can be seen as the innovators and early majority in taking up the use of social media. They are therefore expected to be good indicators of the trends in social media use.

1.10 Limitations of the study

This study was limited in respect to time assigned and financial constraints. To overcome this, a sample was used to collect data since the time assigned would not allow for a census or survey. To overcome budget constraints, the researcher collected data and administered questionnaires in the most cost efficient method.

1.11 Definition of significant terms

Effectiveness The degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved.

Political Relating to, or dealing with the structure or affairs of government, politics, or the state.

Communication Conveying information through the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, as by speech, visuals, signals, writing, or behavior.

Social Media Interactive platforms through which individuals and communities create and share user-generated content

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reveals available literature related to the use of social media for political communication. The chapter will also include theoretical and empirical perspectives. It will look at the literature on communication and voting in including the “The People’s Choice” by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet., that led to a theory named after the same. The investigators were most interested in studying the dynamics of the formation, change, and development of public opinion and political attitudes.

The major variables studied were respondent perceptions of the social and ideological differences between parties, participation in the campaign, the role of expectations, political information networks, the role of personal relationships and social groups, the political history of the respondents and their family, issue opinions, and personality measures.

This is a study majorly of persuasion so the various authors literature of the conditions under which people are most likely to change their attitudes in response to persuasive messages and other subsequent works on this topic will be a point of reference.

2.2 Political party inclination and increased access to social media

In the past two election cycles, the inclination in political party has evolved into an undeniable political force. Their own web pages defines the political party’s role as one to “attract, educate, organize, and mobilize citizens to secure public policy consistent with various core values such as those of fiscal responsibility, constitutionally limited government and free markets” (Political Party’s Act, 2012). While the political group held their official rallies in 2009, the political

parties were present as unorganized grassroots movements in the 2007 presidential election (Greenblatt, 2010). Even between elections, the parties still influences political discussion, such as today's emphasis on budget cuts in an era of stagnant wages and foreign economic competition (Dionne, 2011). While its sustainability and transition into the future is currently unclear, the emergence of TNA, URP, and UDF among other parties has left an impact on Kenyan politics in the twenty-first century.

In order to spread an issue platform and attract media attention, the parties have demonstrated proficient use of social media tools. According to an article in the *People Journal*, much of the conservative social media usage came in response to the success of the presidential campaign's online organization (Mukami, 2010).

In the American politics, Matt Burns, director of communications for the Republican convention, noted that the Republican Party was not ready to compete on social media platform in 2008 because the GOP is traditionally a more hierarchical organization and therefore less internally structured for social media (Metzgar & Maruggi 2009).

As Malcom Gladwell (2010) noted in America, social media is fundamentally built on networks and links, not leaders and followers. This laid the groundwork for a grassroots response from the right. First, a Twitter collection of top conservatives helped set up a network of politically likeminded individuals (Blackmon, 2010). Additionally, the Party inclination gained national media attention after television commentator Rick Santelli noticed the popularity of conservative blog "Smart Girl Politics" (Schaefer, 2010). By the end of February, the same month as the

above broadcast, the Party held a series of rallies across the nation, many of which were loosely organized on Facebook. The immediacy of the Party's growth fit the demands for a fast and user-friendly communication form, such as social media. In the following year, most of the digital education for Tea Party organizers came from FreedomWorks and American Majority, both politically funded groups that teach social media to conservative organizations (Hiar, 2010).

“There was no way the Tea Party movement could have grown as deep and as wide as it has without social media and digital technology,’ Christina Botteri, a founding member of the National Party and a former PR director... told PRWeek” (Daniels, 2010, para. 2).

Even though the issues may have been the driving point for the political movement, the fast spread of the Tea Party can be linked to social media because of low cost and availability (Daniels).

Because of its fast rise to power within the digital era, the Tea Party serves as an interesting model for studying the patterns of social media use in modern political campaigns.

2.3 Attractiveness of the political message and increased access to social media

As social media messages gain in popularity and scope, it is impossible to know the lasting impact these sites will have over voters' political and cultural perceptions and the way that they communicate.

2.3.1 Media Systems Dependency Theory

When considering the impact of social media, the public's relationship with the message becomes essential. Facebook and Twitter have become a part of the way we talk, socialize and spend our time; social media has begun to take precedent over other communication messages in part because of its heightened accessibility and usability. In turn, dependence on these messages to provide individuals with rewarding interactions has become greater.

Baran and Davis explain the media systems dependency theory as “the more a person depends on having needs gratified by media use, the more important the media’s role will be in the person’s life, and therefore the more influence those media will have” (Baran & Davis, 2006, p. 127). Therefore, the more the public relies on Facebook and Twitter as not only necessary lines of communication, but as rewarding parts of the communicative process, the more value and influence Facebook and Twitter will have.

Twitter and Facebook have also created an audience that is aware of not only the elements in the message but of processing those elements. Twitter and Facebook have the unique ability to reach individuals who choose to seek a company, person or cause out (Comm, 2009, p. xvi). This makes social media a particularly effective marketing tool, enabling succinct communication with individuals who have already expressed an interest. More importantly it enables public figures “to build deeper relationships” (Comm, 2009, p. xvi) with clients, partners and individuals, creating an easy, far-reaching campaign tactic for modern day politicians.

2.3.2 Case study of America’s 2008 Presidential Campaign

“Like a lot of Web innovators, the Obama campaign did not invent anything completely new. Instead, by bolting together social networking applications under the banner of a movement, they created an unforeseen force to raise money, organize locally, fight smear campaigns and get out the vote that helped them topple the Clinton machine and then John McCain and the Republicans” (Carr, 2008).

For this precise reason, Obama’s 2008 presidential bid became an innovative and politically revolutionary one that used media in ways the public had never seen before. Researchers have examined Obama’s campaign from start to finish, noting the impact social media had over his constituents. In part, Obama’s success can be attributed to “an array of new, incredibly speedy and cheap internet tools-- e-mail, social networks, Twitter, and the like—[and enabled him] to run a grassroots campaign that contacted individual voters in personalized encounters on a near daily basis” (Graber, 2010, p. 194).

Obama was able to use the Internet to not only provide information but also encourage activism. During his campaign, Obama was given over \$55 million dollars in donations by linking from his social media sites and website to a site called MyBo. (Penenberg, 2009, p. 11) This call to action and utilization of Internet resources ultimately put Obama's fundraising and reach far beyond earlier uses of the Internet during a campaign.

Research from PEW Internet Research Center showed that in 2008, a record-breaking 46% of Americans used the internet, email or text messaging on their mobile devices to gain information about campaigns, share opinions and mobilize others (Rainie & Smith, 2008). Obama's supporters made up a substantial amount of this group. A notable 39% of voters are using the Internet to get unfiltered campaign materials, including videos of debates, speeches, announcements, political position papers and transcripts.

In addition, the 2008 election integrated other media that was not previously used in the campaign process. During the months leading up to the election, 35% of Americans said they had watched political videos online, 6% of Americans had made a political contribution online and 10% said they had used social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to gather information about candidates and become involved in their campaigns. Internet users under 30 include an important part of this group: Two-thirds of them have a social networking profile and of those, half use their sites to engage in the political process or obtain information.

2.3.3 Social Media to Mobilize the Masses

Beginning in 2004 with Howard Dean's campaign and four years later with Barack Obama's presidential campaign, the Internet gained popularity as a campaign tactic. Facebook, Twitter and blogs can serve as important tools to mobilize groups to action (Shirky, 2008, p. 184). Unlike most media, the "receiver cares about the sender" (Shirky, 2008, p. 184) and seeks out information about them, increasing the likelihood for activism. New social media messages are essential to politicians and causes, enabling them to gain support, encourage participation and have an open and continuous dialogue. Most importantly, social media allows "the highly motivated people to create a context more easily in which the barely motivated people can be effective without having to become activists themselves," (Shirky, 2008, p. 190) creating an environment perfect for politicians to utilize.

The developing connection between emerging social media and its public and political influence has begun to transform the political process and campaign tactics. Politicians are now using social media and the Internet and, in turn are “permitting a new arena of grassroots politics” (Axford & Huggins, 2001, p. 90). Voters no longer make decisions solely based on information available through traditional media and instead seek out additional knowledge, and in some cases, additional means of activism, using their computers and mobile devices.

Studies have also found that mass media use and social media use is positively correlated to an individual’s voting behavior. Essentially, the more they look to mass media and social media for information, the more likely citizens are to vote. (Pinkleton, Austin and Fortman, 2010, p. 39) Ultimately, “social media simplifies word of mouth and facilitates collaboration” (McConnell & Huba, 2007, p. 27) in a cost-effective and impactful fashion and as research points out, is reaching individuals who are more likely to be motivated to actively participate in the political process.

2.4 The extent to which political communication drives people to use social media

Scholars increasingly are sensing that profound changes in both society and the media may be giving birth to a new form of political communication system that is qualitatively different from its predecessors (Cook, 1998; Norris, Curtice, Sanders, Scammell, & Semetko, 1999; Wyatt, 1998). Not only are the avenues of political communication multiplying in a process that is becoming more diverse, fragmented, and complex, but also, at a deeper level, power relations among key message providers and receivers are being rearranged; the culture of political journalism is being transformed; and conventional meanings of “democracy” and “citizenship” are being questioned and rethought (Brants, 1998; Buckingham, 1997). The research community is therefore challenged to keep up with the evolving trends and avoid over-commitment to superseded paradigms.

The cross-national validity of our perspective is open to question. This article’s line of sight is largely Anglo-American, reflecting our observations of British experience and our readings of

the extensive U.S. literature. Whether they resonate in other democratic societies and, if so, how far can be established only by well-designed comparative research.

2.4.1 Social Media and Disclosure

The “open and public nature” (Axford & Huggins, 2001, p. 90) of social media has begun to change the way that campaigns are developed and politicians relate to their constituents.

Politicians and voters alike use Facebook and Twitter as a means for disclosure—they post photographs, personal information and leave public messages to their friends in cyber space.

The benefit of this is that social media “removes the barrier between professional and consumer, showing the latter how the former works and allowing the latter to actually contribute immediately to the work of the former.” (Barlow, 2008, p. 93) This breaking down of previously existing barriers enables strengthened relationships between voters or advocates and politicians who utilize social media in an effort to reach their voter base. However, the emergence and popularity of social media does not come without a price. The repercussions of the digital explosion means that not only are people able to make personal information available to the public, but that they are encouraged to without considering the lasting effects of doing so (Abelson, 2008).

2.4.2 The Societal Environment for Political Communication: Recent Trends

The relations of social change to media change are complex and reciprocal. Over the postwar period, political communication has been responsive (though also contributory) to a chain of exogenous change that can be broken down to the following processes.

Modernization - that is, increased social differentiation and specialization, fragmenting social organization, interests, and identities; proliferating diverse lifestyles and moral stances; and fueling identity politics (Luhmann, 1975; Swanson & Mancini, 1996). This complicates tasks of political aggregation and communication, supports markets for minority media, and may explain the appeal of talk show explorations of divergent personal and sexual behaviors, conflicts, and aberrations.

Individualization - embracing the elevation of personal aspirations, consumerism, and reduced conformity to the traditions and demands of established institutions, notably political parties, the nuclear family, mainstream religion, the workplace, and neighborhood and social-class groupings. In approaches to politics, citizens have become more like consumers (instrumental, oriented to immediate gratifications, and potentially fickle) than believers. Politicians must work harder to retain their interest and support.

Secularization - involving the loss of institutional avenues to the sacred and the reduced status of official politics, reflected initially in weaker party identifications but spreading subsequently to most other facets of political authority. The diminished parties face increased competition for media and public attention from the rise of hard-lobbying interest and cause groups. Relations of elites to masses are transformed by the evaporation of deference and increased skepticism about the credentials, claims, and credibility of authority holders in many walks of life; this supports political and media populism.

Economization - the increasing influence of economic factors and values on the political agenda and other areas of society, including culture, arts, and sports (Mårtenson, 1998). The subordination of formerly more autonomous spheres (e.g., higher education, publishing and journalism) to economic criteria of performance is encouraged.

Aestheticization - in Ulrich Beck's (1994) sense of people's increased preoccupation with stylishness, image, presentation, and appropriate tastes, especially in fashion and music. This encourages closer associations of politics with popular culture (Cloonan & Street, 1997).

Increasing rationalization of all facets of purposive organization and administration. This favors arguments backed by systematically gathered evidence in forums of relatively sustained policy debate (conferences, quality press, signed columns, specialist political programs, analytical journalism, weekly magazines of news and comment). Policymakers, think tanks, and pressure groups are encouraged to commission pragmatically oriented research, strengthening the hands of experts whose claims to be able to conduct and interpret it are widely accepted.

But it also supports the emergence of “the instrumental rationalization of persuasion,” based on the techniques, values, and personnel of (a) advertising, (b) market research, and (c) public relations (Mayhew, 1997).

“Mediatization” - the social media moving toward the center of the social process. This promotes the concept and practices of a “media-constructed public sphere,” elevating the communication function and the role of communication experts in a wide range of institutions. The “modernization” of such institutions is often equated with tooling them up for sophisticated public relations (as latterly in Britain with the Monarchy and even the Church of England!).

Many problems of government have been exacerbated by these trends. Higher social expectations demand more of authorities whose abilities to cope have been reduced. With societal consensus fragmenting, there are more disparate constituencies for politicians to try to satisfy. Overall, the political arena has become more turbulent, less predictable, less structured, and more difficult to control.

Amidst numerous changes and problems, however, the persistence of cultural support for democratic values (admittedly diffuse, uneven, and difficult to measure) should also be noted. Its influence can be exerted through expectations of politicians to articulate their case convincingly in the face of challenges, receptivity to substantive news agendas when relevant and accessible, dislike and criticism of communication practices by politicians or journalists that fall below certain standards, and broad acceptance of a notion of the citizen’s role as someone who aims to keep up with social and political affairs, to learn how proposed policies might affect his or her life, and to form a sense of what political leaders are really like.

2.5 Topics on particular political communication and the use of social media

2.5.1 Agenda Setting

Agenda setting has been researched with great interest since the 1960s and the advent of television news. In *Mass Media and Voting*, Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang (1966) noted the importance of not just unbiased coverage, but also covering all issues. Following this, McCombs and Shaw (1972) cited their definition in research on agenda setting: “The mass media force

attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about, have feelings about” (p. 177). Only a small number of mass media news producers dominate the market, and therefore, audiences only get information about what the media decides is important enough to cover (McCombs & Shaw).

However, McCombs noted that the emergence of networked media requires more research to address the ultimate power of mass media (1972). Within the Internet era, the agenda-setting theory of mass media still holds relevance, but within this agenda users have more of an opportunity to seek, create, and share their own content, as explained earlier. The traditional gatekeepers to media coverage have seen a decrease in control, especially within the US political blogosphere (Meraz, 2011). In researching political blogs in 2007, Meraz found that they didn’t always stick to the same issues as covered by mass media each day, especially rightleaning blogs. Meraz stated that this is an example of “the growing power of partisan social influence within networked political environments” (p. 120).

For politicians, one of the biggest benefits of social media is the ability for candidates to speak directly to potential voters without the media intermediary (Gillin, 2008). This also creates a more personal relationship. For example, a study of candidates’ Facebook pages found that people used the personal term “you” most frequently to refer to the candidate when posting on the page (Sweetser & Lariscy, 2008). First-name references, last-name references, wholename references, pronouns, and formal titles made up the rest of the postings, in descending order of frequency (Sweetser & Lariscy). This demonstrates the more personal relationship by just having a presence on social media, such as facebook “friends.” Using the same appeal as Nixon’s well known “Checker’s Speech,” candidates succeed when viewed as a likeable character, not just political figure (Culbert, 1983). Social media provides the means to quickly and easily doing so, without needing to create so many forced moments and to get this coverage past the traditional gatekeepers.

2.5.2 New Influencer

The power of the new influencer is also a new concept for communication practitioners to understand when using social media. Even within the industrialized side of online marketing, social media shops are popping up across the nation to adapt to such a specialized industry (Morrissey, 2010). Recent research has even shown a tendency toward “‘media catching,’ a reversal of the traditional media relations’ communications patterns” (Waters, Tindall, & Morton 2010 p. 241). In this process, journalists ask for leads and sources from the outside, using websites such as HARO and Twitter, as opposed to the traditional “pitch” format. HARO, or Help-A-Reporter-Out, is not limited to just public relations professionals. The website features questions from reporters, which can be answered by any individual who fits the request. This type of news coverage can be extremely powerful and create a mutually beneficial relationship between a journalist and a media influencer (Waters et al.).

A recent phenomenon of viral media, or material that gains quick popularity through Internet distribution, shows the power of any individual as a content creator. In fact, research has shown that those who use the Internet frequently also tend to be more social than the average person to begin with (Baym et al. 2004). For example, the Eepybird.com and Coca-Cola incident where two entertainers in Buckfield, Maine, videotaped the chemical reaction between Mentos and Diet Coke (Gillin, 2008). Using over 100 bottles in a choreographed explosion, with both music and acting in the background, the pair shot the video and uploaded it to their website and emailed the video to friends. The video quickly went “viral,” or was spread to a large number of users, because of the many links the pair had already held. At first, Coca-Cola fretted over legal ramifications from the videos’ popularity, but eventually supported the pair by providing free products and even hosting the videos on the company’s webpage (Gillin). Even though Coca-Cola did not originally create the video, the company was able to latch onto consumer-generated content and benefit from a supposed 15% boost to business (Gillin). This example just skims the surface of the power of the consumer, or potential voter, as an outside force in news creation.

2.5.3 Political Information Spaces

Information flows in one direction via traditional media (newspapers, television), allowing audiences only to consume information. The Internet (and social media in particular)

accommodates multi-directional information flow, allowing users to interact with one another. This classification of online interaction spaces based on direction of communication is well documented (Chung, 2008; Quandt, 2008).

Literature about what constitutes political participation often revolves around how personally involving is a behavior (Conway, 2000), adding to the importance of the suggested categorization.

2.5.3.1 Media Use–Consumption

Primarily unidirectional platforms, such as most Web sites, allow few opportunities to share information among users. This is similar to newspapers, television, and other traditional forms of media. Ideally, online newspapers could become spaces for interpersonal information and opinion interaction. In practice, they remain slow to take advantage of their interactive potential (Quandt, 2008).

2.5.3.2 Media Use–Interaction

Social media platforms, however, next to serving entertainment and social surveillance needs (boyd & Ellison, 2007; Lampe, Ellison & Steinfield, 2006), provide spaces where individuals share political opinions and information (Pew, 2009a, 2011). Social media spaces include SNS, discussion forums and blogs, where individuals meet, share, and discuss a wide range of issues (Kapla & Haenlein, 2010).

Whereas social media spaces can be exclusively used for unidirectional information flow, studies show they also serve social interaction needs, which require some level of information or opinion interaction (Papacharissi & Mendelson, 2008; Sweetser & Weaver Lariscy, 2007).

The characterization of spaces based on uni- or multi-directional communication flow is important, as online interactions showed positive relations with political activities and attitudes. An earlier space where online interaction occurred, online political chat rooms serve both social and information-seeking needs (Atkin, Jeffres, Neuendorf, Lange, & Skalski, 2005; Johnson & Kaye, 2003) and can influence political behaviors and attitudes (Kaye & Johnson, 2006; Moy,

Manosevitch, Stamm, & Dunsmore, 2005). More recently, Zhang, Johnson, Seltzer, and Bichard (2010) observed that reliance on SNS is significantly related to increased civic participation. They did not find a relationship with political participation, which they explained in terms of the types of relationships on SNS. In the context of this study, another possible explanation is their conceptualization of political participation as traditional off-line activities only.

2.5.3.3 Interest in Political Discourse

Another aspect of interaction with political information is the individual's interest in taking part in political conversations. Studies examining conversing off the Internet about political issues demonstrate that such conversations play a major role in political learning, attitude formation, and behavior (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1995; MacKuen & Brown, 1987), increase in political involvement (McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999), and increased factual knowledge and understanding of politics (Eveland & Scheufele, 1998). Rojas and Puig-i-Abril (2009) showed that informational uses of Internet and mobile phones are significantly related to expressive participation in the online domain, which in turn results in a host of offline civic and political participatory behaviors. Interests in interpersonal interactions about politics and in consuming political content provide another level for understanding and predicting attitudes toward online political activities.

Different political activities on and off the Web require different types of interactions between users and content and among users, depending in part on the activity of choice. In some, users are expected to interact and share political opinions and attitudes, while on other spaces users are often limited to information search and consumption. Individual attributes of information sharing—interpersonal informational trust and openness—discussed next, can help shed light on attitudes toward online political activities and Internet use.

2.5.4 Interpersonal Political Openness and Informational Trust

Trust is described broadly as the expectation that “people have of each other, of the organizations and institutions in which they live, and of the natural and moral social orders, that set the fundamental understandings for their lives” (Barber, 1983, p. 165). Trust is described both in interpersonal and institutional terms (e.g., Soh, Reid, & King, 2009). Political trust, in

contrast, traditionally was conceptualized mainly as institutional trust (Miller & Listhaug, 1990), including compliance with governmental authority (Scholz & Lubell, 1998), voting behaviors (Hetherington, 1998), and belief in governments' legitimate authority (Easton, 1965; Gershtenson, Ladewig, & Plane, 2006). Growing distrust of government, politicians, and political processes (Langer, 2002) alarmed scholars and concerned citizens who regard such distrust as damaging to the legitimacy of all public systems (Erber & Lau, 1990; Gallup, 2008; Putnam, 1995).

A relationship was observed between institutional political trust and willingness to openly share ones political thoughts with others (Klaase, 1999). Considering the interpersonal nature of social media for exchanging opinions and information, this relationship between trust and openness may also be associated with willingness to share via social media.

Interpersonal trust was shown in prior research to be correlated with effective knowledge transfer (Andrews & Delahay, 2000; Penley & Hawkins, 1985; Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998). High trust indicates feelings of connectedness to one another in a community and a "standing decision" to give most people—even acquaintances or complete strangers—the benefit of the doubt (Delli-Carpini, 2004). Individuals with higher trust expect others to follow the same rules or beliefs and are more likely to belong to community groups, socialize with others informally, volunteer, and cooperate with others to solve community problems (Levi, 1996; Orbell & Dawes, 1991). When people are tightly bound to an association, their trust for their fellow members usually grows and the aggregate social capital increases. As a result, people are more likely to participate in political activities (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Putnam, 1995; Sullivan & Transue, 1999).

Interpersonal trust may depend on strength of relationships. Whether offline or online, one can interact with individuals with whom one has strong or weak relationships.

Strong ties characterize one's inner circle, like family and friends with whom one feels close and interacts frequently; while weak ties, the outer circle, typically consist of co-workers and strangers (Hansen, 1999; Marsden & Campbell, 1984). Literature suggests that individuals form strong relationships with those who are similar to them, and weak relationships are often characterized by connections with heterogeneous individuals, from which diversity of opinions

and perspectives can originate (Granovetter, 1983). In the context of political communication, studies suggest that discussion of politics with those of different perspectives generates positive democratic outcomes such as increased political knowledge and tolerance (Brundidge, 2010; Mutz & Mondak, 2006). In the context of SNS, literature suggests that strength of relationships via social media vary (e.g., Gilbert & Karahalios, 2009), especially considering that some online relationships complement existing social relationships outside the web.

Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) found that strong relationships are more likely to be effective because they tend to be trusting ones. Strong ties were also associated with the receipt of useful knowledge (Levin & Cross, 2004). However, Levin and Cross showed that when controlling for trust, weaker ties led to the receipt of useful non-redundant knowledge, more than stronger ones. Trust in weak ties is also important as a weak tie provides knowledge from more socially distant regions of a network (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1983). Trust in inner and outer circles has different implications, as these two circles provide different types of knowledge.

2.6 People's perception on the content of political communication

If the vision of a singular, integrated public sphere has faded in the face of the social realities of late modern society, so has much of the normative impetus that may have previously seen this as an ideal. The goal of ushering all citizens into one unitary public sphere, with one specific set of communicative and cultural traditions, is usually rejected on the grounds of pluralism and difference. There must exist spaces in which citizens belonging to different groups and cultures, or speaking in registers or even languages, will find participation meaningful. Differences of all kinds, including political orientation and interests, gender, ethnicity, cultural capital, and geography, can warrant specialized communicative spaces. At some points, certain groups may require a separate space where they can work out internal issues and/or cultivate a collective identity. Not least we must take into account alternative or counter public spheres (cf. Fenton & Downey, 2003; Asen & Brouwer, 2001), where political currents oppositional to the dominant mainstream can find support and expression. These were first formulated in terms of class "the proletarian public sphere"; (Negt & Kluge, 1993) as a direct response to Habermas's emphasis on the bourgeois public sphere. Later, Fraser (1992) further developed the idea, not least with feminist horizons.

It is here where the Internet most obviously makes a contribution to the public sphere. There are literally thousands of Web sites having to do with the political realm at the local, national, and global levels; some are partisan, most are not. We can find discussion groups, chat rooms, alternative journalism, civic organizations, NGOs, grass roots issue-advocacy sites (cf. Berman & Mulligan, 2003; Bennett, 2003b), and voter education sites (see Levine, 2003). One can see an expansion in terms of available communicative spaces for politics, as well as ideological breadth, compared to the mass media. Structurally, this pluralization not only extends but also disperses the relatively clustered public sphere of the mass media.

If the Internet facilitates an impressive communicative heterogeneity, the negative side of this development is of course fragmentation, with public spheres veering toward disparate islands of political communication, as Galston (2003) had argued. Here opens up yet another important research theme, one that must encompass an overarching systemic perspective. That various groups may feel they must first coalesce internally before they venture out into the larger public sphere is understandable; however, cyber ghettos threaten to undercut a shared public culture and the integrative societal function of the public sphere, and they may well even help foster intolerance where such communities have little contact with—or understanding of—one another. Fragmentation also derives simply from the mushrooming of advocacy groups and the array of issues available.

While traditional online party politics and forms of e-government may serve as centripetal forces to such fragmentation, the trend is clearly in the direction of increasing dispersion.

The question of multi-public spheres glides readily into the issue of the links between the different spheres to the centers of decision making. The public sphere is no guarantee for democracy: There can be all kinds of political information and debate in circulation, but there must be structural connections—formalized institutional procedures—between these communicative spaces and the processes of decision making, as Sparks (2001) argued. There can obviously be no automatic, lock-step connection here, not without degeneration into a chaotic populism. Yet, there must be some semblance of impact, some indication that the political talk of

citizens has consequences, or else disengagement and cynicism can set in—as is precisely what many observers claim has been a pattern for a decade or so in the mainstream, mass mediated systems of political communication of the Western liberal democracies.

Today the most notable gap between communication in the public sphere and institutional structures for binding decisions is found in the global arena. Transnational forums, global networking, and opinion mobilization are very much evident on the Net, yet the mechanisms for transforming opinion at the global level into decisions and policies are highly limited, to say the least. There are simply few established mechanisms for democratically based and binding transnational decision making. While we might see the embryonic outlines of a global civil society (cf. Keane, 2003), its full realization is not on the horizon, even if the idea is a powerful and progressive element of the social imaginary.

In terms of the structural dimension, we can specify a number of different sectors of Net-based public spheres, including:

Versions of e-government, usually with a top-down character, where government representatives interact with citizens and where information about governmental administration and services is made available. While interaction may be relatively constricted, it can still at times serve as a sector of the public sphere.

This sector is sometimes distinguished from *e-governance*, which emphasizes horizontal civic communication and input for government policy (Malina, 2003).

The advocacy/activist domain, where discussion is framed by organizations with generally shared perceptions, values, and goals—and geared for forms of political intervention. These include traditional parliamentary politics, established corporate and other organized interest group politics (e.g., unions), and the new politics of social movements and other activists.

The vast array of diverse civic forums where views are exchanged among citizens and deliberation can take place. This is generally understood as the paradigmatic version of the public sphere on the Net, but it would be quite erroneous to neglect the others.

The prepolitical or parapolitical domain, which airs social and cultural topics having to do with common interests and/or collective identities. Here politics is not explicit but always remains a potential. Clearly, there is no absolute way in which the boundary between the nonpolitical and the parapolitical can be drawn, since it is always in part discursively negotiated and changeable.

The journalism domain, which includes everything from major news organizations that have gone online (e.g., newspapers and CNN) to Net-based news organizations (usually without much or any original reporting) such as Yahoo! News, alternative news organizations such as Indymedia and Mediachannel, as well as one-person weblog sites (also known as “bloggers”). Interestingly, the research literature has tended to focus mainly on deliberative interaction in terms of online public spheres and/or mass media journalism. We should not forget that the online journalism sector is a core element of the public sphere on the Internet.

This list can of course be made more elaborate; for example, one could divide civic forums into those which originate from journalistic initiatives and those with other origins. The point is simply to highlight a bit more specifically the sprawling character of the multisector online public sphere.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

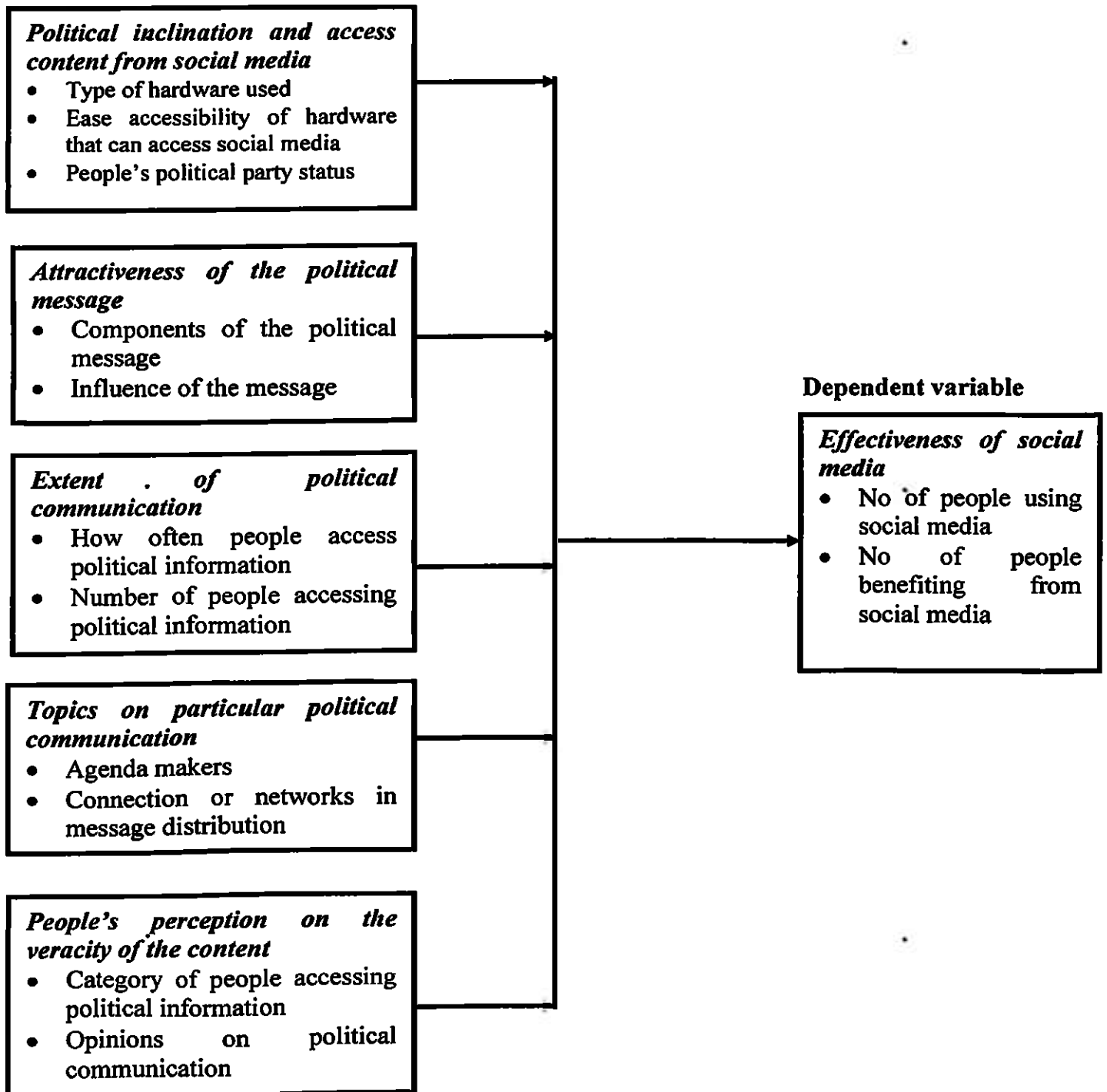


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the methodology used in the research. It will cover the research design, target population, sampling procedure and sample size, the instrument validity and reliability, and data collection methods and analysis techniques used in this study.

3.2 Research Design

Descriptive survey design will be used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researcher gather information, summarize, present and interpret it for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2003). Kothari (2003) also recommends descriptive research design as it allows the researcher to describe, record, analyze and report conditions that exist or existed.

This was also a quantitative study which relied on the principles of verifiability. That means confirmation, proof, corroboration or substantiation. The researcher's values, interpretation and feelings were not going to be considered. Objectivity is reinforced. In quantitative research the researcher tried as much as possible to be detached from the subject of the study or respondent (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The research focused on measurement i.e. the assignment of numerical events according to rules.

3.3 Target Population

The population for purposes of this study was the UoN students in various campuses in Kenya, Working Class Youth and some of the political hopefuls.

3.4 Sample size

According to Orodho and Kombo (2002), sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire population. Sampling is the process of obtaining information about the entire population by examining only part of it (Kathari, 1985)

Sampling is a research procedure that will be used for selecting a given number of elements from the target population as representative of that population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Once the number of the target population is established by the researcher, an appropriate sampling technique will be used as recommended by the various statistical scholars.

The sample size chosen for the purposes of this study were recorded in a sampling frame will be as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Selection Size

<i>Respondent's category</i>	<i>Estimated Population (100%)</i>	<i>10% sample rate</i>	<i>Sample size</i>
UoN Students	1,000	10%	100
Working Class Youth	700	10%	70
Political hopefuls	300	10%	30
Total	2,000		200

3.5 Data Collection procedures

This study employed questionnaires with both open and closed-ended questions for the purpose of inquiry. The questionnaires were deemed to be the best method to gather large amount of information in a cost effective and timely manner. They collected primary data that was used for its proximity to the truth and control over error (Cooper & Schindler 2003).

Since some of the questionnaires were administered through a distant research, one of the the main methods of data collection was E-mail correspondence with primary respondents. These primary respondents were mainly credible researchers who had conducted actual field research in the area as well as other respondents who had access to internet and mobile phone. The open-ended or free response questions required respondents to give opinions and feelings about the effective use of social media in disseminating political information and any other relevant subjective detail that was significant for the study. Conversely, through Email correspondence, the close-ended or fixed alternative was a series of multiple-choice questions, which the

respondent were required to pick one answer, for example Yes, No, or I do not Know.

The interview process was divided into three parts, which were, the pre-interview where respondents were sent a copy of the interview to be done, scheduling was arranged and informed consent sought. The actual interview was then done through Email with each response transcribed immediately. Post-interview was mainly concerned with seeking clarifications and any other additional information relevant to the research. Secondary data collection came from the archives where various researchers had conducted studies on the issue under review.

3.6 Validity of the research Instruments

The study tools measured the content validity test where a pre-test was conducted. This ensured the determining accuracy, clarity and suitability of the tools. Initially, 3 respondents with the same characteristics as those involved in the study were randomly chosen, which assisted the researcher to identify the items which could have been inadequate. Necessary corrections made to the same whereas the ambiguous questions were reframed. Examination of the content validity ensured that the tools answered all the research questions. The researcher made corrections, adjustments and additions to some research instruments following the analysis of the pre-test results.

3.7 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability test of the tools was the dependability, consistency or trustworthiness of a test which was measured through test-retest technique. The questionnaire was administered to a group of individuals with similar characteristics as the actual sample. The same test was repeated after a period of 7 days, equivalent to a week, and the scores obtained from both tests were be correlated to get the coefficient of reliability. According to the Spearman's Rank, Correlation Coefficient of 0.82 obtained meant that the tools were 82% reliable. This justified the reliability of the tools and consistence to answer the research questions and thus the study was conducted.

3.8 Data Analysis techniques

Before the actual data analysis, the researcher edited and coded the raw data to free it from inconsistencies and incompleteness, misclassification and gaps in the information obtained from

the respondents. The validated process determined the respondent rate of questionnaires; Data was then captured and stored in electronic/soft and written/hard copy format. The data was tabulated into sub-samples for common characteristics with responses being coded for basic statistical analysis, ANOVA, to draw out the strength of relationship between variables. The data analysis tool used was the programme Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17. Orodho (2003) argues that the simplest way to present data is in frequency or statistical tables, which summarizes data about a single variable.

The qualitative data was analyzed thematically by categorizing the responses into related themes. By use of a correlation coefficient, further relationship of the variables were revealed, through the use of coefficient of determination (r^2), the study determined the extent at which the predictor variables were influenced by the effective use of social media. In order to control the effects of other variables while analyzing one, cross-tabulation tables were used through the application of the SPSS statistical package. Error correction mechanism procedure to find out the order of integration was used, in order to find out the number of times that a variable has to be differenced to achieve stationarity. It was necessary to achieve stationarity of the variable so that the mean and variance estimated from such variables would be unbiased estimates of the unknown population mean and variance.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

There was need to get an informed consent from the respondents before the actual research was conducted. This ensured that the aims and objectives of the research were explained before undertaking the research to assist in arriving at permission from the respondents as well as utmost confidentiality about the respondents be assured. The researcher obtained legal requirements and made prior appointments for the interviews.

3.10 Organization of the Study

In this research, various sections were integrated together to form a complete study report. In Chapter one, the goal of this research was discussed, followed by a presentation of comprehensive background information on the influence of social media to political communication in Kenya. Chapter two detailed the various literatures from other authors and

their opinions on how the social media had influenced political communication. The third Part discussed the methodologies used to reach the respondents and acquired enough information on the subject under study. In chapter 4 and 5, the findings and discussions, summary conclusion and recommendations reached were accounted for. The final part illustrated the reference materials from diversity of authors, the tools used alongside the schedules and budgetary allocations for the study.

3.11 Operational definition of variables

Table 2: Operational definition of terms

Objective/Research question	Type of variable	Indicators	Measure	Level of scale
1. To determine the influence of political party inclination in accessing the content from social media	Independent <i>Political inclination and access content from social media</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of hardware used • Ease accessibility of hardware that can access social media • People's political party status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types of hardware - No of people accessing the hardware - No of political parties 	Ordinal Ordinal Ordinal
2. To assess how the attractiveness of the political message leads to more access to social media	<i>Attractiveness of the political message</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of the political message • Influence of the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No of people interested in the message - No of people using the message 	Ordinal Ratio
3. To investigate the extent to which political communication drives people to use social media	<i>Extent of political communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often people access political information • Number of people accessing political information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No of people accessing political information 	Ordinal

4. To assess what topics on particular political communication influence the use of social media	<i>Topics on particular political communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda makers • Connection or networks in message distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No of agenda makers - No of networks formed on social media 	Ordinal Nominal
5. To assess the influence of people's perception on the veracity of the content of political communication to the access in the social media	<i>People's perception on the veracity of the content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category of people accessing political information • Opinions on political communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No of people implementing information accessed in social media - Opinions on political communication 	Ordinal Ordinal
	<u>Dependent</u> <i>Effectiveness of social media</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of people using social media • No of people benefiting from social media 		

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION , ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analyzed data and discusses the interpretation of the findings. The data analyzed was presented both using frequencies and percentages using frequency tables. The data related to the factors that influenced political communication in social media was also analyzed and tested using the regression test where determination of the t and f values and co-efficiency (R Square) was applied, to test for its correlation with the dependent variable. These are followed by discussions based on the analyzed data presented for interpretation purposes.

In order to address the research questions, the authors employed a full factorial analysis of covariance using either MANCOVA or ANCOVA, depending on the dimensionality of the dependent variables. These statistical procedures permitted the examination of the mean differences across levels of the independent variables, while at the same time assessing the explanatory power of the model. Furthermore, when dealing with multiple dependent variables it was necessary to adjust for multiple testing effects and thus control for Type I error. This required that the independent variables be recoded into a discrete number of categories, potentially losing information. However, the study concluded that the advantages of a factorial model outweigh this disadvantage.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to respondents through email while others were administered by enumerators; and thereafter followed up through telephone to confirm receipt of the same, 160 were properly filled and taken back thus giving 80% response rate in this study. The questionnaires were analyzed and constituted to the discussions made in this study report. The response rate is therefore presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Response Rate

<i>Respondent's category</i>	Questionnaires issued to respondents	Questionnaires returned from respondents	Response rate
UoN Students	100	80	80%
Working Class Youth	70	65	92.8%
Political hopefuls	30	15	50%
Total	200	160	80%

In this study, the questionnaire response rate was in a percentile that is acceptable (80%), and therefore acceptable for analysis.

4.3 Demographic profile

The demographic history of the respondents was analyzed and presented in this part. Three (3) categories of respondents were involved in this study and respondents were chosen to give information on the subject under review in order to take part in the study. This study sought to find out the age, gender and the employment status of the respondents. An account of the analysis was summarized and below.

4.3.1 Distribution of respondents by Sex

Sex of the respondents was analyzed and reported as follows;

Table 4: Sex of the respondents

<i>No</i>	<i>sex</i>	<i>UoN Students</i>	<i>Working class youth</i>	<i>Political hopefuls</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1	Male	45	40	7	53.3%
2	Female	35	25	8	46.7%
	Total	80	65	15	100%

Table 4 depicts that 53.3% of the respondents involved in this study were male with 46.7% being female. The analysis of study is indicative of the female representation in sharing of opinions of

the subject under review. Since the population Census of 1999 showed that there was an almost fifty-fifty split in the sex of the population of Kenya, the data collected from the respondents is deemed to be representative of how political communication is accessed by the general population.

4.3.2 Age representation in the study

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents by age.

Table 5: Age distribution of the respondents

<i>Age</i>	<i>No of respondents</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1. Below 20 Years	16	10%
2. Between 21 and 35 Years	90	56.25%
3. Above 35	54	33.75%
Total	160	100%

Table 5 shows that 56.25% majority of the respondents were between the youthful ages of 21 to 35 years. The fact that the study reached youthful respondents could clearly be indicative of the fact that technological adoption had been highly embraced by the age bracket. The analysis of the findings revealed that 33.75% of the respondents were above 35 years while only 10% were below 20 year. The fact that a significant number of 10% respondents were below 20 years was indicative of the early adoption of technology for the young generation in Kenya.

4.3.3 Current Employment Status

The study sought to find out the employment status of the respondents and the findings shown in table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by employment status

No	Variable (Question)	Response category	Frequency distribution	Percentage proportion
1.	What is your employment status?	1. Employed for a wage	50	31.25%
		2. Self employed	15	9.4%
		3. Employed and part time student	5	3.125%
		4. Student at the University	75	46.875%

Table 6 indicates the respondent's distribution by their current employment status where majority of them (46.875%) were full time university students with 31.25% being full time employees. It was important to note that a significant proportion of 9.4% of the respondents were self-employed while a minority of 3.125% were employed and part time students.

The foregoing analysis indicates that majority of the respondents were students within the universities in the major towns of Kenya which assumes that technological adoption in the use of social media such as Facebook, twitter, YouTube is highly prevalent. The sample chosen would therefore help in getting the required information with regard to the quest within the variables.

4.4 Political party inclination and access to social media

Kenya's politics have experienced a new twist in the dynamism of political party inclination for the last couple of months. Political hopefuls have aligned themselves with political parties they feel have the most to offer in terms of appeal, although expediency cannot be ignored as the major driving force of this inclination before the deadline set by the Political Party's Act is reached. In order to spread an issue platform and attract media attention, the parties have demonstrated proficient use of social media tools. According to an article in the *People Journal*, much of the conservative social media usage came in response to the success of the presidential campaign's online organization (Mukami, 2010).

The study sought to investigate various underlying factors which influenced usability of social media in accelerating the political party inclination. An analysis of the findings was done and recorded as shown in table 7.

Table 7: Extent of political party inclination.

No.	Question	Response categories	Frequency distribution	% Proportion
1.	What is your political party	ODM	50	31.25%
		URP	30	18.75%
		UDF	25	15.625%
		TNA	35	21.875%
		Narc	5	3.125%
		Others (Specify)	15	9.375%

Table 7 indicates that a bigger percentage of bloggers inclined themselves in ODM party followed by TNA which had 21.875% of the bloggers inclined to it. URP and UDF shared 18.75% and 15.625% respectively. It should be noted that Narc had a minority of 3.125% while 9.375% was shared by bloggers from other parties.

The above analysis indicates that party inclination among the bloggers was quite pronounced. While its sustainability and transition into the future is currently unclear, the emergency of TNA, URP, and UDF among other parties has left an impact on Kenyan politics in the twenty-first century.

Further analysis of the study findings was quite indicative of the fact that political party influenced access to social media as some were quoted during the interviews;

“I have to blog daily to ensure that I share my blessings and my opinions on my political stand and emphasize on the increased following towards the party for majority.” UoN Student in Mombasa Campus

While it was clear that the inclination in political parties had an impact on the increased usage of social media for political communication, it was certain that social media guaranteed political party’s support as Blackmon, 2010 puts it below;

“This laid the groundwork for a grassroots response from the right. First, a Twitter collection of top conservatives helped set up a network of politically likeminded individuals.”

Additionally, the Party inclination gained national media attention after television commentators noticed the popularity of conservative blog “*Smart Politics*” (Schaefer, 2010).

Coefficients (a) on political party inclination

The variable was tested for coefficient determination and further an f and t test conducted to measure stationery and results of the test were as shown in the tables below.

Table 7: Model Summary for political party inclination test

Model	R	R Square (r ²)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.234(a)	.047	-.024	09.10194
2	.638(b)	.417	.437	4.40123

b Predictors: (Constant), political party inclination

The determination of the t test was further conducted parallel to the f test and findings discussed below.

Based on the political party inclination analysis, the f value is significant and therefore we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the value is stationary. The t value in the analysis below is significantly positive at 1.139 after calculating the Coefficient. This is indicative of the fact that the alternative hypothesis (*political party inclination influences the increased use of social media*) is highly rejected and null hypothesis fails to be rejected.

Table 8: Determination of access to hardware and internet facility

No.	Question	Response categories	Frequency distribution	% Proportion
2.	Do you have a mobile phone or a computer?	Yes	160	100%
		No	0	0%
3.	Can your mobile or computer access internet?	Yes	155	96.875%
		No	5	3.125%
		N/A	0	0%
4.	What type of hardware do you use in accessing internet?	Mobile phone	145	90.265%
		Computer	5	3.125%
		PDA	10	6.25%
		N/A	0	0%

Table 8 clearly indicates that access to hardware that could assist the respondents to blog in verge of political communication was paramount considering that all the respondents (100%) had access to a mobile phone. Among them, 96.875% majority could easily access internet from their mobile phones while a minority of 3.124% whose mobile phones had no access to internet easily accessed it from computer networked to the internet. However, 6.25% proportion of the bloggers used PDAs for accessing internet.

As stated earlier, it was wise to say that access to internet was a significant factor to consider when determining the access to social media and in this study, it could be summed up that all the respondents could easily blog and thus their interest in political inclination could thus be determined with ease.

Earlier inferences made by various actors indicated that while the political re-grouping held in the official rallies since 2009, the political parties were present as unorganized grassroots movements in the 2007 presidential election (Greenblatt, 2010). Even between elections, there

was still influence in political party inclination and discussion, such as today's emphasis on budget cuts in an era of stagnant wages and foreign economic competition (Dionne, 2011).

In view of the above, the study sought to find out the bloggers' position in political party incrimination and the findings were as shown in table 8.

4.5 Attractiveness of the political message

The study made an analysis on how the attractiveness of political message would be of great influential factor towards social media access and findings shown in the table below.

Table 8: Attractiveness of political message

No.	Question	Response categories	Frequency distribution	% Proportion
1.	Have you ever used a social media page?	1. Yes 2. No	160 0	100% 0%
2.	If yes, which one?	1. Twitter only 2. Face book only 3. YouTube only 4. Combination	15 20 7 118	9.375% 12.5% 4.375% 73.75%
3.	Have you ever posted any political message in a page?	1. Many times 2. Few times 3. N/A	135 25 0	84.375% 15.625% 0%
4.	Is the political message a driving factor towards your access to social media?	Yes No Sometimes	95 7 58	59.375% 4.375% 36.25%
5.	Has your political message influenced others to access social media?	Yes No Sometimes	95 7 58	59.375% 4.375% 36.25%

The table above depicts that all the respondents had at some point posted some political message in social media. It can therefore be concluded that political communication is a relevant topic with Kenyans using social media..

Facebook, Twitter and YouTube attracted a proportion of 12.5%, 9.375% and 4.375% respectively with a majority of 73.75% using a combination of all the above in posting their political messages most of the times.

On asking if the political message was a driving factor towards access to social media, 59.375% confirmed while 4.375% declines with 36.25% expressing their uncertainty on the same. The same percentages proportions were expressed when it was asked if the bloggers had influenced others to blog in social media through the political message.

It could be noted that attractiveness of political message was quite a significant factor that influenced political communication access in social media.

During the interviews, it was evident that in a warm up to the 2013 election, social media was integral in the campaign process. This is evident from responses from the interviews that give the figures that 35% of Kenyan bloggers said they had watched political videos online, 6% had made a political contribution online and 10% said they had used social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to gather information about candidates and become involved in their campaigns. Internet users under 30 include an important part of this group: Two-thirds of them have a social networking profile and of those, half use their sites to engage in the political process or obtain information.

4.5.1 Attractiveness of political message test

A comparative test was made on the coefficient determination and an alternative test done using the t test and findings given in table 11.

Table 9: Model Summary for Attractiveness of political message

Model	R	R Square (r ²)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.926(a)	.356	.099	6.5268

b Predictors: (Constant), attractiveness of political message

In determining the coefficient test, the results on the effects of the political message attractiveness on social media were conducted. The R Square (r²) model was used and a standard

error was recorded at 6.5268 at 1 degree of defense and a figure of .099 was arrived. In this determination therefore, it was predicted that the attractiveness of political message could significantly influence the social media access as evidenced by the r^2 .

Determination of coefficient test in the analysis of the attractiveness of political message conducted using the t test and findings shown in table 12.

Table 10: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Attractiveness of political message	1.871	.522	.678	3.125	.083

a Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Attractiveness of political message

b Dependent Variable: Social media determination

The t value for political message attractiveness is registered in this t-test at 3.125 after the difference. This means that it is significant and thus we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that increased access to social media and increased technological adoption has been greatly influenced by the attractiveness of political messages where bloggers mostly visit social media to get networked, update and post/ refresh their political messages to reach their followers.

4.6 Extent of political communication

In the various literatures reviewed in this study, it was evident that different Scholars increasingly were sensing that profound changes in both society and the media was giving birth to a new form of political communication system that was qualitatively different from its predecessors (Cook, 1998; Norris, Curtice, Sanders, Scammell, & Semetko, 1999; Wyatt, 1998).

The extent of political communication was determined by asking the bloggers about their frequency in blogging, the networks they had where friends blogged with them as well as the extent of involvement in political information in social media and findings analyses as shown in the table 13.

Table 11: Determination of the extent of political communication by bloggers

No.	Question	Response categories	Frequency distribution	% Proportion
1.	Have you ever blogged in social media?	1. Yes 2. No	160 0	100% 0%
2.	How many times do you blog in social media?	1. Few times 2. More times 3. Not often 4. Never 5. Not applicable	41 96 23 0 0	25.625% 60% 14.375% 0% 0%
3.	Do you have friends who blog in social media?	1. Yes 2. No	160 0	100% 0%
4.	How often people access political information?	1. Few times 2. More times 3. Not often 4. Never 5. Not applicable	44 116 0 0 0	27.5% 72.5% 0% 0% 0%
5.	How many of your friends people accessing political information?	1. Few 2. Many 3. None 4. Almost everyone	56 104 0 0	35% 65% 0% 0%

The analysis of the study findings conducted above is indicative of the extent of blogging in social media on political communication as many of the bloggers expressed having blogged several times while others had accessed information on political communication not alone but with their friends.

The foregoing analysis indicates that not only are the avenues of political communication multiplying in a process that is becoming more diverse, fragmented, and complex, but also, at a deeper level. The power relations among key message providers and receivers are being rearranged.

These sentiments were justified by a certain author in the literature who echoed that the culture of political journalism was being transformed; and conventional meanings of “democracy” and “citizenship” were being questioned and rethought (Brants, 1998; Buckingham, 1997). The research community was therefore challenged to keep up with the evolving trends and avoid over commitment to superseded paradigms.

4.7 Topics on particular political communication

In an efforts to determine the agenda setters, their political connectivity among other factors, social media forces attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures, they are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the media should think about, know about, and have feelings about. These opinions were justified during the interviews with the bloggers and an analysis of the findings was made as shown in table 14.

Table 12: Topics on particular political communication

No.	Question	Response categories	Frequency distribution	% Proportion
1.	Who are the Agenda makers in the blog sites?	Politicians Political activists Political sympathizers Community mobilizer Others (Specify)	43 65 27 25 0	26.875% 40.625% 16.875% 15.625% 0%
2.	Do the agenda makers have any connection or networks in message distribution?	1. Yes 2. No	160 0	100% 0%
3.	Is there any Political information space for the politicians in Kenya?	1. Yes 2. No	160 0	100% 0%

The above analysis demonstrates the more personal relationship for the agenda makers by just having a presence on social media, such as facebook “friends.”

Politicians, political activists, sympathizers and mobilizers all have an opportunity to set up agendas within social media for their blog partners to communicate with as reported by 26.875%, 40.625%, 16.875% and 15.625% of the respondents respectively.

Various bloggers confirmed that the use of the same appeal well known “Checker’s Speech”, where a candidate succeeds when viewed as a likeable character, not just political figure. It can therefore be concluded that social media provides the means to effectively and efficiently get to the electorate by by-passing the traditional gatekeepers.

4.7.1 Co efficiency determination

A coefficient test of the study findings was conducted. Subsequent results of the test, the Coefficient of topics on particular political messages in political communication was negative at -.341 at a standard error of .975.

Alternatively, the t-test was recorded at -.489 after the first difference and thus we failed to reject the null hypothesis (topics on particular political messages in political communication does not significantly influence the social media access).

4.8 People’s perception on the veracity of the political communication

Analysis of the study findings on the perceptions on the veracity of political communication on social media were conducted and presented as discussed below.

Table 15 indicates a mean of 1.89 and a standard deviation of 0.02; it was therefore important to note that this was an important indicator that contributes to access of political communication in social media.

Table 13: Determination of perceptions of bloggers

<i>No.</i>	<i>Query</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Rank in severity</i>
<i>People's perception on the veracity of the content</i>				
1	Political communication influence media access	1.35	1.14	5 th
2	Category of people accessing political information are youth	2.05	1.45	3 rd
3	Opinions that political communication is truthful	2.42	1.41	4 th
4	Use of social media distorts political communication	1.67	0.74	6 th
5	I have taken part in political communication through social media	2.55	1.45	1 st
6	Social media does not help ones mileage in political communication	1.31	1.66	2 nd
<i>Grand mean / standard deviation</i>		1.89	0.02	

Consecutive analysis indicated that other components such as the category of people accessing political information being youth, the use of social media distorting political communication and social media not helping ones mileage in political communication were analysed and subsequent tests conducted to determine its veracity.

Table 14: Model Summary (b) People's perception on the veracity of the content

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.048 ^a	.002	-.122	11.40486

a Predictors: (Constant), People's perception on the veracity of the content

b Dependent Variable: Social media determination

The coefficient of determination (r^2) as shown in the table above indicates a very insignificant level of relationship between the perceptions on veracity of the content and access of political communication in the social media.

It is evident from the analysis that perceptions on veracity of content in political communication had no significant influence on social media as shown by the non-stationary value of .023. This means that we reject the null hypothesis.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the major findings are summarized; conclusions are drawn based on the findings and recommendations are forwarded for the concerned bodies.

5.1 Summary

It is impossible to make any overall generalization about influence of social media on various independent variables based on these results, since they vary so widely among each blogger. The one conclusive statement is that social media is used in a variety of different ways. However, it is apparent that the social conversation has continued to exist since the election, with a large number of comments, mentions, and views. Each respondent seems to prefer one platform over another, just by observing the amount of time put into posting and promoting.

Based on the political party inclination analysis, the subsequent tests indicate a failure to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that the value is stationary; meaning that the alternative hypothesis (political party inclination influences the increased use political communication in social media) is highly rejected and null hypothesis fails to be rejected.

The value indication for political message attractiveness was registered in this t-test after the difference and it gave an indication that it is significant and thus we failed to reject the null hypothesis; concluded that increased access to social media and increased technological adoption has been greatly influenced by the attractiveness of political messages where bloggers mostly visit social media to get networked, update and post/ refresh their political messages to reach their followers.

Subsequent results of the test, the Coefficient of topics on particular political messages in political communication was negative. Alternative test was conducted after the first difference and thus we failed to reject the null hypothesis (topics on particular political messages in political communication does not significantly influence the access of political communication in social media).

Themes from the secondary research also appeared in the political pages. First, lack of control appears as a huge issue for public officials, with only few having open Facebook profiles where any user can post. Having an area where any individual can comment leaves politicians both vulnerable to criticism and open to praise. Political bloggers seem to be dealing with this issue in different case-by-case ways. Additionally, the agenda setting aspect of social media certainly applies here. Of course, politicians posted mainstream media content in which they were featured. Interestingly, though, many also posted op-eds or articles, which supported legislative decisions aligned with their own political ideologies. This outside content helps to validate decisions and persuade constituents. It is important to note the difference between a social media and mainstream media here. While many people expect mainstream media to provide factual news, social media's new emergence has yet to fully show how it is perceived.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Conceptual Implications

The growing use of the Internet for purposes of political activities and communication suggests that traditional definitions of political participation may need to be revisited. This study makes a contribution to political communication research by suggesting conceptual frameworks for understanding online activities as political participation. It proposes and provides evidence to support two helpful conceptual distinctions (1) between consumption and interaction, and (2) between outer circle informational trust and openness. The former distinction addresses the direction of political communication channels (uni vs. multi-directional). The latter addresses political communication-related social relationships (trust vs. openness) mainly with people with whom one has no strong ties. These two distinctions were found to be very helpful in predicting, and thus understanding, perceptions constituting online activities as political participation. Stronger perceptions of interaction activities as constituting political participation, such as participating in political groups on Facebook, were associated with high personal openness toward people with whom one does not necessarily have strong relationships. Strong affirmations of consuming online activities such as searching for political information on the

Internet as political participation, in contrast, were associated with informational trust in one's outer social circles.

5.2.2 Practical Implications

Establishing the relationship between openness and trust in outer circles with online political activities, interests, and perceptions, may have important implications for evaluating political campaigns in social media spaces, especially in terms of the potential voters these campaigns are likely to capture. Using social media, a political candidate may reach individuals who feel comfortable sharing their political views with almost anyone, who already are highly interested in political campaigns, whether via face-to-face discussions or online sources, and who are highly politically informed, across all platforms. Social media campaigns capture potential voters who already are highly involved and informed via all other communication channels, especially those online. Issues of efficiency of communication should be examined in further studies, but in terms of capturing new audiences, social media, just like other online and offline media, attract individuals who are already inclined to communicate their political opinions with almost anyone.

5.3 Recommendations

Like any research, this study must be acknowledged when looking at the results. Beyond restrictions, the results from this study lead to further questions in the area of political social media. Potential future research questions could cover the positive vs. negative feedback by constituents on social media. Also, for contrasting purposes, a larger study which documents all bloggers social media usage would make it possible for more differentiation between parties or the number of terms served when compared with social media activity. This comparison could also look at social media during campaigns vs. social media once elected.

However, a more qualitative study could look at how constituents perceive correspondence, images, and text on social media. It is obvious that social media is a rapidly growing field. Just as Kenyan bloggers can grow to more effectively use the different social media tools, more research can also be done on its implications and trends.

Still, the immediate impact of social media can already be seen from the results mentioned here. Regardless of the adoption by Kenyan bloggers, the audience for the messages exists, and users will be content-generators. While social media currently serves as another platform for push communications, new modifications to encourage feedback and participations are being instituted by new applications that are continually emerging in the social media.

The popularity of a user's social media account is not completely correlated with the content it generates. In more than one case, users had a large number of followers, without providing correspondingly more content. In contrast, name familiarity seems correlated to the number of followers.

Thus, bloggers should not rely solely on updates to increase popularity. Rather, the message and brand are still the most important factors when determining the number of followers.

All over, social media is being accepted by Kenyan bloggers and political aspirants, and its usage for political communication will undoubtedly continue even after election campaigns. However, one of the most noticeable aspects of each site is the comments and interaction with each other on the threads below the official postings. While it no longer resembles the grassroots organization platform, social media can still be used by constituents to communicate with each other, instead of just directly to elected officials. These commenters continue the conversation about politics, giving the sites their truly social aspect.

5.4 Limitations and Suggested areas for further research

First, with no prior research experience, this study was my first time taking on such an extensive project. Naturally, I faced the learning curve of understanding not only the subject of social media usage, but also the facets of completing a research project. Also, I lacked the resources to hire an outside professional researcher, and thus used both free online software with no certainty to its rigor and methodology.

As with any survey-based study involving self-reports of socially acceptable behavior, this study perhaps suffers from inflated reports of political participation, political interests, and social

media exposure. However, because the emphasis was to examine patterns among these variables, rather than making univariate generalizations to any population, this phenomenon is of limited concern.

Last, while the online spaces they addressed in the survey are frequently mentioned by popular media, it is possible that some items deal with activities that may not be understood by people who are not regular users of the Internet. This limitation could have affected the age differences.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I Letter Of Transmittal

Guantai Emmanuel Louis

The
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Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: ACADEMIC RESEARCH

I am a student at Nairobi University currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Communication. One of the requirements within the Masters is to undertake a research on a particular area of interest. This is the basis why I am conducting a research on the effectiveness of social media in political communication with specific focus on the Kenyan phenomenon.

The research will seek to understand the situation as it is in the subject under review through the use of a questionnaire. I am kindly requesting for your assistance in responding honestly to the interview questions.

Looking forward to your corporation

Thank you.

Guantai Emmanuel Louis

Appendix II: Research Tool/ Questionnaire

Introduction

Hello! My name is Emmanuel and pursuing my Master degree in Communication at University of Nairobi. I am currently conducting a study in this area on the effectiveness of social media in political communication with specific emphasis on the Kenyan context following the fact that Kenyans will be voting for their leaders and are currently in the campaign period. Your participation in the study is voluntary, you can choose to participate or not to. The information that you will provide will be treated with confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose other than the objectives of this study.

1.0 Demographic profile

No	Variable (Question)	Response category
2.	Gender	1. Male 2. Female
3.	What is Your Current Age?	1. Below 20 Years 2. 21-30 Years 3. 31-40 4. Above 40
4.	What is your Current employment status?	5. Employed for a wage 6. Self employed 7. Employed and part time student 8. Student at the University

2.0 Political party inclination and access to social media

No.	Question	Response categories
5.	Do you have a mobile phone or a computer?	1. Yes 2. No
6.	Can your mobile or computer access internet?	1. Yes 2. No 3. N/A
7.	What type of hardware do you use?	1. Mobile phone 2. Computer/laptop 3. PDA 4. N/A
8.	If you cannot access internet from your hardware, how easily is your accessibility of hardware that can access social media?
9.	Can you easily afford a hardware that you can easily access internet?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not easy 4. Somewhat
10.	Is accessibility to hardware than you can	1. Yes

	access internet be your priority agenda?	2. No 3. May be
11.	What is your political party	1. ODM 2. URP 3. UDF 4. TNA 5. Narc 6. Others (Specify)
12.	How do you think your political party influences your access to social media?
13.	How do you think social media guarantees your political party's support?

3.0 Attractiveness of the political message

No.	Question	Response categories
6.	Have you ever used a social media page?	3. Yes 4. No
7.	If yes, which one?	5. Twitter 6. Face book 7. Yu Tube 8. Yahoo 9. Others (specify).....
8.	Have you ever posted any political message in a page?	4. Yes 5. No 6. Many times 7. Few times 8. N/A
9.	Is the political message a driving factor towards your access to social media?	9. Yes 10. No 11. Sometimes 12. Not at all
10.	What particular component of the political message do you prefer?
11.	Has your political message influenced others to access social media?	Yes No Sometimes

4.0 Extent of political communication

No.	Question	Response categories
6.	Have you ever blogged in social media?	3. Yes 4. No
7.	How many times do you blog in social media?	6. Few times 7. More times 8. Not often 9. Never 10. Not applicable
8.	Do you have friends who blog in social media?	3. Yes

		4. No
9.	How often people access political information?	6. Few times 7. More times 8. Not often 9. Never 10. Not applicable
10.	How many of your friends people accessing political information?	5. Few 6. Many 7. None 8. Almost everyone

5.0 Topics on particular political communication

No.	Question	Response categories
4.	Who are the Agenda makers in the blog sites?	1. Politicians 2. Political activists 3. Political sympathizers 4. Community mobilizer 5. Others (Specify).....
5.	How are the agenda makers connected to politics in Kenya?
6.	Do the agenda makers have any connection or networks in message distribution?	3. Yes 4. No Specify.....
7.	How has the agendas influenced your political desire?
8.	Is there any Political information space for the politicians in Kenya?	3. Yes 4. No Specify.....
9.	How do the politicians influence the people's perception on social media?

6.0 People's perception on the veracity of the political communication

No.	Item	Agreement scale					
		Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
	<i>People's perception on the veracity of the content</i>						
1.	Political communication influence media access						
2.	Category of people accessing political information are youth						
3.	Opinions on political communication are neutral						
4.	Use of social media distorts political communication						
5.	I have taken part in political communication through social media						
6.	Social media does not help ones mileage in political communication						

Thank you for taking part in the interview.

Appendix III Financial Budget

Table 15: Estimated cost and budgetary allocation for the study

Activity	TOTAL(Ksh)
Telephone expenses	5,000.00
Internet expenses	4,500.00
Data Entry and Analysis	10,000.00
Contingency	2,500.00
Total	22,000.00

Appendix IV Time Framework

Table 16: Time scheduling of activities of the research project

No	Description of research activity	Duration of conducting the study in days				
		Day 1 - 3	Day 4 - 8	Day 9 -20	Day 21 - 27	Day 28 - 35
1	Development of research tool in line with the variables					
2	Correspondences with various participants in quest of research permission					
3	Dissemination of the research tool with the identified respondents through enumerators and email					
4	Conducting of a Pre-test and validation of the research tool					
5	Field data collection and correspondents with respondents via email and telephone for additional information relevant to the variable quest					
6	Data coding, entry, cleaning and analysis in accordance with the variable					
7	Report writing					