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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION IN KENYA, THE CASE OF NAIROBI COUNTY

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented in any other institution of higher learning for academic award.

Signature………………………………………….

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the students' approval

Supervisors' Signature………………………………..

Date……………………………………………………

PROFESSOR EDWARD K. MBURUGU

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my siblings whose voices we can no longer hear. The six of you have made my academic trajectory to go beyond mere copy and paste. Patricia Juma Oyiro, this work is an attestation of the thunder of your words that in deed no one can teach you anything, you must be willing to learn. In your very own words, "even a stone can teach you something". I dedicate this work to you my first guru in life. I am forever grateful to have been brought into this journey of life by you, loving mum!

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BRL   Basic Rivalry level

CCK   Communication Council of Kenya

CEWERU   Conflicts and Early Warnings Unit

CIL   Consumer Insight Limited

FB   Facebook

ICCPR   International Convention on Civil and Political Rights

ICERD   International Convention on eliminating all forms of Racial Discrimination

ICT   Information Communication Technology

ICT4D   Information Communication Technology for development

ICT4P   Information Communication Technology for peace

KNBS   Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

NSC   National Steering Committee of Peace Building and Conflict Prevention

SMS   Short Messaging Services

UNDP   United Nations Development Programme

ABSTRACT

The penetration and popularity of social media among the Kenyan youths and young adults has shown that social media has the potential to be a great tool that can foster democratic dialogue and freedom of expression. However, owing to the unrestricted nature of internet and social media, users without ethical standards and professionalism can use the tools to circulate misleading information. Such information can lead to destabilization of peace and ignite violence. Few studies have shown the role of social media in escalating political unrest while some have shown its role in crisis management in Kenya. There is inadequate information on the potential role of social media for conflict prevention and peace building.

This study sought to bridge this gap by conducting systematic research with the following objectives; to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of social media as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building; to analyze the contribution of regulatory mechanism of social media in promoting peace building; to examine the potential role of social media in generating social and political tensions that might result into violence; and to identify the early warning social and political signals through social media and ICT in conflict prevention.

The research study covered four locations in Nairobi's Eastland's areas; Dandora ward three, Dandora ward Four, Kariobangi North and Mathare Mabatini. Stratified random sampling was used to select 90 respondents aged from 13-50 years, Two key informants were indentified through purposive sampling; one a social media expert and the other a peace studies expert. The researcher used questionnaires, key informant interview and focus group discussions to collect data.

The study found out that over 80 percent of the respondents were on social media. Majority of the respondents had a circle of social media friends of about 101-1000. The study also established that mainstream media (televisions and newspapers) was used by respondents to complement social media in giving political updates. The study revealed that government regulation of social media would result into the users mostly using it for social reasons. The study also showed that social media is still an unpopular tool for early warning and for reporting violence.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Humans have an innate desire for communication, over the years the communication channels have been in constant evolution. However there has been a dominance of what is referred to as mainstream media, which include broadcast media (Television and Radio) as well as print media (newspapers, reviews, magazines etc.). Main stream media are in most cases very structured and owned by the elite in Africa. Skeptics have accused main stream media of manipulating and relaying information that represent the interest of their owners and those in power, and they can be loosely be referred to as instruments of power in most emerging democracies. The same individuals also enjoy media and political economy, the ownership of the media houses is split between political actors which have given the Kenyan media a long continued support.

More recently there has been the emergence of the new media which has also referred to as social media. It has complemented main stream media in relaying information to the masses. The mostly used social media platforms include; Facebook, Twitter, Whatsup, Google chat, Skype, Yahoo chat and Blogs. In March 2010 there were a little over two million Facebook accounts according to the Communication Council of Kenya CCK. This accounts for about 5 percent of the entire population. These numbers are much large now with more and more Kenyans joining Facebook. A great majority of those on social media are the youth.

The reason for their popularity has been attributed to the easy access from cell phones. There is a Short Message Service SMS to Facebook for instance, that sends a text to the users on every time something happens on Facebook. More importantly there is an application called Facebook zero, a text only free version of Facebook launched in 2010 in collaboration with mobile providers. This has brought Facebook to a larger number of people who prior did not have access.

In addition to those who access social media websites on their phone there are those who are computer literate. According to a 2008 Consumer Insight Limited study, 74 percent of the population in Nairobi had used a computer at least once in their lives. (CIL 2008). Synovate on other hand has estimated that in 2009, 30 percent of the Kenyan urban population used the

internet weekly (ITU 2010). As a rule, all who use the internet regularly also have a Facebook account or have accounts on other social media platforms.

Twitter is a social network site much like Facebook. Tweets, which are twitter messages, are text based with a maximum of 140 characters long. Unlike Facebook messages which can contain photos or videos. These messages are posted on the user's profile page and read by followers, not friends as on Facebook. While Facebook has a limit of 5000 friends for every member, there are no such limits on followers on Twitter.

The potential role of social media on political movements to ignite violent conflict has become a topical issue. In Kenya for instance the discourse surrounding it has been characterized as a dual of anecdotes between cyber utopian and cyber skeptics. Those of the view that the growing popularity of social media will inevitably lead to more transparency in governance and democracy, and those who simply view it as an elitist phenomenon, they only see the danger that uncontrolled communication might pose. The Arab spring in the Middle East and North Africa in early 2011 has prompted calls for need of rigorous study into the potential role the new media can play in conflict prevention and peace building. Protestors in these countries across the region relied to varying degrees on social media to organize protests against incumbent regimes and leveraged on international news organizations to solicit for international support. Recognizing the power of social media, those in power made asserting controls over social media platforms a top priority. Former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak shut down all access to Twitter, Facebook, You tube and Google in the first few days of the protest, before essentially shutting down internet on 2011 January 28th. Gaddafi 's security officers blocked all internet traffic in and out of the country , in response the international community redirected funds towards programs that aimed at strengthening media in the region. This was to provide conduit between governing bodies and potential voters, information sources for those in need of humanitarian aid and platform for discussion and debate on how to structure and implement reforms.

Even though social media is critically important and encompasses great potential for democratic dialogue, conflict prevention and peace building, a number of risks can be identified. In Kenya there has been increasing access to internet which is the main gateway to social media, most users have now the biggest tool for expression and sharing information. However not everyone is

ethically guided while using it, and thus the social media can be abused by such people. Information sharing can and has been used in the past as a platform of extreme right wing groups, even though international and regional instruments such as article 20; sub- article of 2 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 4 of the International Convention of Eliminating all form of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) prohibits the use of any means of media to promote hate speech or incite to violence. Likewise the African Charter on Human and People Rights article 28n prohibits hate speech.

The other significant concern is the difficulty of ensuring reliability and accountability of facts and information disseminated through internet, unverified facts are usually circulated with proposed actions. The social media users often do not give attention to the accuracy of the information, contextualization or verification of information. Inaccurate or misleading information can have serious consequences on conflicts arising and even basic issues concerning the quality of information can make people feel that sharing information will entail a risk for their own credibility and security. As a new platform for communication, the social media acts in new unpredictable ways and without regulations ethical standards or professionalism any individual posting materials can fabricate events and re-write them.

Another concern arises from the unrestricted nature of the internet which is very difficult to regulate, in fact regulating the internet is more difficult than the traditional media. Besides internet and other social media networks are not civil rights platforms. They have a business angle and thus they are collectively a part of a business dominated platform. The inventors of the platforms have priority on commercial interests and profits. They may therefore not be interested in regulating content, but rather just offer what the market demands. However some actors have set up measures for reporting offensive communication. For instance there have been initiatives like state regulators and self-regulatory mechanisms for example the Communication Council of Kenya CCK, is now mandated to regulate internet and online media. Certain websites have been banned by the CCK for the reason that the information contained on those websites amounted to act of crime. Internationally Google and Facebook have been removed from certain domain websites following an Indian court decision on the basis or religious sensibilities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The emergence of social media or new media as it is sometimes referred to, has dared to de-fragment communication. This has occurred through the involvement of the audience in the creation and dissemination of information. This has thus altered existing structures and created a room to what is referred to as citizen journalism. Social media has provided a means of constant and immediate communication, which link globally and locally. It has caused a shift in the communication environment which was previously dominated by the mass media. Social media has implications for power relations. The prime example is how social media is diluting the mainstream media's monopoly of information. It is therefore becoming progressively difficult more difficult for those in power to bury or manipulate information.

In Kenya just prior to the 2013 March 4th general elections the social media was polarized with propaganda, hate speech, statements of negative ethnicity and incitement. These were emanating majorly from the supporters of the two major antagonizing political blocks. Social media was home for verbal conflict that never resulted into physical violence, during the whole electioneering period, the time awaiting the ruling of the Supreme Court on the petition challenging the outcome of the presidential election results, up until the swearing of the new president. There are still groups in the social media that give constant updates with doses of speculative information that might amount to incitement and hate speech.

Throughout history information is a key factor in beginning conflicts around the world. The media can play an important role of a watch dog of the society, by exposing to the masses what is essential but hidden, however it can also be used to mobilize for violence. Social media can therefore act as a tool for widening the democratic space, but can also lead to destabilization of peace.

While there is no consensus or sole role of the social media played in the Arab uprising, there is considerable debate of what credit properly goes to the social media compared to other factors in precipitating this wave of political unrest. Despite the lively debate, there is little systematic research on this area. The few resources are specific to conflict environment and how social media was used for coordination during the violence. There is inadequate material on the use and

role of social media for conflict prevention and peace building. This could be partly explained by the lack of control over the research environments, rapid shifts of public attention, difficulties in measuring the casual impact of media intervention, and the heterogeneity of conflict environments and changing objectives in the conflict torn countries.

This study therefore bridged the gaps between sociology and communication sciences by analyzing the ways in which social media can contribute to peace building and conflict prevention in Kenya. More specifically Nairobi County was a good location for this study owing to the political stability; therefore it shielded the study from dynamic uncertainties of the study environment. This study sought to fill the knowledge gap by examining the potential role of social media for peace building and conflict prevention among the youths and young adults in Nairobi's Eastland estates, these estates are particularly important because they were vastly affected by the 2008 post-election that; is in Dandora, Kariobangi North and Mathare Mabatini.

1.3 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

I. What are the strengths of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention?

II. What are the weaknesses of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention?

III. What is the contribution of government regulation of social media in promoting peace and conflict prevention?

IV. What is the potential role of social media in generating social and potential tensions that might result in violence?

V. Can social media be used to relay social and political early warning signs that can help in conflict prevention?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1Overall Objective

The overall objective was to examine the role of social media in conflict prevention and peace building.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

I.   To evaluate the strengths of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention.

II.   To evaluate the weaknesses of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention.

III.   To analyze the contribution of regulatory mechanisms for the new media in promoting peace and conflict prevention.

IV.   To examine the potential role of social media in generating social and political tensions that are likely to result in violence.

V.   To identify the early warning social and political signals through social media and ICT in conflict prevention

1.5 Justification of the Study

There are wide theoretical gaps between the fields of sociology, conflict studies and communication studies. There have been few studies targeting social media users in Nairobi's Eastland's areas. The few studies that have been conducted have been keen on the use of ICT and new media for crisis management as opposed to peace building and conflict prevention. It is thus essential to target the youths in low income urban setting of Nairobi's Eastland's area, since they played significant role in escalating violence in 2007/2008 and thus can be targeted for conflict prevention and peace building.

This study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of social media in conflict prevention and peace building which will offer insights to the formulation of effective strategies on conflict prevention to policy makers and peace stakeholders.

The contribution of this study will thus be to showcase the relevance of social media in peace building.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was confined to four locations in three of Nairobi's Eastland's estates. The areas are; Dandora ward 3, Dandora ward 4, Kariobangi North ward and Mathare, Mabatini ward. There has been focus by peace stakeholders to build peace and promote co-existence in these locations. This study looked into the role of social media tool for promoting in these processes in the targeted location. The study was limited to the study objectives. Data was collected from 90 residents of the study locations. The study also drew views from a social media expert and a peace building expert. The study focused on the youths and young adults aged 13-50 years. Due to constraints of resources both financial and time, the findings of the four locations was used to represent the case in Nairobi County.

1.7 Key Concepts in the Study and their Definitions

Social media; refer to websites and technology based platforms that enable the interactive web's content creation, collaboration and exchange by participants and the public in social networking.

Peace building; is defined as a long term process involving activities which aim to reduce tension and to end or prevent violence. It takes place after a violent conflict and supports the conditions, attitudes and behaviours which lead to peaceful development.

Conflict prevention; refers to a variety of activities aimed at anticipating and averting the broad outbreak of violence.

Conflict transformation; according to Hugh Miall, it is a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and if necessary the very constitution that

supports the continuation of violent conflict. It is based on the notion that conflict is normal in human relationships and that conflict is a motor for change.

Early warning; is defined in many fields as the provision of information on an emerging dangerous circumstances where that information can enable action in advance to reduce the risk involved.

Crisis management; is defined as the umbrella term that encompasses all activities involved when an organization prepares for and responds to a significant critical incident

Crisis communication; refers to the public relations aspect of crisis management. It involves communicating both internally and externally about what happened and what the organization is doing to manage the crisis.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This section provides insights into literature review on social media use conducted by other scholars. The researcher dwelt so much on literature that have relevance to the objectives of this study. This section also reviews the theories upon which the study is anchored.

2.1 The Concept of Social Media

Social media refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create share and or exchange information ideas in virtual communities or networks using technology based applications. Micheal Heanlein defines social media as a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of the web and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The content might include text, video, images, podcasts and other multimedia communications. The most prominent examples of social media include, Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, Reddit, Google + Googletalk, Yahoochat, Skype, WhatsApp.

Facebook is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends family and colleagues.Twitter is a free micro blogging service that allows registered members to broadcast posts called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other user's tweets by using multiple platforms and devices. Wikipedia is a free, open content encyclopedia created through the collaborative effort of a community called the Wikipedians. Anyone registered on the site can create an article for publication. Registration is not required to edit articles.

Furthermore, social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share co-create discuss and modify user generated content. It introduces substantial and persuasive changes to communication between organizations communities and individuals. It is argued that social

media has introduced positive effects such as allowing the democratization of the internet while also allowing individuals to advertise and form friendship. Much of critism of social media has been that it has decreased face-to-face interactions, there have been issues of trustworthiness and reliability of information presented, concentration, ownership of media content, and the meaning of interactions created by social media.

2.2 The Concept of Conflict Prevention

The term conflict prevention suggests different things to different people and there is no agreed upon meaning among scholars. However Munueara(1996) defines it as the application of non-constraining measures (those that are not coercive and depend on the goodwill of the parties involved ,primarily diplomatic in nature.

Carnegie Commission (1997) defines it as the preventive actions that prevent the re-emergence of violent conflict form spreading or prevent the re-emergence of violence.

Lund (2002) define it as any structural or inter-sectary means to keep intrastate or interstate tension and dispute from escalating into significant violence and the use of armed forces to strengthen the capabilities of parties to possible violent conflicts for resolving their disputes peacefully and to progressively reduce the underlying problems that produce those tensions and disputes.

Carment and Schnabel (2003) defines it as a medium and long term proactive operational or structural strategy by a variety of actors intended to identify and create the enabling conditions for a stable and more predictable international security environment. I argue that most of the definitions used very loosely make conflict prevention broad to be researchable and thus a more precise definition is needed if the research community is to develop a preventive agenda.

A more rigorous definition should distinguish between conflict prevention from other closely related concepts such as preventive diplomacy, foreign policy and intervention. It should be applicable to different contexts and still get specific enough to be operationalized.

Sriram and Wermester (2003) take case-by case approach and do not define success as preventing conflict per se, they argue that the success must be very context sensitive and take history, risks and goals into consideration. Varyrynene (2003) agrees that the success depends largely on the political condition context and the ability to read it correctly. Furthermore he argues that the outcome vary between the stages of the conflict cycle that is pre-war, escalation and post-war prevention.

The method of defining success does to some extent depend on the availability of comparable indicators. At present there are no precise indicators to determine the outcome and therefore each case must be interpreted separately to fully understand. My view is that it is not enough to view success in the short term or long term. Instead conflict prevention can only be considered successful when it prevents or ends the underlying causes of violence. There is always a tendency to view the absence of speedy solution as failure, especially lack of speedy control of hostility and violence in conflict torn regions or among such communities.

Talentino is the first scholar that tried to systematize the evaluation of success or failure in conflict prevention. Goertz and Regan in their work on conflict management in enduring rivalries reasons in similar way, they argue that one can define success of conflict prevention in three broad ways that is short term success, medium term effects and long term.

The outcome of conflict management efforts is pre-dominantly seen in short term consequences, which is not conflict resolution. That is why there is a further urgent need to look into tools that will not simply stop at management but will rather aid in conflict resolution mainly through peace building. The preference of medium term effects for instance turning a rivalry a 'détente' type of relationship that last for a longer period. However the rivalry is not terminated. This only points to the interest in the reduction of basic hostility level between the actors not just the solution to particular crisis.

This is a way to see that the change in hostility is not temporary, but that the preventive measures were effective in preventing a long term escalation. Obviously, the study of enduring rivalries gives a possibility of developing a measure of the basic rivalry level BRL.

Goertz and Regan advocate a medium or long term horizon. In doing this they examine the patterns of dispute severity instead of using the level of severity of the next dispute, which would be another alternative. They argue that taking a medium term approach in defining the dependant variable can contribute to our understanding of how conflicts are managed. Still the discussion so far suggest that the effects of preventive measures have to be seen as a continuum of several levels of success and furthermore , effects have to be seen in at least a medium term perspective, only to stop a particular situation from escalating is a form of conflict avoidance rather than conflict prevention. Much more tools for peace building thus need to be researched and developed.

2.3 The Use of Face book and Twitter to Impact Political Change

Several scholars have documented how social media was used as the main medium of communication that brought change to political leadership in Northern African states and the Middle East. The studies have shown how social media was instrumental in coordinating the protests during the uprising. They have also documented how civilians in authoritarian regimes relied on social media to champion their political rights. Middle East countries and Northern African have been further discussed in this study because they exemplified the most recent ways in which social media has been used to coordinate uprisings that later became revolutions. These regions have exposed the potential of social media in coordination and how social finds its place during conflicts.

2.3.1 Collaboration in the Middle East and North Africa through Social media using Facebook and Twitter for political change

Facebook and twitter have enabled users to collaborate on issues they feel strongly about. The first step towards collaboration is shared awareness. An important component in understanding influence is to detect sentiments and opinions. Aggregated opinions over many users are predicators for convergence of interest in a community (Java 2007, P. 1934). Considering that 89% respondents in Egypt during the revolution had twitter accounts against a near perfect 99% who had Facebook accounts. 66% of the people in Cairo used twitter to follow the latest news on the Egyptian revolution. The message has been clear. Young people armed with little more than

laptops and mobile phones can help amplify popular voices of freedom and justice (Harsh 2011 para9).

Social media helps angry people achieve shared awareness about how people are angry and helps those people to take action (Clay Crovitz 2011).

The Middle Eastern countries showed how weak ties between people initiated on the web can become strong ties and can forge close relationships that are effective in organizing for social change. (Tapscot 2011). Shared awareness gives people courage to act in ways they wouldn't otherwise "Twitter and Face book let us show people the size of the demonstration", said Jiji Ibrahim, a university student at the university of Cairo (Harsch 2011 para 3).These platforms are empowering people to become the new influencers (breakendge& Solis 2009).

These could be considered as one of the strong points of social media as a tool for influencing change. With shared awareness comes the collective strength of the crowd "young activists in Egypt as in nearby Tunisia and elsewhere in the region, were able to use their access to new social media tools to publicize demands, call demonstrations and win support from broader sectors of the population (Harch 2011 para 2).

Thanks to social media's increasing popularity and ability to connect activists to ordinary people,"Egyptians are protesting police brutality in unprecedented numbers" (EItahaway, 2010, papa 1). Many believed that Khaled Said's[1] fatal beating sparked a virtual revolution that is affecting Egypt's tightly controlled society. Thanks to social media's increasing popularity and ability to connect activities to ordinary people, the photograph of Said's battered corpse which disseminated through Facebook and twitter prompted a protest outside the interior ministry in Cairo, the largest in living memory against police brutality (Eltahaway, 2011).

The social media tools gave Hosni Mubarak's opponents unprecedented ability to share information and organize their activities including the massive protests which riveted the world attention (Tapscott 2011 para 2).

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[1]Khaled was a business man who was brutally beaten to death by police, the images of his beatings and death were high publicized on social media, face book and YouTube.

As hundreds of thousands Egyptians in Cairo'sTahrir square celebrated the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak on 11thFebrauary 2011, some wielded signs proclaiming "Thank you Facebook" Harsch 2011. Bouazizi's [2] suicide tragically brought to light many of the long standing problems , Tunisia's youth now face government cronyism , corruption restriction of civil right and unemployment rate of 30% (Wambugu 2011 , para 3) with these problems on their mind angry Tunisian's used twitter to organize their protest and inform the outside world of their activities (Tapscott, 2011 para 5).

These protests which were largely organized by the apparent leaderless online activists, asked people to stand up, showing the world that they are not a cowardly submissive people (Wambugu 2011). In addition to generosity shared awareness and collective strength, Facebook and twitter have delivered increasing visibility to the world. Twitter is the first people's broadcast medium said Douglas Rushkoff, author and media theorists (Morozov 2011 para 7).

2.3.2 Pressure to Authoritarian Government from Facebook and Twitter

The power of Facebook and Twitter to coordinate is certainly a threat to the authoritarian government. For many years political violence upheavals, nuclear proliferation and international terrorism have posed the biggest threats to the nation state. We are now in an era in which the internet has been added to that arsenal. Where millions of finger plucking and poking at touch screen phones, a logging in posting, can bring down a government as they did in Egypt (Countemanche, 2011 para 10). "I've always said that if you want to liberate a society just give them the internet" said Wael Ghonim a Google executive and the administrator of Facebook page (Ghannam, 2010).

After many years of built-up repression, people equipped with social media tools have begun to stand up for themselves and have their rights. These tools provide a two way conversations unlike the mainstream media, making it easier to mobilize a group (Wafula 2011 para 7).

While Facebook and Twitter have made it easier to assemble activists, they have made it harder for authoritarian governments to steer the public. In the past such governments took control of

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[2]Bouazizi is a Tunisian national who set himself ablaze publicly as a symbol of the frustration of King Ben Ali's rule

television, newspapers and controlled the public knowledge and behavior. But internet is interactive and decentralized; it is a model to share information from many people to many people. Finally civilians have found their voice and they are certainly using it. Few can deny that social media has enabled the most significant advancement in freedom of expression and association in contemporary Arab uprsing (Ghannan 2011).

The swift and unexpected overthrow of 23 year old regime in Tunisia and the mass unrest in Egypt have sparked debate on how far social media networks can challenge governments around the world (Wambugu 2011 para 7).

The critism I pose is as follows, were it not for these social media tools would the revolutions not happened anyway? It is unclear to say that the initiative to go to the protests were originating from the social media especially in communities like Egypt where the pre-dominant population had a relatively low degree of internet penetration and internet access. Facebook and Twitter have their place in social change but the real revolution happens in the streets, and thus to prove that communication via the new media or social media is actually what brings people to the streets is difficult. Because it is no surprise that authoritarian government in the Middle East and North Africa tried to restrict internet freedom. Arab leaders have long recognized the threat posed by the internet and most have instituted filters and legal restrictions in attempts to control online activities.

Hosni Mubarak's government tried to stifle the protests by shutting off internet indefinitely, after the demonstrations in Libya started up. Internet access and cell phone services had severely deteriorated however shutting down internet backfired for these governments as people went on with the protests and they even got more intensified. When people had their tools of communication such as Twitter and Facebook taken away from them, they had no choice but to come to the street and communicate. So this had the effect of stimulating mass action in the street (Tapscott 2011).

Even on the streets people were continuing to collaborate in ways other than social media to unite, social media was replaced by the analogue equivalent Twitter. Handheld signs held aloft at the demonstrations, with the information of where and when people should gather the next day

(Beaumont 2011 para26). Though soon enough the civilians received a helping hand. In Egypt for instance, when the last internet operator in the country was ordered to shut down all services. Google and Twitter joined together to establish three mobile numbers for people to call and record tweets as voice messages. These voice messages were then made available to users. They could listen to the tweets instead of reading them. The new audio tweets instantly gave the content a more personal feel as users could hear the voices of the tweeter and the surrounding background sounds. It was the first time that leading internet search engines and social media combined forces amid widespread upheaval to keep information flowing despite state efforts to shape the public narrative (Joudon, 2011, para7).Google's blog referred to this project as the new weapon against repression.

2.3.3 Social Media Revolution Criticism

Some critics argue that social media tools are ineffective; Christensen for instance claims that platform of social media are built around weak ties and are only effective at increasing participation and on the other hand they lessen the motivation the participation requires. He says that people need close personal connection in order to get them take action, especially if it is announced through social media and the nature of action is risky and difficult. Then there are also logistical issues that arise, there were only 20% of the entire population that used internet in the Egyptian revolution (most concentration being in Cairo). Despite the limited access to the social media like Facebook and Twitter, there was a tremendous amount of pressure generated from the onset Cairo. There was the unofficial role played by the trade unions in the protests that was downplayed, away from the trade unionists there were drivers, factory workers and the Suez Canal labourers, nurses, doctors who finally brought down President Hosni Mubarak.

Political theorists also claim that techno-utopian overstate the affordability of the new technologies while understating other underlying factors of their acquisition and use. Economic or gender issues for instance could affect their accessibility as well as other prevalent conditions in the country.

In Libya and Yemen for instance the severe totalitarian regimes stymied reform efforts, and at the core of the revolution there was a force that was more willing to criticize the authority and

tolerates diversity than perhaps the mainstream public opinion. The case in Lebanon was different, the activists began to unite with the goal of outdoing the sectarian system. They managed to reach about 15000 people through a Facebook group entitled "In favour of ousting the Lebanese sectarian system toward a secular system", the group comprised of youths from different sects, regions and cultural backgrounds. It is thus the sectarian and divided nature of the Lebanese youth partisanship that rendered it difficult to use social media to mobilize the young people through a common goal. This is clear illustration that the prevailing conditions can affect the outcome of the use of the social media when rallying behind a common goal.

Questions also arise, once the dust of the revolution has settled where does social media fit into the new paradigm? Social media help push for a revolution but without creating the expected kind of long term structures which for instance can become political parties after the regimes have toppled.

Clay Shirkely believes that the most promising way to look at social media as a peace building tool is to view it as a long term tool that can strengthen the civil society and the public sphere.

There is powerful evidence that social media can improve understanding and help establish ties between traditionally opposing groups. Facebooks's own project a partnership with the Peace Pot Initiative at Stanford University called "Peace on Facebook". The initiative counted new friendship formation on the site between people who come from groups with a history of difficult relations. The count is done in revealing connections established across geographic division. e.g. friends between antagonizing political blocs, different ethnic groups or religious groups.

 On March 11th 2012, there were 123 844 online connections which were made between conflicting Muslims and Jews. It would be a gross oversimplification to suggest that these counts necessarily represent concrete progress towards greater real world harmony. However they do reflect the way that social media can help to maintain relationships online that may prove difficult in person due to social censure, political or logistical constraints.

2.3.4 Social Media and Post Election violence in Kenya

In late 2007 and early 2008 most Kenyans didn't have access to the internet as they do presently (Saila 2012, 28), not even through cell phones as today. Those who were online experienced a wave of heightened activity. Many experienced the down side of uncontrolled communication, but others were able to even save lives though their blog posts and social media accounts. There was a strong intertextuality within these communications and SMS messages have therefore been included in as the new media. (Iraki 2010, 152).

Mäkinen and Kuira argue that 'the social media functioned as an alternative medium for citizen communication or participatory journalism' but it was also used 'as channels for biased information, tribal prejudices, and hate speech. Goldstein and Rotich continue in the same vein by stating that digitally networked technologies 'were a catalyst to both predatory behaviour such as ethnic-based mob violence and to civic behaviour such as citizen journalism and human rights campaigns' during the post-election crisis. (Goldstein and Rotich 2009, 1).

According to wa-Mungai there was a strong intertextuality between sources of information and the means used to disseminate the information. Mass e-mails were shortened to fit SMS and Twitter accounts and mixed with rumour. (wa-Mungai 2010, 237) 'Like SMS, cyberspace-based discussions were also fed on rumour and misinformation from the press.' (wa-Mungai 2010, 237). The majority of those who participated in these discussions were pro-Raila Odinga and expressed despair for the 'failure of democracy.' (wa-Mungai 2010, 238)

Due to the rampant spread of SMS messages the government decided, despite a weak legal standing on the issue, to send a warning: 'The government of Kenya advises that the sending of hate messages inciting violence is an offence that could result in prosecution.' (wa-Mungai 2010, 221). This warning did not ring on empty ears as many of the respondents stated clearly that they were wary in fear of government action.

Face book zero FB zero (a free application) together with the spread mobile devices has increased the number of users of social media especially those from the urban poor. As a result when one talks of social media in Kenya they primarily talk about Facebook, Twitter, blogs

Whatsup. Majority of the youth in Kenya have mobile phones which facilitate their access to social media.

There are also a number of ICT4D[3] initiatives and other ICT initiatives like Ushahidi[4] and Uwuiano peace platform going on which are crisis mapping platforms. These are platforms that were created to help in crisis management, which are short term initiatives in conflict management. When talking about the impact of social media to politics, the political discussions are carried majorly on social media. Most researchers are however skeptical about the impact of spreading ICTs and state a number of obstacles.

Politicians are also starting to take note of the social and most now have Facebook or Twitter accounts, as well as blogs that they use for campaigns. There are signs that government is taking online activism seriously and taking action in scrutinizing content online. The audiences are aware of this and some of them fear that the state machinery have expressed the possibility of a repetition of the post election violence and incitement towards ethnic divisions. However there has been caution for those who are posting content online with political sensitivity to exercise self-censorship.

There is thus a huge opportunity to shift paradigm and start to look at the tool of ICT4P[5], so far the focus has been on ICT for development and crisis management. However when social media tools are built to promote peace and co-existence, there will be an enabling environment for development and the atmosphere for conflict prevention. This angle of looking at things will bring light to what researchers have not shed much light on in the past.

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[3] Information Communication Technology for Development

[4] Ushahidi was the first big public mapping platform to be used for conflict management and analysis, the original map was coded during the election violence as a place to gather data on events from the "Crowd. What the tool did was receive a text message and an administrator could approve the message (or not approve), and if the message was approved as viable it would be put on the map.

[5] Information Communication Technology for Peace

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Information Asymmetry and security dilemma

The problem of ethnically defined political violence and more broadly inter-group political violence has been theorized by political scientists, sociologists and social anthropologists, but has always proven difficult to deal with a practical, operational way. There are examples to draw to try and understand why ethnic groups act out violently, either at low levels post election violence in Kenya (e.g. deadly ethnic riot) all the way to up to genocide levels (e.g. Rwanda).

Broadly speaking we can make an argument that information asymmetries concerning access to representation and resource between groups leads to inter-group security dilemmas, and these security dilemmas lead to the outbreak of violence. I used this argument as my general framework for discussing the impact that emerging communication technologies are having on conflict prevention, conflict analysis theory and peace building.

Since 2007, there has been an explosion of interest of operationalization of mobile phones, social media, and open source mapping within the peace building and development communities for conflict prevention, while the concept of crisis mapping[6] predates more modern crowd sourcing[7] approaches, the concept of using mobile phones as the core information and data transfer device for aggregating and building policy. In this study the focus as w more on information sharing in conflict prevention settings, touching on process such as mapping and social media as appropriate.

Kenya which has embraced information communications technology in recent years has become the pinnacle example of mobile telephony and crowd sourcing for conflict prevention and development. But even with a number of years of observed success, there is relatively little

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[6] Crisis mapping is defined as using interactive digital map to track events in a crisis (natural disaster, violence etc.)in real time. One of the leading early examples of crisis was the U.S holocaust Memorial Museum's "crisis in Darfur project, which used Google Earth imagery to map reports of violence in Darfur onto a public's viewable map (http:www.ushmm.org/maps/projects/Darfur/). Later efforts at crisis mapping included mapping earth quake in Haiti (http: haiti. ushaihidi.com/), and recently UN-OCHA's map of the events during the Libyan uprising (http://libyacrisismap.net/).

[7] Crowd sourcing is a method of data collection that draws on voluntary contributions from a unbounded crowd to determine answers to questions. Generally, crowd sourcing is done through mobile phones using text-based polls and surveys (but can really be done in any way that allows a public audience to provide feedback to a question).

theorization of why this technology has had such a striking impact in Kenya. This question is highly valuable since the same technology at work in Kenya is also widely available in Iran, Egypt and Indonesia, but the results of access to this technology is vastly different in each case. We will explore this question assuming that technological success in Kenya is the outcome of information symmetry between voting blocs/ethnic groups access to mobile and internet communication, and that this increasing symmetry continues to decrease the security dilemmas between the groups. Kenya's ethnic groups are not recognized as inherently violent towards one another, so much of the balkanization and security dilemmas between the groups are driven by top-down communication systems.

Technology has allowed for both the top down communication (horizontal communication) and lateral communication (sideways communication). Top down communication involves the passing down of commands or instructions from a higher levels in a hierarchy to lower levels while on the other hand lateral communication involves the exchange of ideas and information between those at the same level in an organization and the new media has highly encouraged this, Thus we assume that by increasing communication laterally at the various levels of governance (local, district, national, etc) with mobile phones, the top down narrative of violence and risk is less likely to have the same level of impact as it competes with alternatives information at lower levels.

2.3.1 Rational Choice Theory

This theory is built around the idea that all action is rational in character and people calculate the likely costs and benefits of their action before deciding what to do. The theory had appeared to be embraced by most economists but its application in social integration takes the form of social exchange.

The fact that people act rationally has, of course, been recognised by many sociologists, but they have seen rational actions alongside other forms of action, seeing human action as involving both rational and non-rational elements. Such views of action recognise traditional or habitual action, emotional or affectual action, and various forms of value-oriented action alongside the purely rational types of action. Max Weber (1920), for example, built an influential typology of action

around just such concepts. His ideas were taken up by Talcott Parsons (1937) and became a part of the sociological mainstream. In a similar way, the social anthropologists Bronislaw Malinowski (1922) and Marcel Mauss (1925) looked at how social exchange was embedded in structures of reciprocity and social obligation. What distinguishes rational choice theory from the other forms of theory is that it denies the existence of any kinds of action other than the purely rational and calculative. All social action, it is argued, can be seen as rationally motivated, as instrumental action, however much it may appear to be irrational or non-rational.

A pioneering figure in establishing rational choice theory in sociology was George Homans (1961), who set out a basic framework of exchange theory, which he grounded in assumptions drawn from behaviourist psychology. While these psychological assumptions have been rejected by many later writers, Homans's formulation of exchange theory remains the basis of all subsequent discussion. During the 1960s and 1970s, Blau (1964), Coleman (1973), and Cook (1977) extended and enlarged his framework, and they helped to develop more formal, mathematical models of rational action (see also Coleman 1990).

Rational choice theorists have become increasingly mathematical in orientation, converging more closely with trends in micro-economics. Indeed, some economists have attempted to colonise areas occupied by other social scientists. This trend towards formal, mathematical models of rational action was apparent in such diverse areas as theories of voting and coalition formation in political science (Downs 1957; Buchanan and Tullock 1962; Riker 1962) and explanations of ethnic minority relations (Hechter 1987) and, in a less rigorously mathematical form, social mobility and class reproduction (Goldthorpe 1996, Breen and Rottman 1995).

2.3.2 Rationality and Social Exchange

Basic to all forms of rational choice is the assumption that complex social phenomena can be explained in terms of the elementary individual actions of which they are composed. This stand point, called methodological individualism, holds that:

'The elementary unit of social life is the individual human action. To explain social institutions and social change is to show how they arise as the result of the action and interaction of individuals' (Elster 1989: 13).

Where economic theories have been concerned with the ways in which the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services is organized through money and the market mechanism, rational choice theorists have argued that the same general principles can be used to understand interactions in which such resources as time, information, approval, and prestige are involved.

In rational choice theories, individuals are seen as motivated by the wants or goals that express their 'preferences'. They act within specific, given constraints and on the basis of the information that they have about the conditions under which they are acting. At it's simplest, the relationship between preferences and constraints can be seen in the purely *technical* terms of the relationship of a means to an end. As it is not possible for individuals to achieve all of the various things that they want, they must also make choices in relation to both their goals and the means for attaining these goals. Rational choice theorists hold that individuals must anticipate the outcomes of alternative courses of action and calculate that which will be best for them. Rational individuals choose the alternative that is likely to give them the greatest satisfaction (Heath 1976: 3; Carling1992: 27; Coleman 1973).

The methodological individualism of rational choice theorists lead them to start out from the actions of individuals and to see all other social phenomena as reducible to these individual actions. For Homans, however, it was also necessary to see individual actions as reducible to these conditioned psychological responses.

2.3.2.1 Psychological Basis

The idea of 'rational action' has generally been taken to imply a conscious social actor engaging in deliberate calculative strategies. Homans argued that human behaviour, like all animal behaviour, is not free but determined. It is shaped by the rewards and punishments that are encountered. People do those things that lead to rewards and they avoid whatever they are punished for. Reinforcement through rewards and punishments -- technically termed 'conditioning' -- is the determining factor in human behaviour. This behaviour can, therefore, be studied in purely external and objective terms; there is no need to invoke any internal mental states. People learn from their past experiences, and that is all we need to know in order to explain their behaviour.

In social interaction, individuals are involved in mutual reinforcement. Each participant's behaviour rewards or punishes the other, and their joint behaviour develops through this 'exchange' of rewarding and punishing behaviours. While any behaviour can, in principle, reinforce the behaviour of another, Homans held that *approval* is the most fundamental human goal. Approval is a 'generalized reinforcer' that can reinforce a wide variety of specialized activities. Because of its generalized character, Homans saw approval as directly parallel to money. Both money and approval are general means of exchange in social interaction, one in economic exchange and the other in social exchange.

2.3.2.2 Social Interaction as Social Exchange

Following the economic model, then rational choice theorists see social interaction as a process of social exchange. Economic action involves an exchange of goods and services. Social interaction involves the exchange of approval and certain other valued behaviours. In order to emphasize the parallels with economic action, rewards and punishments in social exchange have generally been termed reward and costs, with action being motivated by the pursuit of a 'profitable' balance of rewards over costs. The various things that a person might do- his or her opportunities –vary in their costs, but they also vary in their rewards. In many cases , there will be a combination of monetary and non-monetary rewards and costs.

The rewards received from goods purchased from a shop like a mobile phone device, for example might include the intrinsic satisfactions that can be gained from their utilization and the social approval that is gained from their status display. Getting involved in protests for struggle for right can be enjoyed and the recognition accorded by fellow citizens as being the champion for such struggle. These same activities, however also involve cost. Items can be purchased from a shop only by giving up some of the money that a person possesses, and protest demonstrations would be imprisonment and social disapproval that will be incurred if the activist is apprehended and convicted.

The strength of reinforcement is measured by its quantity and its value. For example the more banknotes that a person receives, and the higher their denomination, the more of a reward they are likely to be. The quantity and its value of social approval, on the other hand is less easily measured though it may sometimes have a monetary equivalent.

Social exchange theorists, however regards this as purely technical problem that exists only because we have not yet developed adequate methods for measuring it. For many rational theorists it is not even a technical problem as it can be handled in exactly the same way as the intangible satisfactions that people gain from the objects that they buy or sell with money. The value of a reward, they argue is the utility that is has for a person.

While this subjective utility can vary greatly from one person to another, it is possible to construct preference curves that measure the relative utility of one object against another and therefore the likelihood that people will try to obtain them. In general, the utility of someone's behavior is seen in terms of such things as the amount of their time that it takes up and the frequency with which they are able to do it.

Rational choice theorists also recognise that the *threat* of punishment or the *promise* of reward may motivate people just as much as the punishment or reward itself. The threat of punishment for example may call forth appropriate behaviour from those who wish to avoid punishment. This assumption allowed Homans to recognise the motivating role of threats and inducements in the conditioning of human behaviour.

This can be illustrated by the case where one protestor could caution a message on the social media to alert the rest of the protestors of police presence or the other related danger. Someone who helps others in consequence, receives their approval and is likely to help them and others in future circumstances where he or she expects this to meet with approval.

This theory fits for this study as it looks at the social media users as rational beings and thus the choice to use social media will be very calculative. The social media users will look at the preferences of attaining their goals. The rewards verses the cost of the actions and in thus doing the benefits that social media provides as a tool on peace building and conflict prevention will popularize its use and effectiveness.

2.4 Conflict Theory

Max Webber 1864-1920) saw societal relationships as best characterized by conflicts, as did Karl Maxx. Karl Marx however emphasized on economical conflicts by emphasizing on the on the social class differences of the bourgeois and the proletariat based on the exploitation. He argued that individuals or groups use their material or non material resources (such as power) to exploit those who have less of those material or non material resource.

Webber however saw conflict arising from multiple sources with economic conflicts just being a subordination of other conflicts. While Maxx envisioned the end of conflict with destruction of capitalism, Webber contended that conflict will always exist regardless of the economic or political nature of society.

Even though individuals and groups enjoying great wealth, prestige, and power have the resources necessary to impose their values on others with fewer resources, Weber viewed the various class divisions in society as normal, inevitable, and acceptable, as do many contemporary conflict theorists (Curran & Renzetti, 2001). As opposed to Marx's concentration on two great classes (the bourgeoisie and the proletariat) based only on economic interests, Weber focused on three types of social group that form and dissolve as their interests change—class, party, and status. A class group shares only common economic interests, and party refers to political groups. Status groups were the only truly social groups because members hold common values, live common lifestyles, and share a sense of belonging. For Weber, the law is a resource by which the powerful are able to impose their will on others by criminalizing acts that are contrary to their class interests. Because of this, wrote Weber, "criminality exists in all societies and is the result of the political struggle among different groups attempting to promote or enhance their life chances" (Bartollas, 2005, p. 179).

Like Weber, viewed conflict as normal and socially desirable. Conflict is a way of assuring social change, and in the long run, a way of assuring social stability. A society that stifles conflict in the name of order stagnates and has no mechanisms for change short of revolution. Since social change is inevitable, it is preferable that it occur peacefully and incrementally (evolutionary) rather than violently (revolutionary). Even the 19th-century arch conservative

British philosopher Edmund Burke saw that conflict is functional in this regard, writing that "A state without the means of some change is without means of its conservation" (Walsh & Hemmens, 2000, p. 214).

This theory fits for this study because it is virtually impossible not to have beliefs and values about the role of conflict. Some people say that all conflict is destructive and should be avoided at all cost. But there are some conflicts that are beneficial to societies and individuals alike. Conflict can be beneficial to those dissatisfied with the status quo (those who wish to keep things as they are). Too often managing or preventing conflict have sometimes just deferred or postponed the needed change in the power relations. In some cases conflict management are reduction are productive of beneficial change. In other cases, it is best to escalate conflict and contest for power. The elite who own the mainstream media in Kenya and most African states usually control to keep their economic, status and party interests. Internet and social media which presents a decentralization and defragmentation of communication would thus present opportunity for wider democratic space which might result to evolutionary conflict (resulting to beneficial change) as opposed to contest and revolutions which might result to violent conflict as the masses are dissatisfied with the constant doses of manipulated information and exploitation over the years as it happened in the Arab world.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frame work is a result of what a researcher conceptualizes as the relationship between variables in the study. The dependent variable is known as the endogenous variable. This field lacks a shared concept of what constitutes conflict prevention as a dependent variable. The inability to determine what successful conflict prevention is may be partially due to the degree of conceptual ambiguity. As the term conflict prevention suggest different things to different scholars success or failure depends in large on how prevention is defined in the first place. In this study however the dependent variable was peaceful co-existence and the independent variables were perceived to be; tolerance, transparency, democracy, good governance, social justice, political will and media both mainstream and social media. The intervening variables are conflict prevention and peace building initiatives.

The conceptual framework has been illustrated in the diagram below:

Dependent variables   Intervening variables   Independent variables

| Democracy |
| Transparency |
| Political will |
| Media (Mainstream and Social Media) |
| Social justice |
| Tolerance |

Peace Building Initiative

Conflict Prevention

Peaceful Co-existence
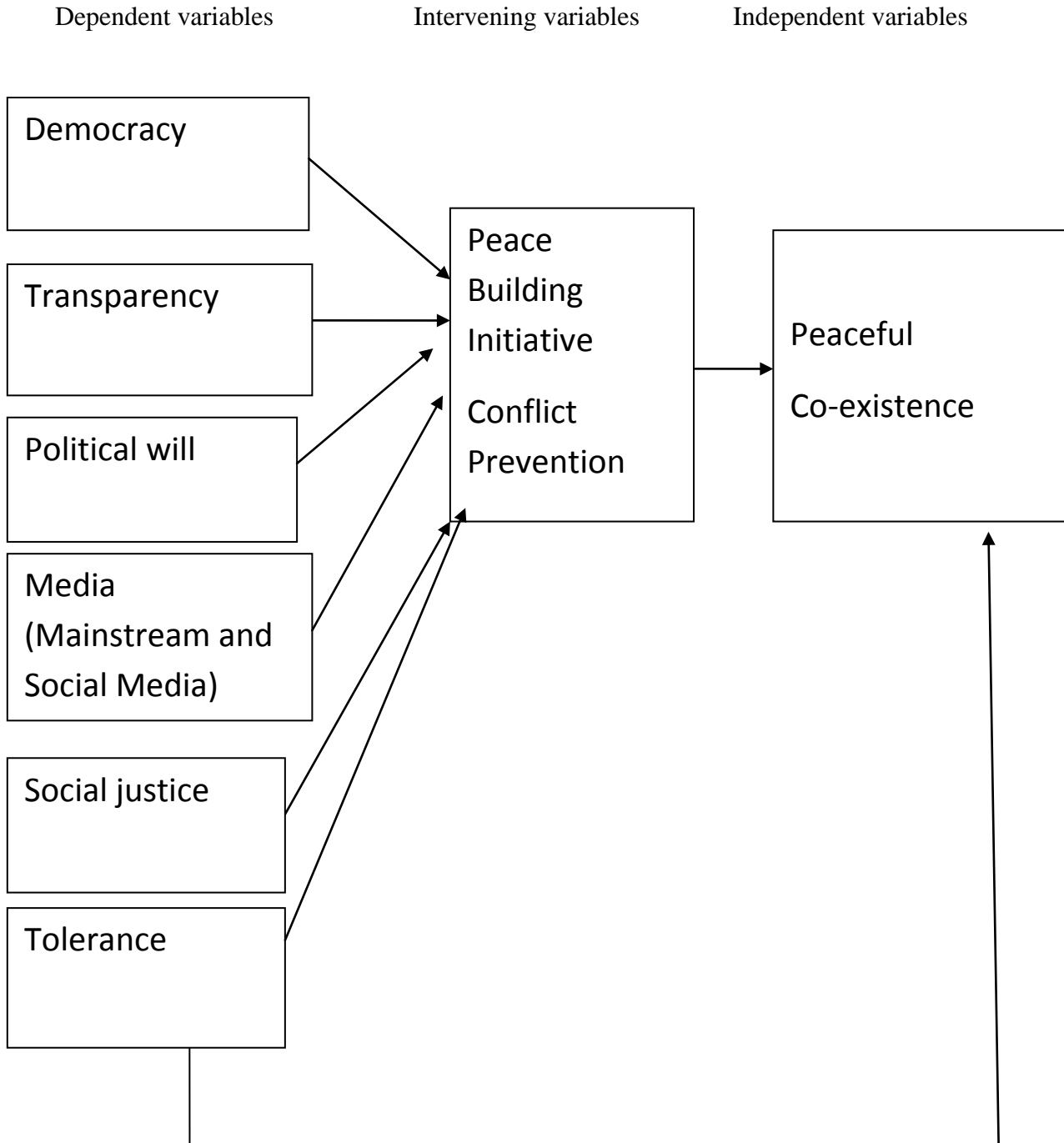
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section describes the procedures that the researcher followed in conducting the study. The section also describes the research design, the target population, the unit of analysis and observation, sampling procedure, data collection methods, ethical considerations and data analysis.

3.1 Area of Study

The study was conducted in four different locations in three of Nairobi's Eastland's estates. These locations included; Dandora (Dandora ward 3 and Dandora Ward 4), Kariobangi North, and Mathare (Mabatini Ward).

According to the 2009 national census the entire Nairobi Eastland's area is the most populated of Nairobi's residential areas, with a population of 582,554 Male and 561,862 Female. Nairobi as a county has a population of 3,138 295 with a total of 985,016 households. (2009 Kenya National Census Report by Kenya National Bureau of Statistics).

These locations are characteristic of urban informal settlement with significant socio-economical challenges including; high unemployment rate, high insecurity and urban poverty. The areas were vastly affected by the 2007/2008 post election violence that followed the general elections. These sites were selected through purposive sampling since they fall under high risks conflict areas.

Following the election crisis there has been efforts to implement peace building and conflict prevention initiatives notably through the Ushahidi Platform, Uwuiano Peace Platform and the Government targeting these locations among others. Ushahidi is a technological platform that enables citizens to report violence through SMS, email and the web. The reports are then analyzed and after validation are mapped geographically then finally availed to citizens on their website. Uwuiano peace platform on the other hand is multi-stake holder consortium for peace building and conflict prevention. It relies on Short Messages Service SMS to promoting peace

and for information gathering. The government under the office of the president has a National Steering Committee on peace building and conflict prevention (NSC) which serves as Kenya's Conflict Early Warning Response Unit (CEWERU). The NSC launched a platform where citizens can report violence or peace building activities by sending SMSs to the number 108, or through web on social media and email. The platform equally maps conflict, and is used for information gathering and dissemination to citizens for early warning.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Descriptive studies allow for the collection of information without changing or manipulating the environment. According to Glass& Hopkins descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events or phenomena, then organizes, tabulates and describes the data collected.

According to Churchill (1991) descriptive study is appropriate when the study seeks to describe, explain and validate findings. Descriptions emerge following creative exploration and then serve to organize the findings in order to fit then with explanations and finally test or validate the explanations (Krathwohl 1993).

The descriptive survey design was the most appropriate for this study. It sought to provide the description in the role of social media as tool for peace building and conflict prevention in Kenya, using the case of three estates in Nairobi's Eastland's area, which are Dandora, Mathare and Kariobangi North.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) the purpose of descriptive research is to determine and report the way things are. It thus helps in establishing the current status of the population under study.

In survey research design, a survey is used to obtain a description of a particular perception about a situation, phenomena or variable and the views are taken to represent those of the entire population.

Questionnaires and interviews were extensively used to collect data and were seen as efficient ways of gathering data that represent large populations (Irura s.et al 2009). These tools often yield rich data.

Descriptive statistics utilize data collection and analysis techniques that yield reports concerning the measures of central tendency, variation and correlation statistics along with its focus on specific types of research questions, The methods and outcome is what distinguishes descriptive survey research form the other research designs.

This design was chosen for this study because of its ability to ensure minimization of bias and maximization or reliability of evidence collected. Furthermore descriptive survey design raises concern for the economical completion of the research study. This method is rigid and focuses on the objectives of the study (Gay 1992).

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study focuses on the understanding the role of social media in peace building and conflict prevention among youths and young adults in Kenya using Nairobi county as an illustrative case.

3.4 Unit of Observation

The study utilised individual youths and young adults from the four locations of study as its units of observation. In Dandora ward three 33 respondents were selected while in Dandora ward Four 33 respondents were selected. In Kariobangi North 2 respondents were selected while in Mathare (Mabatini Ward) 22 youths and young adults aged from 13-50 who use social media and SMS were selected. They constituted observation units from which data will be collected. These units of observation represented the following percentage; Dandora three 37.1%, Dandora Four 37.1% Kariobangi North 1.2% and Mathare Mabatini 24.6 % of the entire population respectively. 2 key informants also formed the unit of observation as well the focus group discussions participants who were about 5 to 7 participants in each of the four locations.

3.5 Target Population

This study was conducted in 4 locations in 3 of Nairobi's Dandora, Kariobangi North, and Mathare estates. Dandora ward 3 has a population of 42,784, while Dandora ward 4 has 42,785 people. Kariobangi North ward has 1411, while Mathare Mabatini ward has 28,260 people (Source 2009 National Census KNBS). The study selected a total 90 respondents, 33 respondents which represent 37.1% of the entire population was selected from Dandora three, while 33 respondents which represent 37.1 % was drawn from Dandora Four, 2 respondents from Mathare Mabatini which is 1.2 of the entire population, lastly 22 respondents which is 24.6 % of the population were drawn from Mathare Mabatini ward. The respondents were majorly youths and young adults aged from 13- 50 years.

3.6 Sampling Frame

A sampling frame has properties that can identify with every single element being looked for by the researcher. And this has to be included in any of his/her samples. For this study the sampling frame included individuals aged from 13-50 years who for this study were considered to be youths. All of these youths had access to mobile phones, which could either connect to internet (Smartphone) or could not connect to internet (Ordinary mobile phone). These youths equally use or have made use of the Short Messaging Services SMS using their phones. Besides the mobile phone these youths were users of social media (Twitter, Facebook, Watsupp, Hi5, Migg33, Google Chat, Yahoo chat among others). These youths accessed the social media through diverse means which include: Smart devices (Ipads, Tablets), Computers (Laptops, Personal Computers) or Smart phones.

3.7 Sampling Procedure

The researcher employed both probability and non-probability sampling methods in the study. Stratified random sampling, which involved subdividing youth aged 13-50 years into males and females to ensure equal proportions in the sample of the study, was used. Stratified Random Sampling was further used to separate the youths who had ordinary phones (those which could not access internet), and thus are only limited to SMS, from those who had Smart phones (those

that can access internet) and thus beyond SMS could also access social media using their phones. In probability sampling every unit has a chance greater than zero of being selected and thus the sampling procedure produces unbiased estimates of the population totals.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) postulate that stratified random sampling generally has more statistical precision than random sampling. A sample size of 90 was considered appropriate for the study, given the large population of the study area and the limited resources the researcher had at his disposal for this research. Each of the residents of the estates was considered a distinct element of each quota in the study, while the estates were the sectors or quota for the study. For each location the number of participants was selected proportionately to the percentage of the entire population. The following formula was used to determine the sample size for each quota:

Sample Size = <u>Number of Elements in that Quota</u>   X Total Targeted Sample Size
                        Total Number of the Target Population

Once the groups have been subdivided into independent homogenous sub-populations, the researcher then through random sampling identified 33 participants from Dandora three, 33 participants from Dandora four while Kariobangi North ward had 2 participants and lastly Mathare Mabatini had 22 participants. The researcher anticipated to interview 90 youths aged from 13-50 years. . Table 1 below shows the distribution of the samples in the 4 locations.

Table 1: Distribution of samples in the 4 locations

Location	Population size	Distribution on a sample size of 90	Percentage distribution
Dandora 3	42,784	33	37.1
Dandora 4	42 785	33	37.1
Kariobangi North	1,411	2	1.2
MathareMabatini	28,260	22	24.6
Total	**115,240**	**90**	**100.0**

The researcher then selected 2 key informants through purposive sampling. One key informant was a social media expert who was involved in the development of the Ushahidi platform and had practical experience in Crisis Information Management and Dissemination. The other informant was a Peace studies and conflict prevention expert from the Center for Peaces Studies and Conflict Management from the University of Nairobi.

Mugenda and Mugenda (1995p 50) observe that purposive sampling is a technique which allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objective of the study. The researcher also held focus groups discussion in each of the four locations. Each focus constituted 5 to 7 youths, the participants for the focus discussion groups were selected through clusters sampling.

3.7 Data Collection Methods and Tools

This study mainly relied on interviews and focus group discussions as methods of data collection while using questionnaires as the tools of data collection.

3.7.1 Use of questionnaires

Given the relatively large sample of youths participating in this research, using questionnaires as instruments of data collection was ideal. The researcher considered this instrument since it ensured that confidentiality was upheld and it saved time. The questionnaires mostly consisted of structured questions and fewer open ended questions. Structured questions compel the responds to provide specific answers, while the few open ended questions allowed for diverse responses, both approaches are essential for variety and getting the respondent's perception of the phenomena being investigated. Administering questionnaires generally allow for information to be collected from a large sample and in diverse locations.

3.7.2 Key informant interview

The researcher used face to face interview methods to collect a wide range of information on the role of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention. The Key informants were drawn from the field of peace studies and conflict prevention, as well as in the field of

social media. An expert and lecturer of Peace studies at the Center for Peace studies and Conflict Prevention at the University of Nairobi was interviewed. A social media expert was equally interviewed, this expert had also taken part in the development and operationalisation of the Ushahidi Crisis Mapping and Reporting platform. Marshall and Rossman (1999) state that qualitative data is often dependent on key informant interview, interviews allows the researcher to understand the statistical data collected from quantitative research by explaining the figures and giving further information beyond the figures.

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussions

The researcher held focus groups discussion in each of the four locations. Each focus constituted 5 to 7 youths. Focus groups allow the researcher to get the participants perspective, attitudes, experiences and reactions on the phenomena of interest by way of interaction and discussion with the participants. Focus groups have a high apparent validity since the idea is easy to understand, the result are believable are low cost and helps in getting quick results.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The participants were made aware of the purpose of the study and the intended use of the information that will be collected from them, prior to beginning the data collection surveys and interviews. The researchers reassured the participants of the confidentiality of the data collected.

The participants were informed that there were no direct benefits or compensations for participating on the study. The researcher briefed the participants on their rights to voluntarily participate in the study and they thus have the right to stop the survey at any moment or skip any questions they did not wish to answer. The participants were shown the channels of communication they could use to address any question, complain arising from the data collecting exercise and the study in general.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of collected data (Marshal and Rossman 1999p150) In order to bring order, structure and interpretation to the collected data, the researcher systematically organizes the data by coding it into categories and constructing matrixes. After classifying the data, the researcher compares and contrasts it to the information retrieved from the literature review.

After administering the questionnaires, the researcher used codes and had data converted into numerical codes for statistical analysis, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics was computed for all the variables to ensure quality of data. The results from the sample were then generalized to the study population of the 4 locations. The researcher then organized the results around the objectives of the study. The researcher used descriptive statistics to show distribution, relationships between variables under study, proportions in terms of texts, percentages, charts and tables.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses data generated from the study on the role of social media as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building. Data has been organized around the study objectives and is presented in three parts, data presentation and data analysis.

4.1 Data Presentation

This section presents data which was collected and analyzed from the questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Data is presented in the form of texts, tables, pie chart, graphs, frequencies and percentages.

4.1.2 Distribution of respondents by location

The study found out that 37.1 percent of the respondents were from Dandora ward three, 37.1 percent of the respondents were from Dandora ward four, 1.2 percent were from Kariobangi North ward while 24.6 percent of the respondents were from Mathare Mabatini ward. Table 2 below shows the distribution of respondents by location.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by location

Location	Distribution Frequency	Percentage Distribution
Dandora 3	33	37.1
Dandora 4	33	37.1
Kariobangi North	2	1.2
MathareMabatini	22	24.6
Total	**90**	**100.0**

4.1.3 Distribution of the respondents by gender

The study revealed that 56 percent of the respondents were male while 44 percent were female. This shows that gender differences were taken into considerations in an attempt to ensure that the study wasn't biased towards one particular gender.

4.1.4 Distribution of respondents by age

52.2 percent of the respondents were aged between 13-20 years, 33.3 percent were aged between 21-30 years, and 11.1 percent were aged between 31-40 years while 3.4 percent were aged between 41-50 years. Table 3 below indicates the distribution of respondents by age.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
13-20	47	52.2
21-30	30	33.3
31-40	10	11.1
41-50	3	3.4
Total	**90**	**100.0**

4.1.4 Distribution of the respondent by marital status

The study found out that the 60 percent of the respondents were single, 27.8 percent were married while 12.2 percent filled other as their marital status. Figure 1 below shows the distribution of the respondents by their marital status.

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by marital status
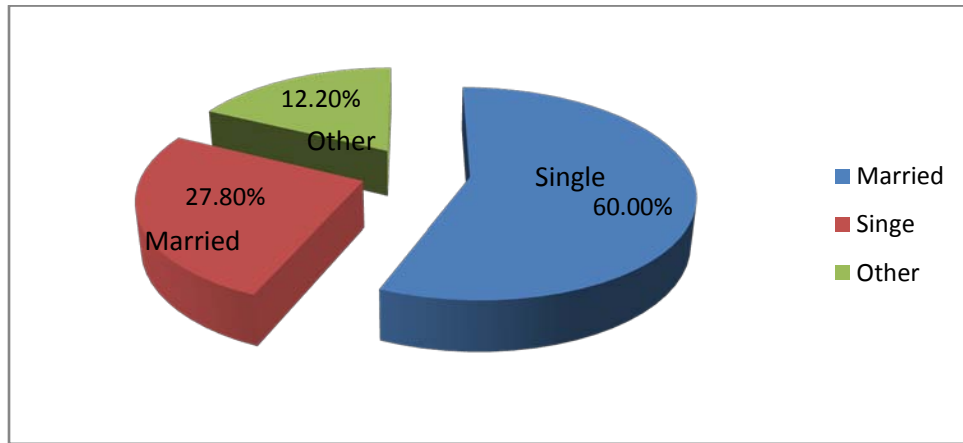
4.1.4 Distribution of the respondent by level of education

Majority of the respondents (44.5 percent) had attained secondary school education, 27.8 percent had obtained college or university education ,18.9 percent had obtained primary education while 2.1 percent had post graduate education and finally 6.7 percent had not received any formal education. Figure 2 below indicates the percentage distribution of the highest level of education among the respondents.

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by highest level of education
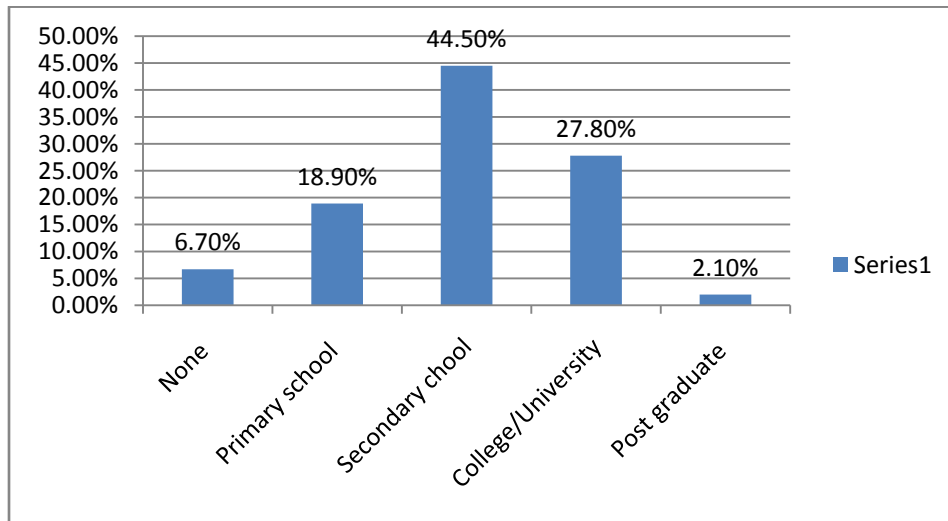
4.1.5 Distribution of the respondent by employment status

The study revealed that 28.7 percent of the respondents were salaried employees, 14.4 percent were self-employed, 37.8 percent were unemployed, and 13.3 percent were casual labourers while 7.8 percent indicated others

Table 4 below shows the distribution of respondents with their employment status.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by employment status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Salaried Employee	24	26.7
Self-employed	12	14.4
Unemployed	34	37.8
Casual labourer	13	13.3
Others	7	7.8
Total	**90**	**100.0**

4.2 Data Analysis

This section presents data analysis. Data is organized around the study objectives described in chapter one of the research study.

4.2.1 Popularity of the social media platforms among the respondents

The study sought to find out the strengths of social media as tools of conflict prevention and peace building. It was thus important to look at the penetration and popularity level of the social media platforms amongst the respondents.

Figure 3: Popularity of social media tools amongst respondents
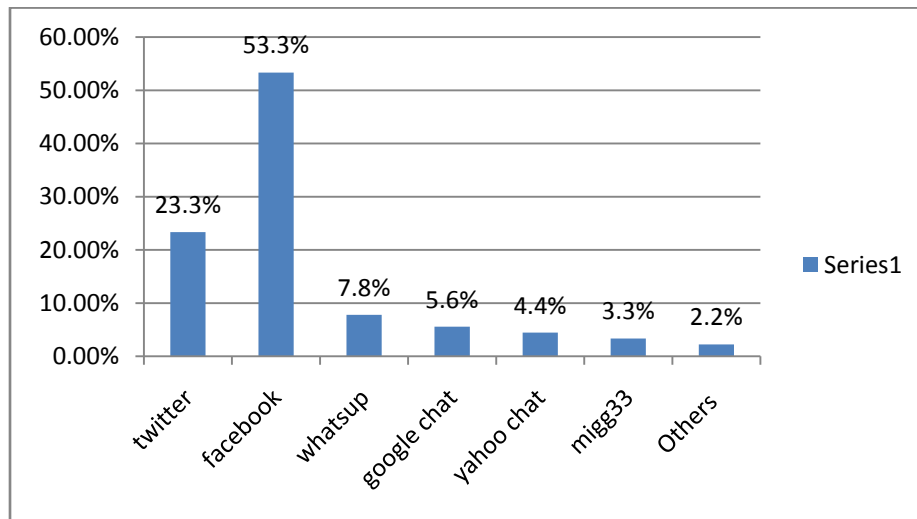
The study revealed that Facebook and Twitter were the most popular social media tools with 53.3 percent and 23.3 percent of the respondents having accounts on each platform respectively. The other social media tools which were represented by 2.2 percent included; Skype and Ning. Skype is a tool that allowed users to make free internet video or voice calls with friends who are registered on Skype. Majority (54.4 percent) of those respondents, who frequently used Facebook, had more than 100 to 1000 friends.

Information from the social media expert a key informant in this study indicated one of the factors that the popularity of Facebook can be attributed to the incorporation of the social media on the mobile phone menu. He said :

 "*The availability of Facebook on the phone menu facilitates its access. Users simply need to be online and they sign in to start using it. Other social media platforms need to be downloaded first and installed on the cell phone before they could be used. The downloading procedure complicates the process for some people and they opt just to have Facebook account which is easier to register on*".

The expert further explained that the interface for each social media platform is unique. Some platforms have limitations, for instance Twitter has a limit of 250 words that one can post on their profile and one cannot upload photos and other multi-media supports. Such limitations are

not present on Facebook, and thus for exchanging social pleasantries Facebook serves them best, hence its popularity. Owing to the unique interface of each social media, most people on social media platforms like Whatsup, Twitter also have a face book account almost as a pre-requisite.

Focus group discussions also revealed that Twitter is perceived to be a little elitist compared to Facebook, a focus group participant in Kariobangi North said:

"*FB ndio mambo yote Twitter ni ya wasomi*" meaning "Facebook is our thing, Twitter is for the learned",

This shows the different perceptions the youth have on the social media platforms that could have led to the popularity of facebook.

Table 5: Distribution of respondent's friends on Social Media

Friends	Frequency	Percentage
1-100	33	36.7
101-1000	49	54.4
1001 and more	8	8.9
Total	**90**	**100.0**

4.2.2 Using Social media for Peace building and Reporting Violence

The study sought to find out among the respondents, if social media was being used for peace building activities. The study found out that 54.4 percentage of the respondents had taken part on peace building initiatives on social media, while 45.6 percent had not. The peace building activities included; taking part on peace building rally, inviting a friend to the rally through social media, likewise a social media user could simply participate online by "liking" the peace building event webpage hence increasing the visibility of the event. By liking the event the people in his circle of friends will be notified that he/she liked the event and thus the friends will be made aware of the event.

The study also sought to know if the respondents' social media friends would take part on a peace building initiative, if they were invited or informed through social media. The study revealed that only 66.7 percent thought that their friends would take part on peace building activities on social media, while 28.9 percent didn't know if their social media friends would participate, 3.3 percent doubted if their friends would take part while only 1.1 percent thought their social media friends would not take part in such initiatives. The interview with the peace expert another key informant in the study revealed that it is easier for the social media users to take part on a peace building activity online than in an outdoor event. This is because the decision to take part in an event is informed by the accuracy of the information on the event provided and the logistical issues to be overcome. As it stands now most users don't give in to participate in events that will involve major logistical implications and thus the easiest option they have is to take part online.

Table 6 below shows the distribution percentage of the social media friend's participation upon invitation on social media.

Table 6: Participation of respondents' social media friends upon invitation through social media

Participation of friends upon invitation through social media	Frequency	Percentage
Yes I know they would	60	66.7
I don't know	26	28.9
I really doubt they would	3	3.3
I am sure they would not	1	1.1
TOTAL	**90**	**100.0**

The study reported that 17.8 percent of the respondents were conversant of social media as tool for reporting violence. However majority (45.6 percent) of those who had ever reported violence used the police SMS hotline for reporting violence, 10 percent had used the Uwuiano Peace platform, 1.1 percent had used the Ushahidi platform while 10.1 percent had used the government SMS 108 platform, 24.4 percentage had reported to friends and relatives through SMS and 8.8 percent had used the social media.

The peace building expert explained:

"In order for one to report violence, they need to be assured of their security and they must also trust that action will be taken once they file report on violence. What this means, is that citizens will be both the generators and the consumers of the information on violence if they use social media".

Conflict information management ethics is thus a key competence, since information needs to be verified and authenticated before it can be released to the masses. At present very few people trust that action can be taken if they reported violence through social media. For social media to be effective for early warning there has to be an assurance of accessing accurate information so that they could take precaution. The social media platforms must be seen to be giving accurate information about violence for users to trust it. He concludes that platforms must also have user friendly interfaces and easy to remember procedure. Figure 4 below summarizes the distribution of the platforms the respondents used to report violence.

Figure 4: Distribution of the platforms the respondents used to report violence
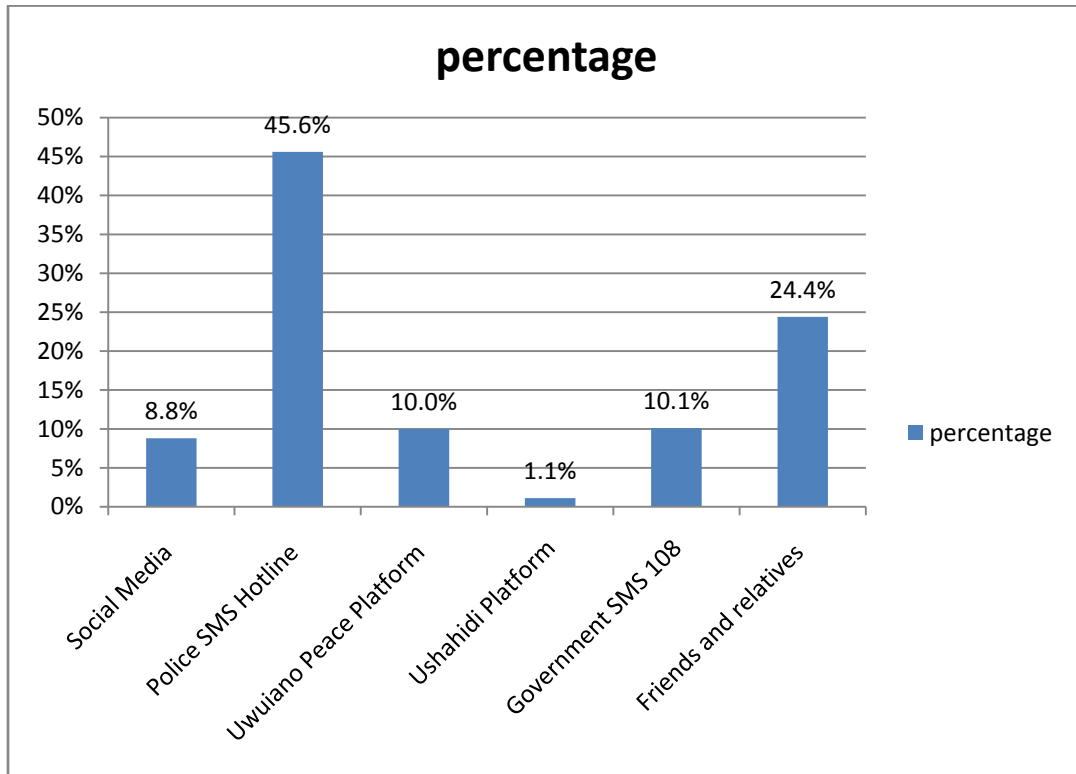
30 percent of the respondents had reported violence, 21.2 percent of those who have never reported violence, did not trust that any action would be taken, while 9.8 percent knew the platforms in which to report violence but didn't remember the SMS number of the website of the platforms for reporting violence. Only 22.2 percent knew of their relatives and friends as platforms for reporting violence, the rest 46.8 preferred other means of reporting violence which included going to the nearest police station to report. Table 7 below summarizes the respondents' reasons of not reporting violence.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents reasons for not reporting violence

Reason for not reporting violence	Frequency	Percentage
I didn't trust any action would be taken	13	21.2
I knew the platforms but didn't remember the SMS numbers nor the websites for reporting	6	9.8
I only knew of friends and relatives	14	22.2
I prefer other medium to report violence	30	46.8
Total	**63**	**100.0**

Over 48 percent of the respondents had reported a peace building event of social media. 10.8 percent of the those who reported were aware of the police SMS hotline for reporting peace building activities, 13.5 percent knew of the Uwuiano peace platform, while0.0 percent were aware of the Ushahidi platform, none knew of the government SMS 108 platform, 48.6 percent had used social media to report the peace building activities, the rest 27.1 percent only knew of relatives and friends as the platforms for reporting peace building activities. Figure 5 below shows the distribution of the platform the respondents used to report peace building activities.

Figure 5: Distribution of the platforms the respondents used in reporting peace building activities
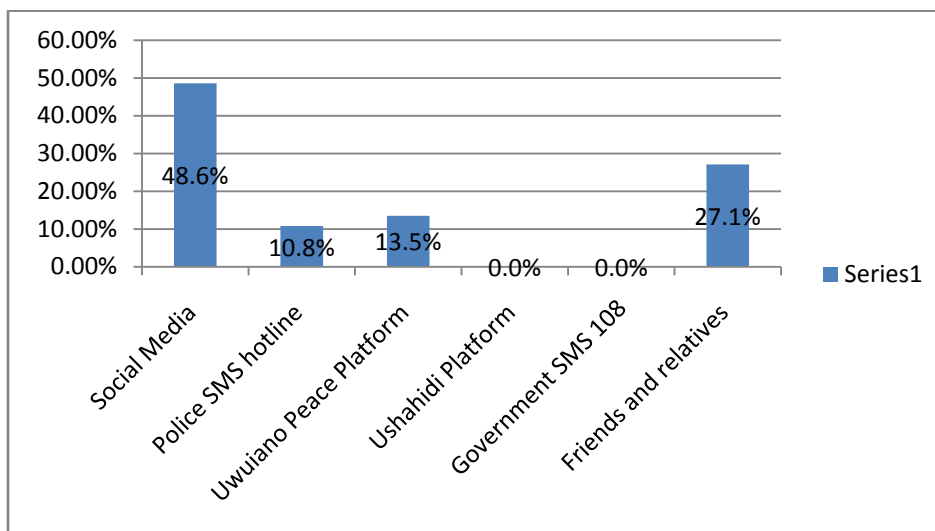
The peace building expert affirmed that:

 "*The potential of social media as a tool for peace building is evident by the elaborate penetration of social media as a communication tool. However at present social media is not very popular beyond exchanging pleasantries in Kenya. There is need to leverage on mainstream media to create awareness on how they can be used for peace building*".

 He explained further that:

 "*Social media can be effective because it is communication built primarily on relationships and deals with the user's circle of influence*".

4.2.3 Social media and its contribution to political and social tension.

The study revealed that only 42 percent of the respondents use the social media for political updates, the rest 58 percent used mainstream media to keep abreast with the activities in the political landscape. For those who didn't use social media, 59 percent used television, 23 percent used the newspaper while 11 percent used the radio, and only 4 percent relied on friends and relative while 3 percent used other media as shown in Figure 6 below

Figure 6: Distribution of main stream media for political update among the respondents
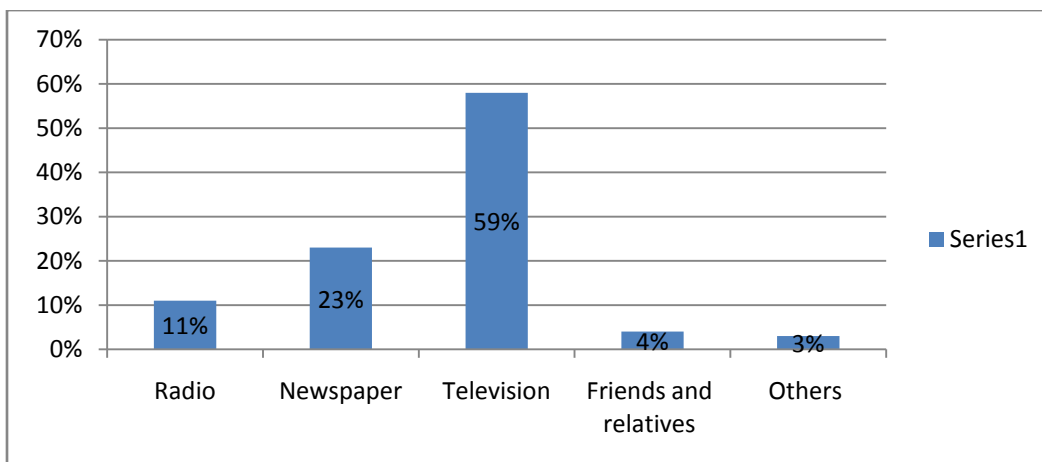
A focus group participant simply put it :

"*Si kwa ubaya lakini mimi lazima niangalie FB ndio nipate uhondo wa siasa kabla ya kuona news*"

 Meaning "Me I need to consult Facebook to get the gist of politics before watching news".

This shows that main stream media and social media complement each other when it comes to relaying political news. Television still dominates in reporting on politics since they most mainstream media are owned by the elite whose proximity to power is undoubted. The peace building expert further explained;

 "*Even though mainstream media dominates in covering the political arena, the social media also never misses the trending political issues and current affairs. This is because of the solid presence of mainstream media on social media. Journalists, media houses give constant information feeds on developing stories on social media. Sometimes this stories run on social media even before they are broadcasted on television or radio*".

This simply shows the complementing roles that mainstream media and social media need to play.

He concluded that:

 "*Social media has a great potential of destabilizing peace and generating political tension because of unethically guided users. These users can use it for politically instigated incitements or spreading rumours with proposed actions which might be detrimental to peace*".

Table 8 below summarises the reaction of the respondents to the messages of hate speech received on social media.

Table 8: Respondents reaction to hate speech and ethnical incitement

Reaction of respondents to messages of hate speech	Frequency	Percentage
I commented back but didn't forward the message to my social media friends online	11	19.2
I simply ignored the message and did not forward to my social media friends online	4	7.1
I commented back and forwarded the message to my social media friends online	27	47.3
I simply ignored the messages but forwarded to my social media friends online	10	17.6
Other actions (please specify)	5	8.8
Total	**57**	**100.0**

A focus group participant in Dandora ward three revealed that she no longer buys newspapers, instead she spends the forty shillings in buying internet bundles and reads online version of the newspaper and eventually connect to social media to see what her friends are saying about the political developments. This shows that social media provides an active medium for feedback on political issues which is interactive as opposed to main stream which could be passive. Another participant in focus group discussion said:

 "I follow groups on Facebook that talk ill about my political party and ethnical group to enable me know how my they think about me, I need to understand what my enemy thinks about me so that I may be politically prepared for the worst and Facebook helps me achieve that".

The study revealed that 63.3 percents of the respondent had received updates from groups that spread hate speech, or statements promoting ethnic hatred and incitement against a certain ethnic group while 37.7 percent had not. Of the respondents who had received such messages, 19.2 percent commented back and did not forward the message to social media friends online. 7.1 percent simply ignored the message and did not forward the message to other social media friends online, 47.3 percent commented back and forwarded the message to social media friends

online, 17.6 percent simply ignored the messages but forwarded them to their social media friends online, 8.8 percent indicated other actions.

The study revealed that 68.9 percent of the respondents had taken part in a politically sensitive debate on social media, while 31.1 percent had not. Of the respondents who had taken part in these debates, 27.5 percent had commented negatively about a political party, 19.3 percent had commented positively about a political party, 32.2 percent had commented negatively about a political leader, 17.8 had commented positively about a political leader while 3.2 indicated other actions in the contribution to the debate. Table 9 below shows the distribution of respondents' contribution to politically sensitive debates on social media.

Table 9: Respondents' contribution to politically sensitive debates on social media

Respondents contribution to politically sensitive debates on social media	Frequency	Percentage
I commented negatively about a political party	17	27.5
I commented positively about a political party	12	19.3
I commented negatively about a political leader	20	32.2
I commented positively about a political party	11	17.8
Other contributions	2	3.2
Total	**62**	**100.0**

A five point Likert scale was used to collect data and analyse whereby '1 points out to strongly disagree'; '2 points to disagree'; '3 points to neutral';' 4 points to agree'; and 5 points to strongly agree'. 3.71 mean of the respondents felt that social media has a greater reach compared to other forms of media, 3.26 mean of the respondents felt that social media is a good tool for mobilizing crowds for clandestine activities without the fear of being caught by the authorities,3.41 mean felt that social media allows people to disagree and fight verbally without getting physically violent, a mean of 3.42 of the respondents indicated that social media can allows for anonymity of identity and thus allowing people to express their sincere feelings without fear or hesitation. Finally a mean of 3.60 felt that social media was affordable. Table10 below shows the degree to which the respondents agreed to the statements relating to political activities.

Table 10: Respondent's level of agreement or disagreement with statements relating social media to political activity

Statement relating social media to political activity	Whether agrees with statement						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	STDEV
Social media is affordable compared to other forms of media for expressing one's views	15	4	17	20	34	**3.60**	**1.451**
Social media allows for anonymity of identity thus one can express their views frankly without fear or hesitation	9	14	22	20	25	**3.42**	**1.315**
It allows one to fight verbally without getting violent	12	11	24	15	28	**3.41**	**1.388**
It is a good tool for mobilizing crowds for clandestine activities without the fear of being arrested by the government authorities	12	19	18	14	27	**3.26**	**1.446**
It has a greater reach compared to other form of media	11	12	10	16	41	**3.71**	**1.462**

A respondent in the focus discussion group in Mathare Mabatini said**:**

 "*I take part in political debates on social media because I feel bad when other people insult my political party I must thus fight back"*

The social media expert said:

"The penetration of social media is owed to the growing affordability of internet. Internet is now retailed in small units of a little as Ksh 10. Meaning that even the most economically challenged person could periodically afford it, since they only pay for it when they need it. They buy pre-paid bundles only when they can afford it".

4.2.4 Social media and it's regulation

The study sought to find out if regulation of social media would help promote its use as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention. The study revealed that 52.2 percent felt that if social media was regulated then they would use it mostly for social reasons and exchanging pleasantries, while 16.7 percent would use it to keep updates of the political landscape and even take part in politically sensitive debates with real identity, 10 percent expressed that they would use it for political reasons but with hidden identity, 18.9 percent said they would use to keep updated on political news but never comment or take part in sensitive debates, 2.2 while percent said they would never use it again . The social media expert argued that :

"Government regulation over social media is only possible in form of surveillance. The government can thus scrape out links or web pages that contain information that amount to act of crime. However the complexity comes where someone can use concealed identity to post politically sensitive information on social media and furthermore use a computer open to the public like in cybercafé to post such like information. It becomes very difficult to track such a person in order to take legal action against him/her".

The peace expert on his part said:

"The government can act as a watch dog and block activities of individuals or groups perpetrating violence, however for sustainable peace building the government should have a consistent presence on social media and position itself as a credible source of reliable information".

This he said will help the government win the trust of users a direction which can help in reducing political tensions arising from inaccurate information. Table 11 below shows how users would use social media if the government would regulate it.

Table 11: How users would use social media after government regulation

How Users would use social media after regulation	Frequency	Percentage
I would use it on purely social reasons, exchanging pleasantries	47	52.2
I would use it political reasons and even take part with real identification	15	16.7
I would use it for political reasons but with hidden identification	9	10.0
I would use it political reasons but never participate on a sensitive debate	17	18.9
I would never use it	2	2.2
Total	**90**	**100.0**

4.2.5 Social economic factors influencing the use of social media

From the findings of the respondents employment status,37.8 percent of the respondents were unemployed, 26.7 percent were salaried employees, 14.4 percent of the respondents indicated that they were self employed, 13.3 percent of the respondents were casual labourers, while 7.8 percent indicated others. The occupations represented by others constituted mainly of students. The study revealed that majority of the respondents were unemployed and the study sought to investigate whether their employment status was related to access to social media. The locations for study are characteristic of socio-economical challenges which include high unemployment rate. The social media expert asserted:

 "Thanks to countries who have low cost of production like China, soon every youth even those in slums will be online, such countries have provided affordable mobile phone devices that enable most groups to access internet, which is the major gateway to social media"

Over fifty one percent (51.1) of the respondents owned a smart phone through which they connected to social media, 5.6 percent relied on a friend's smart phone to connect to social media, 4.4 percent of the respondents owned a smart device for connection, 14.4 relied on a friend's smart device for connection, 14.4 percent connected in a cybercafé while 8.9 percent connected through their computer and 1.2 connected through a borrowed computer. Table 12 below shows the distribution of how respondents connect to social media.

Table 12: Distribution of how respondents connect to social media

Connection to social media	Frequency	Percentage
I own a smart phone	46	51.1
I connect through a friend's or relatives smart phone	5	5.6
I own a smart device	4	4.4
I connect through a friend's or relative 's smart device(ipad, tablet)	13	14.4
I connect in a cybercafé	13	14.4
I connect through my computer	8	8.9
I connect through a borrowed computer	1	1.2
Total	**90**	**100.0**

The study further revealed that 51.1 percent of the respondents bought their internet bundles and connected to social media through their smart phones, 21.2 percent relied on friends or relatives to provide the internet for connecting to social media, 4.4 percent bought internet bundles and connected with their smart devices (ipads and tablets) 14.4 percent accessed internet through a cyber café while 8.9 percent bought internet bundles and connected through their computers

A focus group discussion participant in Dandora said:

"Don't be surprised what Ksh 10 can do, it helps one to get online and it can also help overthrow a government. It has done that elsewhere in Africa, it can also do that here too".

Table 13 below shows how the respondents acquired internet to connect to social media.

Table 13: How respondents access internet for connecting to social media

Provision of internet for connection	Frequency	Percentage
I buy internet bundles and connect using my smart phone	46	51.1
I rely on friends for connection	19	21.2
I buy internet bundles and connect with my smart device	4	4.4
I connect in a cybercafé and pay for the services	13	14.4
I buy internet bundles and connect through my computer	8	8.9
Total	**90**	**100.0**

The social media expert stated that Kenya being one of the emerging economies in Africa, mobile telephony has contributed a lot even on the upward growth; the internet infrastructure is expected to get even better with the arrival of the fourth fibre optic cable connecting Kenya to the rest of the world.

This is expected to significantly reduce the cost of internet; this in itself will be a move towards sustaining social media as a tool for communication.

4.2.6 Social media and early warning

The study revealed that 30 percent of the respondents had received an alert message on violence, while 70 percent had not. Of those who had received 55.5 percent had received an SMS or a call, 29.6 percent had received a social media update, 14.9 percent indicted other media for the alert.

48.1 percent of the respondents who had received alerts pointed friends and relatives as the source of the alert, 33.3 percent indicated that it was from the mobile operator 3.8 indicated from the police while 14.8 percent indicted other sources. The study also found out that 51.8 percent took the warning seriously and took precaution, while 48.2 took it causally and took no safety precaution.

The peace studies expert explained that the Kenya government security agencies had made collaborations with the Mobile operators and the CCK, to give alerts messages of places to be avoided as an early warning mechanism. These places were suspected to be susceptible to further attacks of the grenade explosions. More precisely this was during the grenade explosions that were experienced on Moi Avenue near Ambassador Hotel in 2011. However these alerts were curbed with delays in diffusion and some mobile phones subscribers got the messages 24 hours after the incident had occurred. Such a method of using mobile phones as early warning mechanism would be effective if there they would be prompt because subscribers are likely to take them seriously if they are coming from the official line of the mobile operators.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study whose aim was to understand the role of social media in conflict prevention and peace building in Kenya using of Nairobi County as an illustrative case. The summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations are organized around the study objectives.

5.1 Summary of findings

The findings were categorized into 5 themes which corresponded to the study objectives

Strengths of Social media as tools for conflict prevention and peace building

The study revealed that social media had a high penetration among the respondents, thus might have a great reach and be efficient if used   as medium of communication. Over 80 percent of the respondents had social media accounts.

The study revealed that Face book was the most popular social media tool among the respondents with 53.3 percent of the respondents having been registered on it; Twitter was the second most popular tool with 23.3 percent of the respondents on it. The other tools which were gaining popularity was WhatsAp, it is a fairly recent tool that allows members who are registered on it to send texts to their contacts from their phone list once online. It is almost an online SMS services, the cost of sending the texts is not charged by the mobile operator, they are free, however the user simply needs to be online.

Slightly over 54 percent of the respondents, who had social media accounts, also had a network of about to 101 to 1000 people in their circle of friends on social media. Meaning that on average

those were the people they would engage with or have influence over. This would have a ripple effect among a circle of friends if a message is passed through social media.

Increase of access to internet was attributed to the availability of internet in units that are affordable. This has led to the popularity of social media, contributing to its strongpoint of wide coverage. Internet is the major gateway to social media and it's accessibly is key.

Majority of the respondents who used social media tools used their smart phones to access social media, this accounts to 51.1 percent of the respondents. Despite a high unemployment rate of 37.8 percent, 51.1 percent of the respondents bought internet bundles to connect to social media through their phones. 21.2 percent of the respondents relied on friends or relatives to provide internet to access social media.

Theo other strength of social media is its ability to create awareness, peace building events which need sensitization became very popular when of social media was used to create publicity for them. This can be attributed to the simple application interfaces for creating such events and online participation.

Above 54 percent of the respondents who used social media had taken part in a peace building activity on social media, 66.7 percent of the respondents were positive that their social media friends would take action if they invited them to take part on a peace building initiative through social media. Only 1.1 percent were sure their social media friends would never take part in such initiatives.

Weakness of Social media as tools for conflict prevention and peace building

One major weak point social media as a tool for conflict prevention is the lack of ethical standards and professionalism for the users. It is too liberal and thus can be used to spread unverified information and distorted facts that might be detrimental to peace building and conflict prevention. This has led to some of the users already questioning the credibility of the information that is circulated through social media. The study revealed that 21.2 percent of those who had never reported violence on social media didn't do it because they didn't trust any action

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would be taken. And they mostly (46.8 percent) preferred to contact friends and relatives through SMS to report violence to them.

The other weak point about social media as tool for peace building is that it is dependent to a major extent on the access to internet. The availability of internet in low units doesn't necessarily mean cheap access. So over time the high cost of internet might affect the efficiency of the social media as a tool.

Contribution of government regulation

If social media was to be regulated by the government then 52.2 percent of the respondents would used it purely for social reasons, just exchanging social pleasantries, 16.7 percent would use it for political reasons with their real identification while 10 percent of the respondents would use it for political reasons but conceal their identity. Hypothetically such a move would reduce activities that might lead to political tensions since most people would use social media just for social reasons and not for activities like incitement, ethnical discrimination and hatred which might undermine social cohesion and co-existence.

In reality however it is a big challenge to regulate social media primarily because of the decentralized nature of internet through which most social media can be accessed. Secondly social media allows users to conceal their real identity and thus use anonymous identification. There is provision to use the tools an individual or a group. Most groups which propagate hate speech and political statements with ethnical inclinations are mostly operated using such identity as administrator.

Potential role of social media in generating social and political tensions

Social media was the second most popular medium for keeping update with the events on the political landscape 42 percent of the respondents were depended on it, majority however 59 percent of those who relied on mainstream media used television as their most popular medium of following the political activities. There was strong online activism on social media by respondents to express political opinions and opinion that might ignite social tension, especially with statements of hate speech and incitement against certain ethnicities.

The study revealed that 63.3 percents of the respondent had received updates from groups that spread hate speech, or statements promoting hatred and incitement against a certain ethnic group. Of the respondents who had received such messages, 19.2 percent commented back and did not forward the message to social media friends online. 7.1 percent simply ignored the message and did not forward the message to other social media friends online, 47.3 percent commented back and forwarded the message to social media friends online, 17.6 percent simply ignored the messages but forwarded them to their social media friends online.

The study revealed that 68.9 percent of the respondents had taken part in a politically sensitive debate on social media Of the respondents who had taken part in these debates 27.5 percent had commented negatively about a political party, 19.3 percent had commented positively about a political party, 32.2 percent had commented negatively about a political leader, 17.8 had commented positively about a political leader.

Social media and early warning

The study revealed that only 30 percent of the respondents had received an alert message on violence. Of those who had received only 29.6 percent had received a social media update. Majority (55.5 percent) had received an SMS or a call. The study also found out that 51.8 percent took the warning seriously and took precaution, while 48.2 took it causally and took no safety precaution.

Reporting violence is synonymous with police as 45.6 percent of the respondents indicated that they only knew they police hotline SMS for reporting violence, while only 17.8 percent were conversant of social media as a platform for reporting violence. Despite Ushahidi platform being and crisis reporting platform for gathering information from citizens, only 1.1 percent of the respondents were conversant with it. 10 percent of the respondents were aware of the Uwuiano peace platform for reporting violence.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings in this research project, the study concluded that social media is an important communication tool among the youth and young adults. Social media's popularity can be attributed to certain key elements which include: it responds to the youth's desire for communication; it is affordable and has the opportunity for instantaneous communications. Most of the youths in the study bought internet bundles to connect to social media and those who didn't relied on their friends and relatives to connect. This means that internet has been made available in units that can be afforded by the users especially those hailing from area with socio-economic challenges. For instance with as little as Ksh 10 a youth can buy internet bundles and connect to social media, like wise they may connect in a cybercafé which costs about 50 cent to Ksh 1 per minute in the study location.

These attributes present the strong points in which social media can be used as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building, because it reduces the cost of coordination and increases awareness. The study revealed that social media has majorly been used for social reasons and not much in conflict prevention and peace building. Social media therefore presents a great potential for scaling up peace building initiatives and peace building among the youth and young adults who play in the past have played a critical role in creating conflict, and thus should be target for conflict prevention and peace building. There is however need to popularize the use of social media as a tool for conflict prevention with very user friendly interfaces for it to be a effective tool for conflict prevention.

The study also concluded that the increase in penetration of mobile telephones among the youths especially those represented in this study provides the opportunity to integrate mobile telephony and internet based social media platforms to increase the participation level of the youth in reporting violence and taking part as well as reporting peace building activity. This will move will enable those who posses ordinary mobile phones (which cannot connect to internet) to participate, since they can simply use SMS to report violence or peace building activities. Likewise they can receive warning and alerts for conflict and take precaution.

The study also concluded that information credibility is essential if social media as a tool is to be effective in conflict prevention and peace building. The nature of social media which allows for anonymity of identity gives room for unverified information to be floated around the social media networks, this can be detrimental to the conflict prevention and peace building initiatives. There is therefore need for information verification and authentication by a trusted agent, to offer information appertaining to violence, conflict prevention and peace building on the social media platforms.

5.3 Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations as a precursor to improving the effectiveness of social media a tool for conflict prevention and peace building:

1. There should be a mounted campaign by peace stakeholders, the National Steering Committee on Conflict Prevention and Peace building, the Criminal Investigation Department and the National Intelligence Services, to popularize the use of social media for promoting peace building activities and reporting violence.
2. The security agencies should be trained on conflict information management to enhance their efficiency in handling information from the public which on most cases need to be verified and authenticated.
3. The police as a security agent should have a permanent presence on social media. This will give the citizens a reliable and credible avenue on social media through which to report violence.
4. Leading mobile phone operators should partner with the police to help disseminate early warning messages on violence. The study reveled that there is a high trust level of messages on early warning diffused through the mobile operators by the mobile phone users.

5.4 Area of further research

The study suggests that a similar study should be done in non-urban areas that were affected with the violence and are in the process of reconciliation and peace building. This will ensure a greater understanding of the role of social media as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building in areas which have different set up, different technological infrastructures and different social fabric. As the access to internet could not be the same as in urban areas, likewise the popularity of social media tools could not be the same.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Participant's Consent Note

Sir /Madam

I am a student at the University of Nairobi, Department of sociology. I am conducting a research study on the role of social media as a tool of peace building conflict prevention. I would like to ask you a series of questions about your usage of social media. The questionnaire has roughly 60 questions and I expect it to take about 30 minutes to complete. Questions will ask about your usage of the social media in relation to Conflict Prevention as well as Peace building

There is no direct benefit to you or compensation for participating in this survey. I hope to use the information from this study to inform stakeholders in peace building and help them build better policies that will address conflict prevention challenges and explore the opportunities of using social media to foster sustainable peace in communities like yours. I anticipate minimal risks for your participation in this study. All information you provide in this survey is confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information. All data will be kept in a secure location and only those directly involved with the research will have access to them.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You can stop the survey at any time and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. If you have any questions about this survey you may contact Professor. Edward Mburugu, University of Nairobi, through emburugu@uonbi.ac.ke or Phantus Wambiya at wambiyapo@yahoo.co.uk. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study or any concerns or complaints, please contact the University of Nairobi Department of Sociology and Social Work, through the following address:

University of Nairobi
Department of Sociology and Social work
P.O Box 30197, 00100 Nairobi
Tel: 254-20-318262 ext 28167
Email: dept-sociology@uonbi.ac.ke

Do you have any questions about the consent agreement or the survey?

Are you willing to take part in the study?

Signature …………………………………. Date………………………….

Appendix 2: Questions for the Youth Social Media Users

Kindly complete each of the section of the questionnaire as instructed. Do not indicate your name as the information given is confidential

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Kindly tick (√) and answer appropriately

1. What is your gender?

Male   [   ]   Female [   ]

2. Kindly indicate your age bracket

13-20 years [   ] 21- 30 years [   ] 31-40 [   ] 41-50 years [   ]

3. Marital Status

Single [   ]   Married [   ]   Other [   ]

4. From which of Nairobi's Eastland Estate do you come from?

 Dandora Ward 3   [   ]   Kariobangi North Ward [   ]

Dandora Ward 4   [   ]   Mathare Mabatini Ward [   ]

5.0 What is you highest level of education?

None [   ] Primary School [   ] Secondary School [   ]   University /College /Tertiary [   ]

Post graduate [   ]

SECTION B: STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Kindly tick (√) and answer appropriately

1. For what reason to do you **MOSTLY** use Short Messaging Services SMS for?

For social chatting   [   ]

For business   communication   [   ]

Only for communication with family   [   ]

Other uses   [   ] Please specify_____

2. Have you subscribed for any SMS unlimited services?

Yes [   ]   N o [   ]

3. Of the following social media platforms which **ONE** do you use the **MOST**?

Twitter	Facebook	Whatsup	Google Chat	Yahoo Chat	Migg 33	Others Please specify below

4. How many friends do you have on average on the platform selected in 3 above?

	Twitter	Facebook	Whatsup	Google Chat	Yahoo Chat	Migg 33	Others Please specify below [ ]
1 -100							
100- 1000							
More than 1000							

5. How often do you connect to your social media?

	Twitter	Facebook	Whatsup	Google Chat	Yahoo Chat	Migg 33	Others Please specify below [ ]
Hourly							
Daily more than 12 hours							
Daily less than 12 hours per day							
Once per week							
Once per month							
Only during general election period							

6. How do you take the discussions and trending topics on social media?

Seriously and they can prompt me to take an action	
Seriously but they cannot prompt me to take action	
Casually , I use it only for entertainment	
I don't care at all about the discussions	
Others please specify	

7. Have you ever taken part in a peace building initiative on social media?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

a.)If yes what did you do?

I took part in the event after having learnt of it on social media	
I took part in the event after having learnt of it on social media and shared with my friends on social media inviting them to take part in it?	
I took part in the event after having learnt of it on social media and shared with my friends out of my social media cycle	
I ONLY liked the even t webpage on line after learning of it on social media	
(Other please specify) --- --- --- ------	

b.)If no why didn't you take part?

I did not take it seriously	
I took it seriously but didn't find time to take any action	
(Other please specify) -- --	

----

8. Would your social media friends take part in peace building initiative if you invited them on social media?

Yes I know they would	
I don't know	
I really doubt they would	
I am sure they would not	

SECTION C: SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL TENSION

Kindly tick (√) and answer appropriately

1. Do you have a political party affiliation?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

2. Do you use social media to keep updated on the political activities?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

   a.) If yes which social media platform? _____

[   ] Twitter [   ] Facebook, [ ] Whats up, [   ] Google chat, [   ] Yahoo chat, [   ] Migg 33,

[   ] Others Specify ------------------

b.)If No which media do you use for political updates?

Radio	Newspaper	Television	Friends and relatives	Others (Please specify Below)

3. Have you ever been contacted by a political party using SMS or social media?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

    a.   If yes what was the **MAIN** cause of action for which you were being contacted?

To take part peaceful demonstration or peace building event	
Take part in a mass protest or demonstration	
Participate in a political rally	
Participate on political debate	
For other reasons (Please specify below) -- -- --	

-----------------------	

4. a) Do you get updates from a political group on social media that spread hate speech, or statements on ethnic hatred or incitement against a certain ethnic tribe?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

   b.) If yes which action do you take?

I commented back and forwarded the massage to my social media friends online	
I simply ignored the message and did not forward it to my social friends online	
I commented back and forwarded the message to my social media friends online	
I simply ignored the messages but forwarded the message to my social media friends	
Others please specify --- -- --	

5. a Have you ever taken part in a politically sensitive debate on social media?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

   b.   If yes which **ONE** of the following actions did you take?

I commented negatively on a political party	
I commented positively on a political party	
I commented negatively on a political leader	
I commented positively on a political leader	
Others (Please Specify) --- --	

 c.) what was a your motivation to take the action in 5b above ?--
----

----

5.   For statement please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements indicating why people take part in politically sensitive debates during the election period.

(1 is strongly Disagree, 2 is Disagree, 3 is Neutral, 4 is Agree, 5 is strongly Agree)

	1	2	3	4	5
Social media is affordable compared to other forms of media for expressing one's views					
Social media allows for anonymity of identity thus one can express their views frankly without fear or hesitation					
It allows one to fight verbally without getting violent					
It is a good tool for mobilizing crowds for clandestine activities without the fear of being arrested by the government authorities					
It has a greater reach compared to other form of media					

SECTION D: SOCIAL MEDIA AND REGULATION MECHANISMS

Kindly tick (√) and answer appropriately

1. If social media was regulated by the government how would you **MOSTLY** use it?

Only for use it only for purely social reasons , exchanging social pleasantries	
I would use it for political reasons and even take part in political debates with my real identity	
I would use it for political reasons but with anonymous identity	
I would use it for political reason but never comment or participate on sensitive debates or sensitive trending topics	
I would never use it	
Others reasons please specify below --------------------------------------- --- --- --- --- --- ------------------------------------	

SECTION E: SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

1. What is your employment status?

Salaried Employee   [   ] Self employed   [   ] un-employed   [   ], do casual work [   ]

Other [   ] Specify ---

2. How do you **MOSTLY** access air time for SMS?

I buy [   ], Friends or family share with me through airtime sharing services   [   ]

3. I use my family or friends' mobile phone for texting [   ]

Others Please specify [   ] _____

4. How do you **MOSTLY** connect to social media?

Through a smart phone I own [   ], through a friends or a relative's smart phone [   ]

Through a smart device (ipad, tablet) I own [   ], through a friends' or relative's smart device [   ]

I connect in a cybercafé [   ]

I connect through my computer [   ], I connected through a friend's or borrowed computer [   ]

Others Please specify [   ] _____

5. How do you **MOSTLY** access internet for social media?

I buy the internet bundles and use my smart phone to connect	
I buy internet bundles and use my smart device (ipad, tablet) to connect	
I pay for internet services in cybercafé	
I buy internet bundles and access with a modem on my computer	
I rely on friends internet access for connection	
I have access to free internet at my place of work	

SECTION E: SOCIAL MEDIA FOR EARLY WARNING

Kindly tick (√) and answer appropriately

1. a) Have you ever received a warning message alert on violence?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

b.) If yes what was the media through which of the alert in 1a. above came?

I received an SMS	
I got an update on social media	
Other (please specify)	

c.) Give details of your response above ---

----

d.) What was the source of the alert message in 1.b above?

From a friend or relative	
From the mobile operators	
From the police	
Other specify please--- ---	

e.)What was your reaction to the alert?

Took it seriously and took safety precaution	
Took it causally and took no safety precaution	
Other (please specify)--- --	

2. **Of** the following platforms, which **ONE** are you **MOST** conversant with?

Police hotline SMS number	
Uwuiano peace platform	
Ushahidi criss reporting mapping platform	
SMS to friends and relatives	
SMS 108 platform operated by the government	
Social Media:Facebook, Twitter Whats up	
Other (please specify))--- --- --	

3. Have you ever reported violence?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

    a.) If yes which platform did you use?

Police hotline SMS number	
Uwuiano peace platform	
Ushahidi Criss Reporting Mapping platform	
SMS to friends and relatives	
SMS 108 platform operated by the government	
Social media Facebook, Twitter Whats up	
Others please specify-- --- ---	

b.) If No why?

I didn't know of any platform except alert friends or relatives through SMS	
I could not afford to connect to any of the platforms	
I know of the platform but didn't remember the SMS number of the websites	
I didn't trust any action would be taken	
I prefer other means of reporting (Please specify which ones) -- --	

4. Have you ever reported any peace building activity?

Yes   [   ]   No [   ]

a.)If yes which platform did you use?

Police hotline SMS number	
Uwuiano Peace Platform	
Ushahidi Crisis reporting mapping platform	
SMS to friends and relatives	
SMS 108 platform operated by the government	
Social media Facebook, Twitter Whats up	
Others please specify-- ------------------	

b.)If No why?

I didn't know of any platform except alert friends or relatives through SMS	
I could not afford to connect to any of the platforms	
I know of the platform but didn't remember the SMS number of the websites	
I didn't trust any action would be taken	
I prefer other means of reporting (Please specify which ones) ---	

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix 3.a Interview Schedule for the Social Media Expert

Given name_____Surname_____

Organisation:_____ Position _____

1. How do you describe the social media scenario presently in Kenya?
2. How would you compare it to 5 years ago?
3. What would you describe as the contributing factors to the development of social media in Kenya?
4. What would be role of social media in triggering political unrest and tension?
5. How would relate the effects of social media the 2007-2008 post election violence?
6. How would you describe the social media scene during the 2013 general elections?
7. Do you consider social media as a tool for conflict building and conflict prevention?
8. What do you consider to be the strengths of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention?
9. What do you consider to be weaknesses of social media with interest to peace building and conflict prevention?
10. What social media tools are available to Kenyans and how do they work?
11. What is the extent of their accessibility to Kenyans?
12. What bracket of the Kenyan population utilize the social media most and why?
13. How do you relate the affordability of social media versus the cost of living in Kenya presently?
14. What impact has the regulatory mechanism have on social media?
15. How can social media tools be developed as an early warning system in conflict prevention?
16. What do you view as the future of social media in Kenya and how will that impact to peace building and conflict prevention?

Appendix 3.b Interview Schedule for Peace and Conflict Management Expert

Given name: _____Surname_____

Organisation:_____ Position _____

1. Give a brief discussion of conflict mechanisms that are used to curb political unrest and tension?
2. What are some of the peace building initiatives that the center is involved in at National level as a result of politically caused crisis?
3. How would social media as a tool be used to enhance theses mechanism and peace building initiatives?
4. At what stage of the conflict cycle are these tools effective in curbing the conflict from escalating to violence?
5. What are the strengths of social media as tool for conflict prevention and peace building?
6. What are the weaknesses of social media as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building?
7. How do relate the accessibility of social media versus the cost and how would it affect its efficiency as a tool?
8. What would be motivation of the population to use social media as opposed to other traditional tools of peace building and conflict prevention?
9. Is it necessary for the state to regulate the social media? And why?
10. How does a regulation mechanism affect social media as a tool of peace building and conflict prevention?
11. What are the social-political signals that are likely to result into violence?
12. How can social media be used to as an early system for conflict prevention?
13. What is the potential role of social media in generating socio-political tension that are likely to result in violence?
14. What is the future of social media as a tool for conflict prevention peace building in Kenya?

Appendix 4: Focus Group Discussions

Topic: The Role of social media as a tool for Peace Building and Conflict Prevention

Discussion Points

- The strengths and weaknesses of social media as a tool for peace building and conflict prevention
- The contribution of regulatory mechanism of the new media in promoting peace and conflict prevention
- Potential role of social media in generating social and political unrest
- Use of social media and ICT for early warning and political signals in conflict prevention

Discussion Questions

1. Do you perceive social media as an effective tool for peace building and conflict prevention?
2. What would be challenges of using social media as a tool for conflict prevention?
3. How can social media be used to generate political and social unrest?
4. If social media was regulated, in what ways could that contribute to conflict prevention and peace building?
5. What are the socio-economic factors that affect the usage of social media?
6. How these factors are hinder or enhance social media as a tool for conflict prevention and peace building?
7. How can social media be used as an early warning mechanism in conflict prevention?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION