THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TOOL: THE CASE OF 2013 KENYA GENERAL ELECTIONS

BY

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DECLARATION

In total regard to the regulations of academic excellence, I hereby declare that this is my original work and it has not been presented for a degree or any other examination in another institution of learning.

Sign……………………………   **Date** …………………………

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This research proposal has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I wish to extend my very sincere, deep and heartfelt gratitude to the following persons for their constructive and significant assistance, which collectively contributed to the successful accomplishment of this Research Project:

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ACRONYMS

SNS   Social Networking sites

ICT   Information Communication Technology

CORD   Coalition for Reform & Democracy

TNA   The National Alliance

URP   United Republican Party

FGD   Focus Group Discussion

KOT   Kenyans on Twitter

CMC   Computer Mediated Communications

PR   Public Relations

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the role of social media in the Kenya 2013 general elections. The overall objective was to find out the function of social media as a political campaign tool. The study had three specific objectives which were; to find out the specific ways that social media was used by citizens in the 2013 general elections. The study also sought to evaluate the ways that social media was used by politicians and media in the 2013 general elections.

This study was guided by a rich literature review which was supported by a conceptual framework and three theories of communication which were; agenda setting theory, the public sphere theory and social identity theory.

Research was conducted through collection of qualitative and quantitative data; methods used were FGD and case study survey through distribution of questionnaires. The collected data were sorted, analyzed and interpreted in relation to the research objectives. The findings were presented using tables, graphs, pie charts, quotes and narratives.

The study found that social media enhanced political participation amongst in the 2013 general elections however it also contributed to hate speech, propaganda and ethnicity leading to polarization of citizens on lines of political affiliation. Therefore the study recommends establishment of a social media regulation framework by the government.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

Over the years media has been used by various governments in Africa to oppress citizens and retain power. Until recently most media, have been predominantly owned by the state and therefore news has often been skewed in favor of the leaders. Africa has steadily moved from dictatorship to democratic rule and in turn this has led to a significant change from a media scene controlled by political actors to a more liberalized media scene.

'What does not exist in the media does not exist in the public mind' (Manuel, 2009).Africa and Kenya have been quite dependent on media for political information, what is said in the Mainstream media informs discussions among citizens in their different social groups as media does not provide a forum for citizens to discuss various issues. New Media has completely reversed the traditional understandings of power and authority by giving the masses direct power disturbing government and media's role in the social system.

The emergence of social media in Kenya has increased political participation especially among the youth who previously did not participate in politics (Oser J, 2013).

The below diagram shows that access to ICT improved over the recent years especially in the Urban areas with mobile phones uptake rising to 83% due to supply of affordable handsets. This in turn enhanced uptake of Internet as Kenyans used their mobile phones

to access various social networks however the number of citizens with access to radio is still the highest as compared to any other mass media channel due to its expansive reach with existence of Vernacular radio stations which target those in the grass root level.

Access to ICTs

Channel	Rural	National Average	Urban
Mobile Phone	65%	71%	83%
Landline Phone	1%	2%	3%
Internet	5%	11%	23%
Computer	1%	5%	12%
TV	29%	41%	62%
Radio	84%	87%	90%
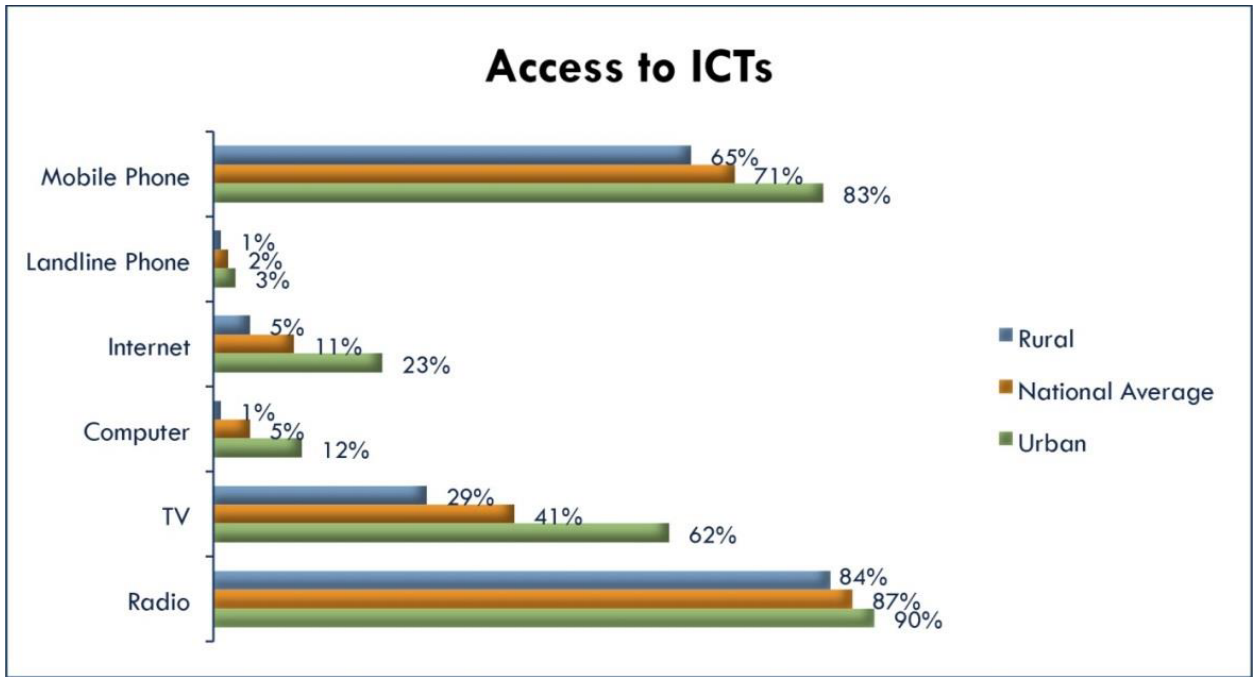
Figure 1 : (Kretchun, 2013)

1.2 Social Media

The internet has evolved from a simple network that supported one to one communication to fit our social nature enabling us to interact through posting comments on various issues photos and videos. They include (Facebook, twitter, YouTube, flickr etc).

The most unexpected change was the decline on TV audience once the Internet was introduced. Mass media channels are widely affected by the internet as the web has

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managed to combine all the capabilities of TV, Radio and Print and even surpassed this by providing a forum for mass action. According to research conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project (Lee R, 2012) ,the number of Americans citing the Internet as their first source of presidential election campaign news has increased by 23 percent since 2004, while at the same time the number relying on television has declined by 4 percent .

Social Media has been successfully used in various campaigns which include; Demonstrations on city streets in the Philippines in 2001, the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States in 2008, revocation of the results of the fraudulent elections in Moldavia in 2009, the M-15 movement with their camps and demonstrations in Spain in 2011, the so-called "Arab Spring" in the Middle East in early 2011, and the "Occupy Wall Street" movement that started in New York, also in 2011, In the Finnish parliamentary election of 2011, there were clear indications that the True Finns were the first party in Finland to succeed in using social media to mobilize their supporters.

Today's social media has helped make real the idea of a "global village", first put forward by communications theorist Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s, and suggests the claims of a "flat world" by twenty-first century essayist Thomas L. Friedman are true.

1.2.1 Impact of Social Media

Social media has been seen to go against the norm of communication in various areas giving the public sphere a choice of giving their social network pages anonymous alias or their known identity giving an individual freedom. It has also led to increase in diversity of content for one to choose from this is a huge stepping stone compared to the days when Kenyans used to get information from KBC only.

Social media enables Kenyans to receive real time news (as it happens) unlike in the other mass media channels where content has to be edited and go through other approvals before airing. It has also encouraged horizontal communication, when two step flow communication is used by a politician in a campaign it may work against him as voters expect to interact with politicians.

Over the years mass media channels have had great impact on Political campaigns however social media steals the light of the day as it brings together masses on one platform, The 2013 Kenya presidential elections took a new twist as political campaigns went digital for the first time in Kenya with the various political parties and their presidential candidates using social media to push their political agenda. This study will explore the role of Social Media as a campaign tool. A case study of presidential candidates and their coalitions in the 2013 General elections.

1.2.2 The Parties

2013 General Elections saw the formation of various coalitions by various presidential candidates they include; The Coalition for Reform and Democracy (CORD) which was formed on 4th December 2012 its main leaders were Raila Odinga of ODM (CORD presidential candidate), Kalonzo Musyoka of ODM Kenya (Wiper) (CORD running mate) and Hon Moses Wetangula (Ford Kenya) . The Jubilee Alliance was formed on January 12, 2013 its main leaders were Uhuru Kenyatta of TNA (Jubilee presidential candidate), William Ruto of URP (Jubilee running mate), Charity Ngilu (NARC), and Najib Balala (RC) .Other presidential candidates included Peter Kenneth (PK), Musalia Mudavadi(Amani) and Martha Karua (Narc Kenya) .

SHARE OF VOICE: PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS

Automated Real Time Conversations (A few days before the March 4th Elections)

Social media conversations had a huge impact on the general elections results. The below figure shows each presidential aspirants and the number of mentions they received on Twitter and Facebook a few days to the elections and during the elections as Kenyans updated their facebook and twitter pages campaigning for their preferred candidates.
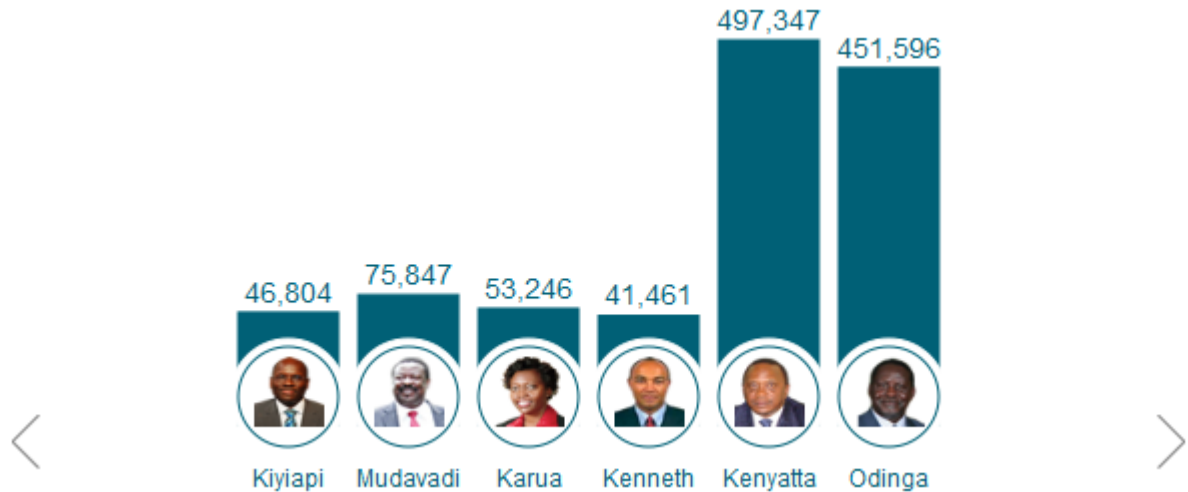
Figure 2: (Daily Nation, 2013)

SHARE OF VOICE: PARTIES

Automated Real Time Social Conversations (A few days to the March 4th Elections)

In relation to the previous data, we can see on the below figure the two leading political parties were mentioned most during the elections period just as it was for the two leading candidates (Daily Nation 2013).This mentions were mostly by bloggers, citizens and the media as they informed each other.
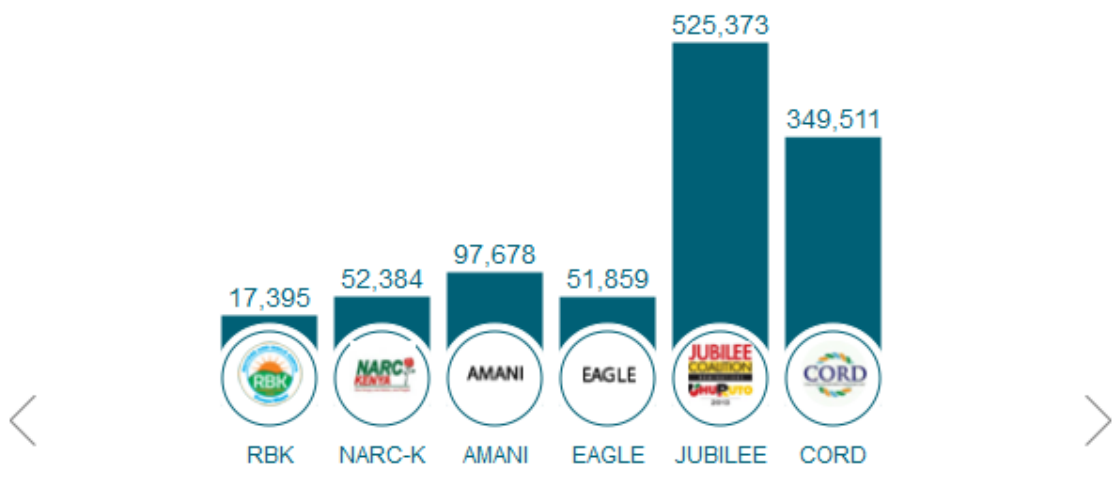
Figure 3:(Daily Nation, 2013)

Impressions per day on twitter

A hash tag is used on twitter to create a link for shared content. Through Hashtag.org we were able to see the trends of sharing of content on #Kenya is pronounced as hash tag Kenya and #choice 2013 with the climax during the March 4th elections. However there is minimal sharing on jubilee and cord hash tags as compared to the other hash tags.
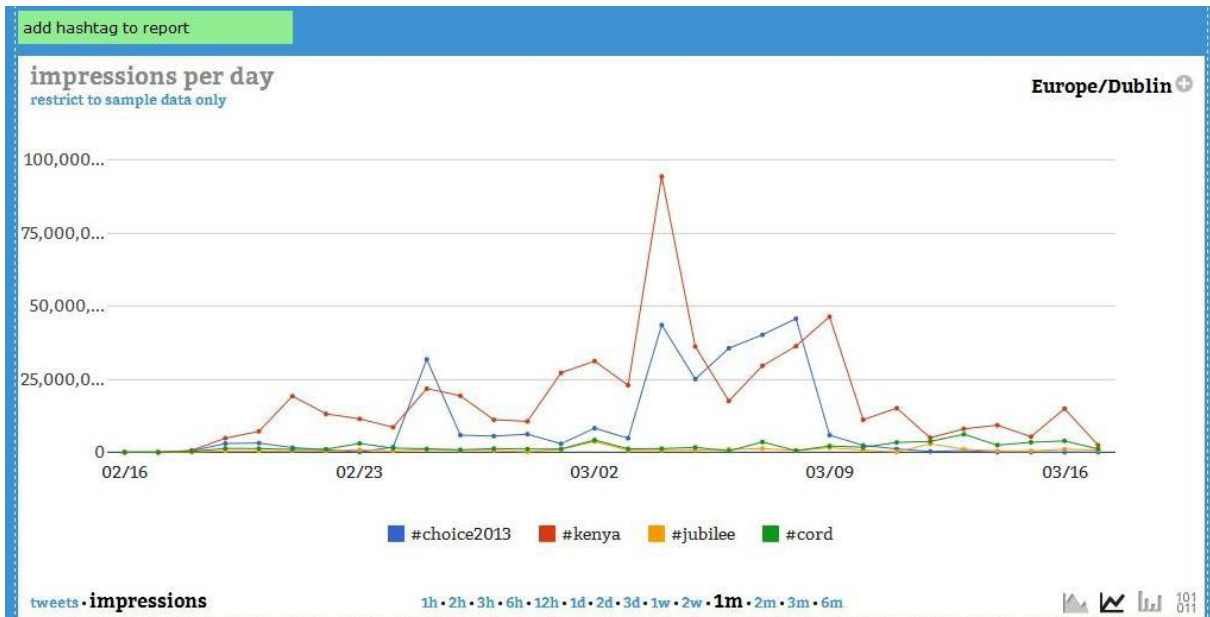
Figure 4: (Hashtags.org)

Tweets per day on twitter

The figure below shows how the number of tweets increased during the onset of the elections and were at a peak during the Election Day which was the 4th of March and slowly declined after elections (Hashtags.org 2013). This shows that Kenyans relied most on social media for real time information during the March 4th General Elections and shared tweets from bloggers like @Robert alai and the various media houses handles.
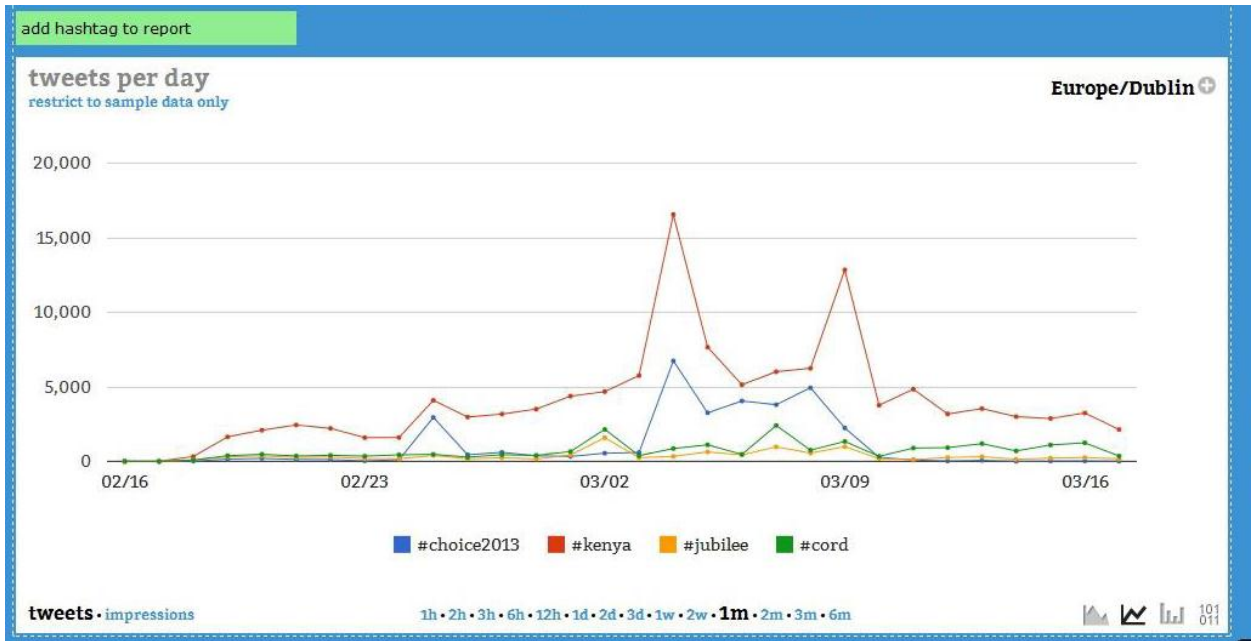
Figure 5 (Hashtags.org)

Use of twitter hash tags during Kenya 2013 General Elections demonstrated how political empowerment can be achieved on social media. Citizen Journalism and democracy could be seen through the sec by sec contributions by Kenyans from all backgrounds. The most prominent hash tags were for instance #kenyadecides, #choice2013, #keelections2013, #cord and #jubilee *(Hashtags.org)*These has tags updated those who were not necessarily near a TV or Radio by the second by using their mobile phones to keep updated, one could easily catch up with the polls thanks to this hash tags.

1.2.3 Consequences for the mass media

Social media brought about the emergence of citizen journalists putting the work of professional journalists under threat as exclusive stories were no longer reserved for journalists as citizens post pictures and videos on social media in real time as the event

occurs. Exclusive pictures and video which were hard to get on time by professional journalists due to distance, were readily availed by citizen journalist on the social media.

Political news producers have had to come up with creative news reporting angles or enhancements in order to fight for the audiences who are opting to go the new media way. During the 2013 General elections NTV news was seen to try to engage the audience further by asking them to send a tweet on their twitter handle on various topics and discussing these tweets during the news.

Social media has introduced the watchdog role through bloggers, ensuring that news reported by journalists is not partisan, does not promote propaganda or filter information keeping various media houses on their toes.

1.2.4 Consequences for governments/politicians

Politicians and various government bodies have been forced to create social media pages as this is where their audience has moved to. The politicians are no longer the authority in this space as roles are reversed giving the public the authoritarian role as they are forced to adapt to an increasingly responsive mode rather than the proactive, agenda- setting role they would prefer to adopt. Bloggers (opinion leaders) on the social media have taken the watchdog role ensuring Politicians and government bodies are put to shame for any misconduct or corruption.

1.2.5 Consequences of Social media for voters

The use of social media platform during the 2013 General elections mobilized the largest number of masses ever seen participating and interacting on a single mass media channel at no cost creating a different balance in society changing the voters role in society hence their expectations of a leader. In social media voter is king.

Although some weblogs aimed to promote peace and justice, others were used as channels for biased information, tribal prejudices, and hate speech. Many bloggers took sides, and the discussion could be ethnically tense. The online hate speech was mainly between supporters of Uhuru Kenyatta, who are largely from the Kikuyu tribe, and those backing Raila Odinga, from the Luo tribe (Mike Pflanz, 2013).

1.3 Statement of the problem

The 2013 general elections saw a different ball game all together, as for the first time in Kenyan history social media was used as a political campaign tool mobilizing scores of voters and supporters however to a large extent, these efforts culminated to polarization of the nation.

In this election, social media provided a platform where many Kenyans particularly the young took part in politics for the first time through interacting, sharing information and campaigning for their candidate expressing their various opinions free from any censorship; this in turn reversed the role of the media in society as the media no longer

determined what citizens think about as the citizens now determined what the media would talk about.

Social media empowered Kenyans by encouraging citizen journalism and blogging providing real time information on the elections minute by minute through sharing of images, videos and updates forcing the different media to join the new media space and share live updates on the elections as well as receive tips informing their coverage.

Based against this background, does social media enhance the democratic space for expression during political campaigns constructively or destructively? In 2007/2008 elections, Kenya experienced post election violence however in 2013 elections social media was used as a platform for hate speech, propaganda, defamation and ethnicity leading to polarization. Fragmentation along political affiliation lines was witnessed leading others to "unfriendly" or block friends who don't share their political views.

In this regard social media use in this elections did very little to foster national integration, fight ethnicity, and encourage objectivity, whether this fundamental gap has enhanced democracy in the public sphere or not is a question whose answer will be derived from the findings of this study.

During the March 4th General elections Dr Bitange Ndemo the former Permanent Secretary (PS) in the Ministry of Information and Communications went on crusade to

have regulations on monitoring social media platforms set up and enforced to control hate speech as social conditions of the public had changed from peace and tranquility to strife.

Hate speech was spread by voters, politicians and bloggers who acted as "opinion leaders." on the social media space shaping the public agenda. The two-step flow model of communication by (Elihu, 1957) is evident in this case as information is seen to flow from the source to the consumer.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by one general objective and three Specific objectives:

The general objective was to investigate the role of social media as a campaign tool in the Kenya 2013 General Elections.

The specific objective will be

a) To analyze how social media was used by citizens in the 2013 General Elections.

b) To find out the specific ways that social media was used by politicians in the 2013 General Elections.

c) To determine ways in which the media used social media during the 2013 General Elections.

1.5 Research Questions

The study will be guided by 3 specific research questions as below

1. How was social media used by citizens during the 2013 General Elections?

2. How did the politicians use social media in the 2013 General Elections?

3. How did the media use social media during the 2013 General Elections?

1.6 Justifications of the study

The study of the role and uses of social media as a political campaign tool was significant because it could inform the government of how to use social media to promote democracy through setting up of social media pages for the various government ministries enabling the government to interact with its people.

This study was also significant as it brought out the various ways that social media was used destructively emphasizing the need for the government to develop a regulation framework governing the use of the social media as this would go a long way in enhancing democracy.

The Kenyan media has concentrated ownership to very few media houses which are affiliated with particular politicians in one way or another leading to production of biased content especially on political issues. In the past gathering Kenyans to debate on particular issues was a great task that required a huge budget but with social media the cost of bringing people together is zero thus the study creates awareness of social media's cost effectiveness.

The numerous opportunities given by new media necessitates increased accessibility and increased citizen journalism giving Kenyans a variety of content to choose from enabling them to make rational decisions as the citizen has now become an authority in this space.

Kenyan Researchers have ignored the potential of democracy being accessed through social media, the potential of mass action by the masses on social media.

This study demonstrates the various ways that the different political parties used the new media. Some focused on the participatory aspects of the new technologies in communicating with voters and monitoring of public opinion, whilst others focused on a top - down information dissemination. During the elections, some parties or political candidates stressed downward dissemination of information via new media whilst others emphasized their interactive and targeting possibilities. The winning political coalition – Jubilee – led by the now sworn-in President Uhuru Kenyatta, was very active in their use of social media. Jubilee's self-nomination as the "digital team" was not necessarily invented to reflect an active social media presence but rather their political manifesto to boost the Kenyan ICT sector, nevertheless the winning campaign team clearly invested heavily in social media. The study thus informs politicians on the do's and don'ts for future political campaigns online.

The study clearly demonstrated the many claims made about the democratizing power of new media. Social media was considered to have contributed to government accountability, human rights activism, the development of civil society and practices of citizenship. In terms of accountability and transparency, it is increasingly difficult for governments to hide or manipulate information or to act inconsistently with citizen concerns. The use of mobile phones and the Internet, for example, allow for news of any inappropriate government actions to quickly reach the public and to be challenged

(Haider, 2011).It also allows for people to follow decision-making processes and discuss issues of common concern.

1.7 Scope & limitations of study

Although television, radio and newspapers were used by politicians in the 2013 general elections this study focused on the uses and the role of social media. This research project looked at the use of Facebook and Twitter. The study used FGDs and Questionnaires to depict the role of social media during the March 2013 general elections and their impact on Kenya's development. The study will be limited to samples purely from Nairobi County which consists of audience of various demographics.

1.7.1 The study targeted three kinds of audiences;

I.   Primary Audiences-audiences that were empirically identified

II. Secondary Audiences-Audiences that developed with time

III. Potential Audiences- Audiences that lacked exposure to a given media outlet but are likely to become loyal consumers of it once they are exposed. For example individuals in rural areas who lack access to Internet due to financial constraints and illiteracy.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

In this study, based on a thorough review of literature, the models and concepts employed were presented in **Figure 6** below. It was based on the four main constructs of this study below.

Influence

The role of social media use in politics depends on the media's Influence which is related to the degree of attention and mobilization that a certain profile can generate from other users (in this case, voters);

Adequacy

The degree of proximity that given content has in relation to the desired characteristics and values (in this case, swinging the votes to one's favor).

Reach

Degree of effective dissemination of certain content or to degree of potential spread that a single profile has in the network (in this case, the political agenda or manifesto).

Engagement

Looks at the level of participation and involvement of a specific profile or group of users to a theme (in this case, interaction between politicians and their voters).
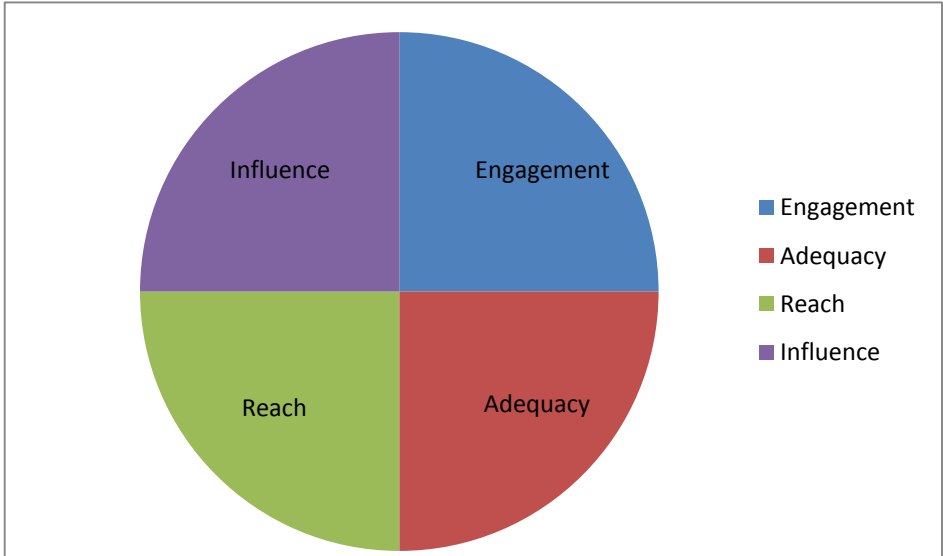
Figure 6 : Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The 2008 United States presidential campaign was historic not only because it saw the first African American candidate, but because it saw the first new media presidential campaign. The Internet was undoubtedly used very powerfully in running an election in the 21st century as it connected people, spread information, and reinforced beliefs. Obama's campaign strategy has been succinctly dubbed as "19th century politics using 21st century tools" (von Drehle, 2008). ''The Internet served our campaign in unprecedented ways'' said President Barack Obama (Balz D, 2009).

Africa has seen stead change over the years from dictatorship to democratic rule which in turn has led to a significant change from a media scene controlled by political actors to a more liberalized media scene. Africa and Kenya specifically, being dependent on media politics, lives up to Castells notion of 'what does not exist in the media does not exist in the public mind' (Manuel, 2009).

Several impactful campaigns have been conducted on social media in Africa and Kenya they include; the Kenyans for Kenya campaign driven by Safaricom (#kenyans4kenya) a campaign that rallied Kenyans to raise funds to help fellow Kenyans incase of famine or #KOTAMPBonus protest campaign led by blogger @RobertAlai platform like this can be used for the good of society or conversely Very little if any research has been conducted on the effects of social media on political campaigns.

2.1 Effects of social media in social change

(Rogers 1983:6) defines social change as "the process by which alterations in the structure and function of a social system occur" producing both positive and negative effects. While social capital refers to all social networks put together and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other. Social capital is indeed a key component in building and maintaining democracy. (Putnam, 2000).

Web 2.0 has been referred to as a great force that is reshaping the way we work; authors have called it a ''social e-revolution'' (Dutta 2009).

Social media has proved to not necessarily pull Kenyans from the offline world but complement their relations as social media keeps people connected despite the distance (Putnam, 2000).

The use of social media in elections in United States have shown the power of social media mobilization bringing together strangers for a common cause decreasing the cost of building large network. (R, 1999)Social media has transformed social movements and grown online political behavior. A study by Pew research centre on the 2008 United States election found that social media use as a political campaign tool increased political participation among young people.

Scholars continue to debate on whether social media has changed the traditional way in which advocacy and activism are practiced, given that they make many aspects of lobbying, campaigning and organizing more effective and efficient (Bennett, 2003).

The relations of social change to media change have been seen to be complex as they have resulted in the following changes;

Modernization

This was brought about by increased social differentiation, specialization, diverse interests and identities; proliferating diverse lifestyles and moral stances; and fueling identity politics (Luhmann, 1975; Swanson & Mancini, 1996). This complicates tasks of political aggregation and communication.

Individualization

Media change led to embracement of the elevation of personal aspirations, consumerism, and reduced conformity to the traditions and demands of established institutions and social-class groupings. In approaches to politics, citizens have become more like consumers (instrumental, oriented to immediate gratifications). Politicians must work harder to retain their interest and support.

Secularization

Political parties' authority has faced increased competition from media as public attention can only be gained through hard-lobbying interest and cause groups. Relations of elites to masses are transformed by the evaporation of deference and increased skepticism about The credentials, claims, and credibility of authority holders in many walks of life.

Economization

Economic factors have increased influence on the political agenda.

"Mediatization"

The media has in the recent past been seen to move toward the center of the social process leading to a "media-constructed public sphere". However social media has moved this notch higher leading to reversal of roles as the public are now at the centre of social process.

2.2 social media and politicians

In little more than a decade, the Web has become a campaign medium that candidates and parties must engage with if they are serious about gaining office. Across advanced democracies, leading political figures and organizations have embarked on intensive efforts to court supporters, secure funding, and attract votes through the Web, apparently to great effect (Chadwick, 2008).

The internet is not another medium it is the "master medium" as it integrates all the qualities of the other mass media channels enabling politicians to disseminate information in any form. Politicians also have a chance of influencing a huge number of masses given that the number of internet audience is on the increase (G.W, 1998).

Social media is about having conversations and making connections with supporters as the opportunities arise. (Pearson, 2010)Twitter use has shown that the speed of social

media can damage a political campaign instantly as it I now only takes 140 characters to gain supporters or lose them. Any off color remark can instantly be read and shared by millions of people (Jackie, 2011).

With the rise of social media came the bloggers who scrutinize politicians and their campaigns (Peters). While it is important to note that bloggers now play a role in the social media landscape, if used correctly, social media can provide new strategies to combat these problems (Natch, 2011).

Social Media provides politicians with a chance to disseminate information to voters without "passing through" the mass media filter which involves various level of approval of news content. Press reports insert the journalist between the candidate and the voter with three effects. First, they filter information from interviews or political events. What gets through the filter may not be what the candidate intended. Second, reporters interpret: the context, explanations, even a description of the candidate's appearance can affect audience perceptions of the candidates and their messages. (G.W, 1998).

Thus social media has increased political participation. Reports by twitter and Pew Internet and American life Project panelists suggest that months before the March 4 elections, much of social media was dominated by younger demographics. Now the growing trend in numbers reflects the population as a whole. More than half this population engaged in some sort of election-related social media behavior.

The primary disadvantages of Internet campaigning for candidates could include: first, despite the growth in Internet access described earlier, there has been a lot of resistance. However, a recent Pew Research Center poll found that those who use the Internet increasingly resemble the general population. (Lee R, 2012) Although social media has the potential to reach many voters, it cannot reach them all.

Social media is not a change in technology; it is a change in how people communicate. This change has to be reflected in how politicians behave, not just online but everywhere. (www.socialmediamonthly.com).It not only serves as a timely communications channel between candidates and constituents but also as a comprehensive news source for the mass media and people interested in monitoring the progress of polling throughout the day and the tallying of votes (www.nationmultimedia.com).

Another problem noted in these sources is the social media ineptitude of candidates Campaigning in local politics. Pearson and O'Connell discuss problems and solutions for local campaigns using social media. Though many campaigns do not do this, they advise that engaging with constituents and having a concrete message is two of the most important things to remember when using social media (Pearson, 2010).

2.3 social media and citizens in political campaigns

According to the *Mass Communication and Society* study, the ability to express political Views and opinions online play an important role for social media in campaigns. Social media allow users to not only seek information but also interact with others through

online expression such as posting political commentaries on blogs and social network sites and sharing multimedia commentary (Kushin, 2010).

According to the Pew Internet and American Life project, 1 in 5 of the U.S. population had engaged in some type of campaign-related activity online once a week during the 2008 primary season, and just less than one quarter had received an e-mail from a candidate for support. Ten percent of the population as a whole reported posting or forwarding some type of online political content.

In past campaigns, Facebook users have expressed themselves politically in many ways, such as making online donations, encouraging friends to vote, or posting graphics or status updates expressing political attitudes and opinions. Twitter and blogs have been used by candidates and voters to comment on social and political issues, share information and encourage participation. (Kushin, 2010).

Twitter has become a primary source of news in the country with Kenya ranking as the second most active in Africa after South Africa with approximately 2.5 million tweets.Most of the tweets are generated by a Kenyan twitter community calling itself "Kenyans on Twitter" using the hashtag #KOT who proved the network can be a powerful tool for activism (Okutoyi, 2013)

2.4 Social media and media in political campaigns

Not only are the avenues of political communication multiplying in a process that is becoming more diverse, fragmented, and complex, but also, at a deeper level, power relations among key message providers and receivers are being rearranged; the culture of political journalism is being transformed; and conventional meanings of "democracy" and "citizenship" are being questioned and rethought (Brants, 1998; Buckingham, 1997).

As (Hacker, 1996) stresses, 'the more democratic a communications system, the more it will accommodate interactivity over mere connectivity'. All this could be a source of expectations among users about how they should be served on web sites, including political ones given material they can get their teeth into and think about, and raise questions or points about, should they feel so inclined.

In short, the Internet allows direct communication between citizens and politicians, enabling both to bypass the media. Here, then, may lie the Internet's greatest potential for change. It could introduce into the political communication environment a different set of qualities from those that predominate today, perhaps even constraining the mainstream media to take account of what people are receiving over the Internet in their own coverage of politics. Politicians could be expected to offer more solid back-up to their policy ideas. Political journalists could be expected to concentrate less on process and more on substance. After widespread new media diffusion, the relations of politicians, audiences and the 'old media' may not be quite the same as before.

2.5 How Social Media was put in use

During the 2013 presidential elections in Kenya, new media played different roles for different parties, voters and media.

Some parties focused on the participatory aspects of the new media in communicating with voters and monitoring of public opinion, whilst others focused on the possibility of a top - down information dissemination.

New media was identified as a means of people to communicate their thoughts as well as communicate with the political candidates. The internet, for the first was used to perform a range of key functions such as opinion formation, interest mediation and party organization.

During the elections, some parties or political candidates stressed downward dissemination of information via new media whilst others emphasized their interactive and targeting possibilities. The winning political coalition – Jubilee – led by the now sworn-in President Uhuru Kenyatta, was very active in their use of social media. Jubilee's self-nomination as the "digital team" was not necessarily invented to reflect an active social media presence but rather their political manifesto to boost the Kenyan ICT sector, nevertheless the winning campaign team clearly invested heavily in social media.

Kenyatta, in particular, was active on twitter not a big surprise as he was mentioned already in October last year as one of Africa's top ten tweeting politicians by British

newspaper The Guardian. And already his first day in the Presidential office he encouraged Kenyans to "stay connected" through newly established State House Kenya Twitter and Facebook accounts (Frida, 2013)

For the first time social media offered an opportunity by allowing Kenyans to question candidates using social media and crowd mobilization on the other hand social media was leveraged by individual citizens wanting to encourage other citizens to take action resulting into the flourishing of hate speech (Abshir, 2013)

The social media encouraged Participatory Politics as interactive, peer-based acts through which individuals and groups seek to exert both voice and influence on issues of public concern (*Kahne*).Examples of participatory political acts include starting a new political group online, writing and disseminating a post about a political issue, forwarding a funny political video to one's social network, or participating or sharing photos.

Participatory politics allow individuals to operate with greater independence in the political realm, circumventing traditional gatekeepers of information and influence, such as newspaper editors, political parties, and interest groups.

2.6 Research Gap

According to Von Drehle the best practices highlighted in social media are Obama's campaign. Social media should be used as integrated marketing communications tool during political campaigns. However this was not the case in 2013 general election in

Kenya. Obama's campaign in 2008 was issue oriented while the 2013 Kenya elections were tribal oriented.

The above literature shows foregoing arguments have offered a discussion of the role of social media in Political campaigns. Social media has changed how people communicate and shown great potential in democracy as it easily brings the masses together on one platform creating a public sphere increasing participation and reversing roles of society as the public become the authority in this space. (Harbemas, 1991)

According to (Arendt, 1968) social media has led to increasing polarization within society while at the same time reinforcing the importance of exposure to a wide range of perspectives as essential support for a free and democratic society viewed such exposure as essential if one was to pursue truth and have confidence in one's opinions.

The above discussions by different scholars do not show need of regulation and monitoring of the social media to some extent which is inevitable for democracy in a society like Kenya which has experienced hate speech online

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This research project is guided by several theories which include ;The Agenda Setting theory, public sphere theory and Social Identity theory .The researcher has chosen the Agenda Setting theory by Mc Combs and Shaw (mccombs, 2004)to emphasize that with the use of social media in political campaigns the roles of society has been reversed as previously what the media reported was seen as the only important issue as the media influenced what people think about however with the digital space Kenyans have access to a platform that enables them to share their views on various issues making them the agenda setters of society as the media have had to monitor social media platform to determine what is important. However the Agenda Setting theory has very little influence on interpersonal communication.

The structural transformation of the public sphere theory *by* Habermas addresses the power of interpersonal communication as it explains an important influence of the social media that allows citizens to come together on one platform and share their opinions on various issues at interpersonal level freely. However as social media provides a platform where opinions on various issues can be expressed freely Herbamas does not show that users of social media public sphere can have divided opinions on various issues and how this affects the conditions of the sphere. The social identity theory is used in this study to fill the gap of possibilities of polarization that is left by the Structural Transformation theory of the public sphere.

According to Turner and Tajfel (1979) the Social Identity theory shows that individuals have opinions on various issues and this opinions form the basis of formation of groups where individuals with similar beliefs come together to discriminate in favor of the in-group to which they belong against another group. An individual is seen to belong to various social groups which influence their actions.

2.7.1 Agenda Setting Theory

McCombs and Shaw (mccombs, 2004), the proponent of this theory predicted that when the media emphasizes an event, they influence the audience to see that event as important. The theory came up after studying 1968 elections which showed correlation between what the media portrayed as important issues and how the issues were ranked by voters.

Hypothesis on the effects of mass media on public shows that mass media have great effects on public opinion. The theory was concerned with the emphasis of some events more than others and (pack journalism) where all media highlight similar issues.

Is mass mediated information truthful or not? Biased or not? Objective or subjective? Is it censored or filtered to favor government or the owners? In the 2013 elections various media houses were seen to report political news favoring a particular presidential candidate. The elections introduced the use of social media as a political campaign tool for the first time enabling Kenyans to express their opinions on various issues reversing the roles in society as what people think was no longer determined by the mass media but

by the public (citizen journalists and bloggers) as citizens shared emerging issues in real time, journalists had to adapt and monitor the social media as their source of the latest information.

2.7.2 The Public Sphere Theory

The Public Sphere theory, by (Harbemas, 1991) claims that during the 18th century a sphere emerged between the state/economy and the private sphere. This sphere was a space where individuals were free from the state/economy and discussed issues of shared importance. People would meet in coffee houses, town halls and various places to discuss politics and trade news.

This concept came in Habermas' mind about a hope for a condition and a space where we can communicate without any domination, uncoercive communication within the society. This discussion can only happened in the social space if only it's free from censored and domination. This space then called as the public sphere.

One of the unique features of social media is that it provides interconnectivity a unique feature when compared to other mass media. The internet revives the McLuhan promise of the global village like no other medium.

The social media is seen to be a' deliberative space'' that If used well can be highly democratic as individuals can engage their ideas freely. The social media has thus proved that it could foster deliberative democratic processes (Harbemas, 1991).

Thus if the social media continues to mobilize masses enabling them to interact and share their views on various issues without hate speech then democracy can be achieved. For communication within the new media, the communicator and the communicant don't have any difference anymore. In the new media anyone can be a communicator. If every individual consumer could also produce and distribute information, ideas, and later images, then the question of 'who owned what' mattered little or not at all.

2.7.3 Social Identity theory

Social identity theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979. The theory was originally developed to understand the psychological basis of intergroup discrimination. (Worchel, 1998) attempted to identify the minimal conditions that would lead members of one group to discriminate in favor of the in-group to which they belonged and against another out-group.

According to this theory an individual has multiple social identities. Social identity being the individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership of social groups. After being categorized as a group member individuals seek to achieve position self esteem by positively differentiating their in-group from a comparison out group in this case competing political party.

This theory relates to the study as it has a considerable impact on social psychology and includes prejudices, stereotyping and language use as seen in the use of social media in the 2013 elections leading to polarization of citizens based on their political affiliation.

2.8 Conclusion

Just as social media has opened a dialogue between businesses and consumers, its value is apparent to those in political office, whose survival hinges on the needs and perceptions of their constituents (Silverman, 2010). As it stands, the social web is ripe with opportunities for candidates and office holders alike to connect with voters, foster transparency, and even spar with opponents in the same ways they have been in the traditional media for hundreds of years. There is in deed no doubting the political power of social media. If the recent elections in Kenya and beyond are any indication, we should expect the future of elected government to be measured in fans and followers, as well as votes.

a) **Transparency and credibility**

Misinterpretation can cloud a political message as it passes from candidate, to spokesperson, to media, to public but something as simple as a tweet or Facebook update could easily break this chain. Being open about one's social policies by posting them online could go a long way in becoming a dependable campaigning tool and revolutionizing the process of legislation. Posting political agenda in real-time on Facebook et al engages the masses by allowing for comments from dozens of voters who would like to engage in rational discourse or simply show their support and appreciation.

Social media is also an interesting tool in gaining credibility from the voters as they can see and tell from the discussions that a legislator is as principled and dedicated as they claim to be.

b) Targeted and inexpensive campaigning

Just like in business, the social web can be a cost-effective medium for targeted advertising. Whereas expensive television and print ads might blanket a wide swath of voters with uncertain viewership and impact, social media engagement costs significantly less, and can deliver highly targeted and measurable results if executed properly. Having a social media presence by micro-targeting potential voters by age and gender will certainly give the public something personal they can relate to and ultimately win over their support.

c) The people as a voice

Engaging one's network of supporters and letting them spread the message is definitely the way to go. Their reach and trust value far outweigh any other expensive marketing tool. Some tactics to be used could include asking supporters to change their Facebook profile picture and Twitter avatar to the campaign logo days before the election, posting and sharing campaign ads and messages on YouTube, encouraging supporters to share on their Facebook walls, and creating and spreading a hash tag tweet about the campaign.

This will certainly make for an interesting way to connect the politicians to the *vox populi.*

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 The study setting

This study was carried out in Nairobi County, which hosts majority of social media users in the country. The population in Nairobi represents Kenyans of different social classes, diverse ethnicity and political affiliation minimizing any chance of bias that would be associated with a mono-cultural setting.

Nairobi is Kenya's largest county which acts as the central business district hosting parliament and other administrative and commercial capital. Nairobi's estimated population is 3 million persons. Almost every Nairobi resident has access to internet through their mobile phone or PC.

3.2 Data Sources

The study made use of both qualitative and quantitative data. Using both primary and secondary data as seen below;

3.3 Primary Data

In this study the primary data was collected using questionnaires. The questionnaires was self administered to ensure 100% response and to save time, this style of administering gave the respondents and researcher a chance to freely interact, hence making it possible to get more accurate information. The study seeks to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitude, behavior or values. (Mugenda, 2003).The questionnaires comprised questions in line with the

objectives of this study. The question was both closed to enhance uniformity and open ended to ensure maximum data is obtained. The questionnaires were distributed to the most relevant respondents who are the youth and technology-savvy members of the society.

The researcher also employed the use of FGD through discussions directed by the researcher providing the researcher with more detailed response. The questions were formulated in alignment with the objectives of the study. The responses were analyzed and used in the findings. The quantitative data focused on data that is numbers, percentages and averages while qualitative data focused on attitude, opinion, criticism and choice.

Pilot tests of six questionnaires were conducted to measure the efficiency of the questionnaire.

3.4 Testing Validity and Reliability of the data collecting instruments

Pilot study

A pilot study was done to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire as a research tool .A sample of 3 ladies and 3 gentlemen of different age bracket was used to check validity of questionnaire and FGD interview guide. This was done to ensure that any unclear question was removed or rephrased. This also helped to estimate appropriate time to be used in main study.

3.5 Secondary Data

Secondary data was obtained from books, internet and journals as indicated in the literature review. Secondary data was data collected for some purpose other than the problem at hand (Malhotra, 2007) Secondary data for this study was collected from the directories of published online articles in refereed journals. Secondary data was also obtained from bloggers on the new media and various candidate pages to provide theoretical content and ideologies along which this study.

3.6 Sampling Procedures

The study made use of probability sampling techniques; first all respondents were purposively sampled from Nairobi owing to strategic justifications outlined in section 3.1.

The respondents were derived (in equal numbers) from three constituencies in Nairobi; Embakasi, Westland's and Langata which represent the various social classes.

Random sampling was used to divide the constituencies into divisions from which locations were randomly selected. Purposive techniques were used to get the key respondents in every location so that all age groups; socio-economic and political groups were represented. Purposive techniques were used to ensure that all the age groups were represented from below 25 to above 45 years.

3.7 Data Collection

A total of 5 locations were selected (5 from every constituency) and from each data was collected from 5-8 respondents .The total sample used for analysis was 120 respondents

24 from every constituency of Nairobi. The sample size may have been limited but representative to the population to a certain degree being that the study was conducted against a background of financial constraints and scarcity of time.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. For qualitative data the computer statistical package for social sciences SPSS and Microsoft Office ™ Excel Spreadsheets. The SPSS was used for both inferential and description statistics.

3.8.1 Descriptive Statistics

These statistical tools enable one to give an account on numerical characteristics of the population as presented by the sample. Enables compilation and presentation of data in various forms which include; tables, charts and diagrams .It facilitates summary of raw data into easily readable forms enabling display of information from which conclusions and recommendations can be made. For the analysis of this project the below descriptive statistics are used;

   a) Frequency Tabulation

   This descriptive statistic enables one to easily show the number of times a particular response occurs. It is used to represent the number of responses in a particular area of the study and the number is in turn used to calculate percentage.

   b) Percentage

   Facilitates easy measurability of the proportion of responses over a whole sample times 100. Calculation of percentages was done using variables of the base

facilitation comparison of one base to another. The study uses percentages as they are easy to calculate and interpret.

3.8.2 Inferential Statistics

his is a statistical tool that enables one to compare the direct relationship between two or more variables. It analyses how one variable influences another or other variables.

For this study simple correlation was used to analyze the relationship between various social and political factors and effects on society.

3.9 Presentation techniques

The findings of the FGD and questionnaire were presented in tables, graphs and pie charts. The use of narration for purpose of authenticating was also used.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretations of the data from the field. It presents the results of data collected and further discusses the findings. The research sought to find out the role of social media as a political campaign tool: A case study of presidential candidates and their coalitions in 2013 General Elections. The analysis and interpretation factored in the research questions and the objectives and findings mainly drawn from the focus group discussions and questionnaires using qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The results are presented below. Tables and figures have been used to analyze and present the findings in the study. The respondents had different characteristics that are fundamental in determining how representative or biased the sample was.
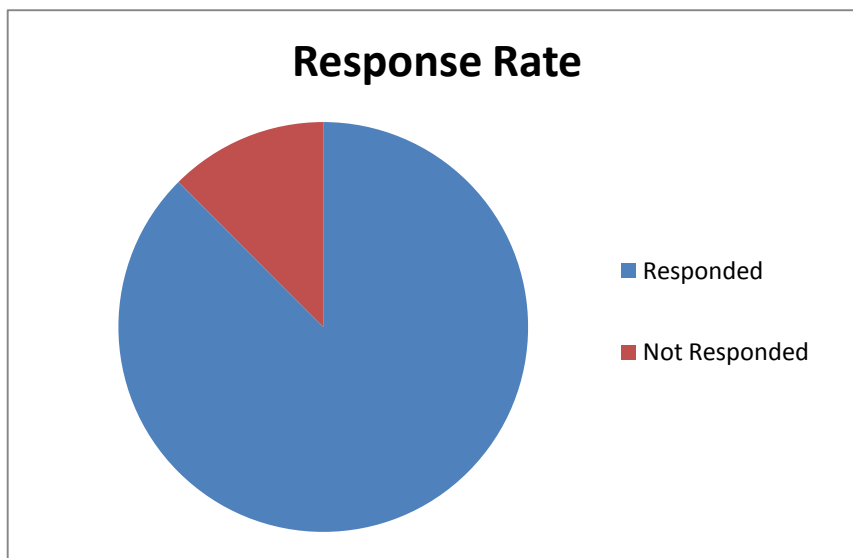
Figure 7: Response Rate

Figure 7 shows that 105 out of 120 sampled respondents filled in and returned the questionnaire contributing to 87.5% response rate. Thus the research sample was adequate hence the findings represented the population adequately.

4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Selected Attributes

The following tables illustrate the distribution of respondents based on various attributes:
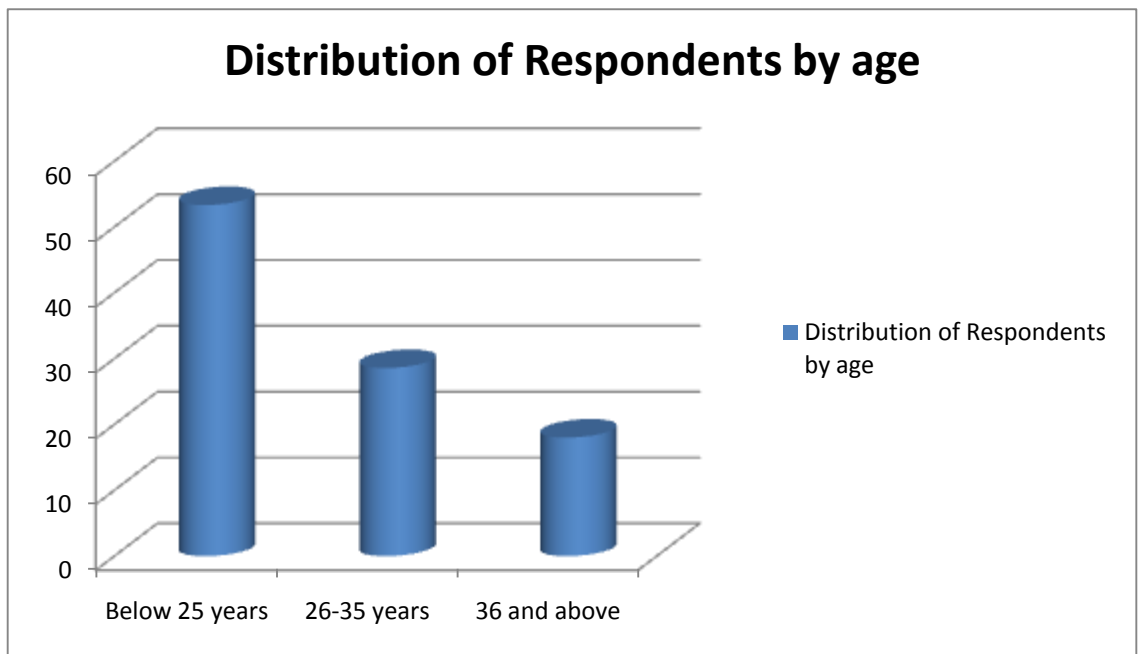
Figure 8: Distribution of respondents' by age

Figure 8 demonstrates the age categories of respondents. All age groups were fairly represented. The various age groups could later be used to test the correlation between age and preferences. Hence the different population age groups were well represented.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by occupation

BACKGROUND	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Employed	23	36.19
Self Employment	13	12.38
University	31	29.52
Not in School and unemployed	23	21.90
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

The above table represents the background distribution of the respondent's .Analysis of this enabled us to relate economic status impact on social media preference and show that majority of those using social media are the employed though data shows that through increased accessibility to mobile phone the unemployed also participate in social media politics

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents by political affiliation

POLITICAL AFFILIATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Jubilee Alliance	34	32.38
CORD	29	27.62

Amani	13	12.38
PK	11	10.48
Narc Kenya	10	9.52
Others	8	7.62
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

The above table shows that distribution was segmented amongst the most popular political parties. The sample was fairly representative of the various political opinions. The results could be used to highlight the correlation between political opinion and social media preference. Results also confirm that social media may have greatly contributed to Uhuru Kenyatta of Jubilee Alliance's triumphant win of the elections.
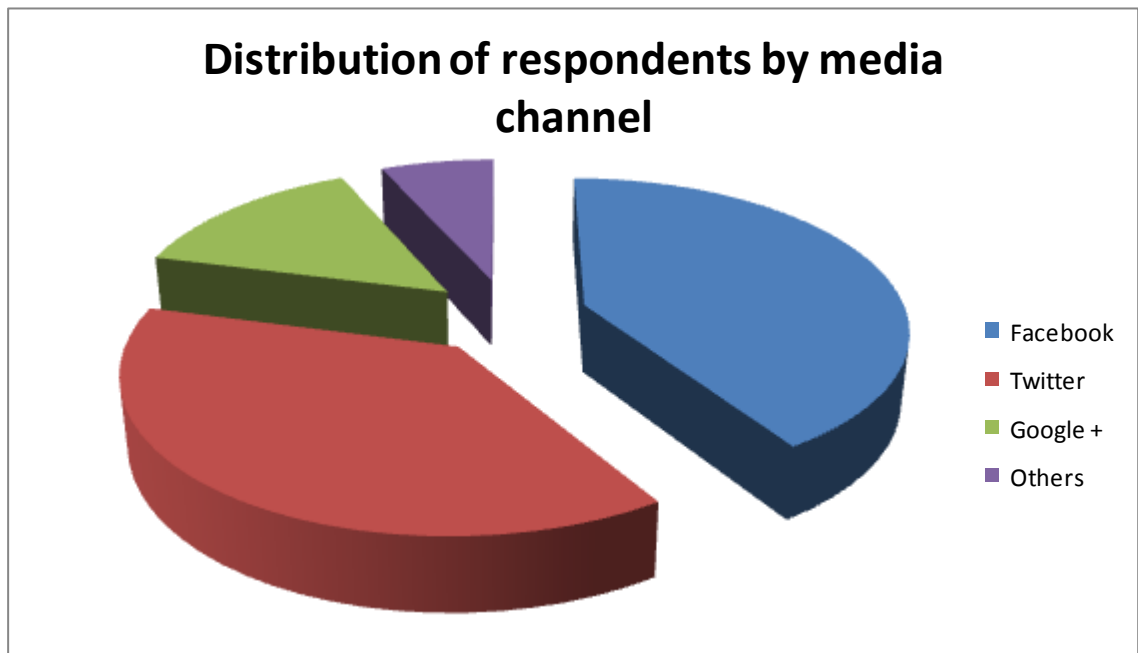
Figure 9: Distribution of Respondents by social media channels

The findings in the above figure show that Facebook is the most preferred social media channel. This could be attributed to the fact that it was established a number of years before the emergence of the rest of the social media channels. This affords familiarity to Facebook for its users, something that the other mass media channels are still grappling with. Google + and other mass media channels have the lowest preference rates largely attributed to the fact that they are the latest entrants into the market. The fact that one can also share as much content and images on facebook could also be a reason for its preference
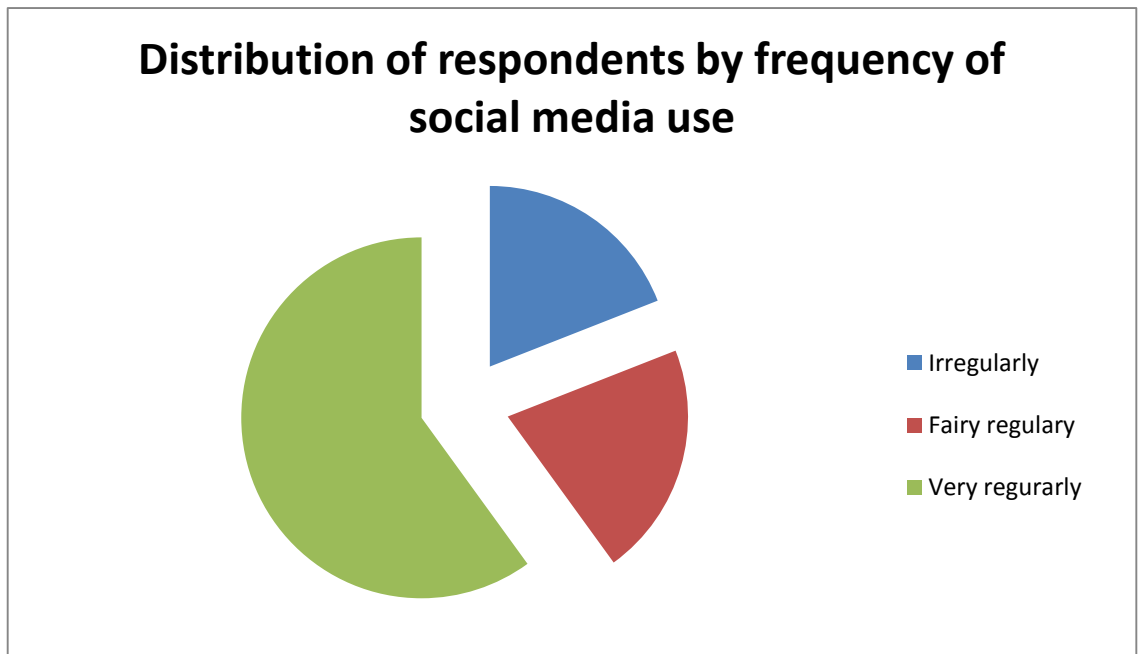
Figure 10: Distribution of Respondents by frequency of social media use

The above figure shows that social media use is popular and widely accessed in the Nairobi area. This goes a long way to demonstrate the tremendous growth of social media

in the last couple of years. Showing that most Kenyans relied on social media for real time political updates and that they could access information at any preferred time

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by most effective political party social media use

POLITICAL AFFILIATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Jubilee Alliance	27	25.71%
CORD	20	19.04%
Amani	10	9.52%
PK	30	28.57%
Narc Kenya	2	1.9%
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

The table shows that PK demonstrated the best use of social media during the 2013 general elections. This shows that effective use of social media without practicing integrated marketing communications may not necessarily lead to a win as Jubilee alliance's Hon Uhuru Kenyatta emerged winner of the elections. Majority of the respondents interviewed that is 28.57% felt that PK used social media most effectively.

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents by how political parties used social media effectively

USE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Creating awareness	25	23.81%
Real time posts	47	44.76%
Answering queries	33	31.42%
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

Above results show that respondents felt that political parties used social media effectively. By giving real time information making it easier for Kenyans to keep up with their political campaign. Some also felt that social media was used effectively by political parties if they answered their supporters queries online and shared their manifestos online creating awareness

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by various ways in which Kenyans used social media platform

USE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Monitoring Results	15	14.29%
Voice their opinion	70	66.67%

Interaction	20	19.05%
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

The above table shows that during the 2013 general elections period Kenyans mostly used social media to voice their opinions on various political issues, however a few Kenyans used the platform to simply monitor polls. The results show that majority of Kenyans used social media to voice their opinions that is 66.67%/. While the other 19.05% and 14.29% used the platform to monitor results and interact.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by their recommendations for GOK in adoption of social media

USE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Regulation framework	63	60%
Interaction	31	29.52%
Awareness	20	19.05%
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

Majority of the respondents that is 60% felt that there is need for the government to develop a regulation framework which will at the same time not infringe on citizens rights.29.52% also felt that the government needs to use social media to interact with its

people so us to understand issues affecting them.19.05% also felt that the government ought to use social media to enhance awareness.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents by social media effects on Kenya 2013 elections

USE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Hate speech	40	38.1%
Polarization	42	40%
Freedom of expression	23	21.9%
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

As seen in the above table social media use in the 2013 elections mostly led to polarization of Kenyans along tribal and political affiliation lines.40% of the respondents felt that use of the social media in the 2013 elections resulted in polarization while 38.1% felt that use of social media resulted in hate speech being spread by bloggers. However a few felt that the overall effects of social media was that it enhanced freedom of expression.

Table 8: Distribution of respondents by media use of social media in 2013 elections

USE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Inform	45	42.86%

Peace building	35	33.33%
Interact	25	23.80%
TOTAL	**105**	**100**

The above table shows that 42.86% of the respondents felt that the media used social media as a platform to share real time updates on polls keeping Kenyans informed. This was done by the media houses to remain relevant to the audience who are online. Another 33.33% felt that the media used social media to preach peace. Majority of Kenyans have social media accounts hence one of the best ways to preach peace building is by posting messages online. The remaining 23.80% percent felt that the media also interacted with Kenyans online to keep up with their emerging needs.

FGD Findings

4.3 Social Media use by Kenyans in the 2013 general elections

The first objective of this research was to establish how social media was used by Kenyans during the 2013 General elections in order to gauge the effectiveness of Social Media as a political campaign tool. It was found that Kenyans use social media in the following ways;

According to the participants of focus group discussion, Kenyans used social media to keep informed by accessing real time news updates on their preferred political candidate and sharing opinions on various political party manifestos. This was confirmed by a 23

years old social media user who said: *Today if you want to keep up with current affairs go to social media.* This is a clear indication that social media has a lot of influence in Kenyans decision making.

Similarly, the various participants indicated that Kenyans used social media to campaign for their preferred presidential candidates by updating their updates to reflect their stand, sharing videos and photos. *"I used social media to campaign for my preferred presidential candidate through updating my status to reflect my political stand and sharing materials"*

(G.W, 1998) explained the Internet is not simply another medium; it is the "master medium." The Internet can disseminate text and photos like newspapers, audio like radio, and audio, text, and video like television.

It was found that social media use in the 2013 General elections lead to cyber bullying by use of hate speech which was incited by bloggers who were partisan in their updates giving biased information causing uproar amongst Kenyans. Most of them confessed to have participated in hate speech directly or indirectly through stereotypes either to retaliate.

Participants also indicated that Kenyans used social media to spread hate speech in their mother tongue especially Kikuyu and luo representing the two main political parties leaders that is ODM and Jubilee Alliance leading to tribalism and polarization of Kenyans. Some supporters went ahead to even impersonate political parties and their presidential candidates by creating fake accounts to provoke others.

The (FGD) participants agreed that social media empowered them by giving them a chance to influence decisions. The participants indicated that they logged onto social media several times in a day to get updates on the 2013 General Elections and they then acted as opinion leaders by updating their families in the village who don't have access to real time information on the polls.

Kenyans used social media as a watchdog tool as political parties were under higher scrutiny than ever before forcing them to give Kenyans promises that they would fulfill in their manifesto. Social media has thus revolutionized how politicians share and generate news. Social media acts as a game change to how we are informed by the media.

4.4 Social media use by politicians during the 2013 general elections

The second objective of this study was to find out the different ways that politicians used social media as a political campaign tool The participants of (FGD) were asked to discuss the above and it was found that politicians used social media as below;

Politicians used social media to call their supporters to actions by asking them to register for voting. They also used social media to inform their supporters where their campaign trail was headed.

According to the participants various politicians used social media differently as others focused on two step flow of communication, where information generally moved from top-down while others focused on a horizontal approach. Thus some politicians failed to understand this platform.

Politicians also used bloggers and various party admin accounts on social media to sell their agenda through use of propaganda, stereotypes and ethnicity indirectly.

Politicians also used their Facebook pages and twitter handles to create an interpersonal relationship with their supporters through answering their queries on various issues. Politicians used social media to sell their manifesto through use of photos.

4.5 Social Media use by Media during the 2013 general elections

The media were seen to enter the media space with messages of peace while encouraging citizens to exercise their democratic right to vote during the elections.

Participants in the FGD said that mass media especially TV stations used their official social media pages to constantly update Kenyans on the polls this was especially visible on twitter. The media also gave social media comments made by Kenyans on live TV broadcast giving Kenyans a feel of what fellow Kenyans felt about various issues at that time

Mainstream media has been seen to play a significant role in political processes and dissemination of information of which previously excluded the local citizen from participation (Oser J, 2013) .Social media tools supplement, rather than replace, conventional media. Because they serve as channels of expression that could not be easily controlled by the ruling power, they widen and diversify public discussion. They offer critical assessments and unmediated perspectives (Makinen, 2008).

It is easy to reject the democratic potential of social media in the case of the Kenya elections especially since social media only seemed to spread hate speech thus negative campaigning and extremism resulting into the sensationalization of the public sphere.

According to the participants media did not report objectively on the social media as various media houses were seen to take sides with particular political parties."Media were slanting news"

Media houses were also seen to use social media to promote the presidential debates which took place in Kenya for the first time during these elections.

4.6 Effects of social media use in the 2013 general elections

According to the participants social media was used as a platform for spreading hate speech, stereotypes and ethnicity leading to polarization of the nation. According to martin a 25 year old student; *Social media use during the 2013 elections was pathetic as Kenyans spread hate speech causing friends supporting opposing parties to clash."What was said on social media polluted minds, I can imagine my twelve year old niece going to the social media to see the sought of updates that were being shared" This would have caused a psychological condition" said Maria a participant*

Participants debated on whether social media use in this elections will necessarily stop physical violence in future just because hate speech was to a large extent only on social media and did not spread offline leading to an experience like that of 2007/2008 as use of new media in Kenya is currently mostly dominated by the youth in middle class and the upper class while those who engaged in physical face off in 2007/2008 elections were the

older generation from rural areas. The participants felt that social media was for the affluent in society though with phone manufacturers developing cheap phones with access to internet this is bound to change.

Knowledge of social media use in 2013 elections will empower politicians, media and political parties to make informed decisions as to whether to incorporate social media strategies in their political campaigns and thus inform the other objectives of the study which include; Determine the way politicians use social media as a political campaign tool and examine possible effects of social media as a campaign tool.

Participants felt that social media has made the world a global village giving them a chance to speak out on various issues that affect our country to make a difference in their own different capacities. The findings also show that if used well social media can enhance democracy.

4.7 Recommendations for the government in enhancing social media use in future elections.

The government ought to use the findings of this research as learning's of social media use in political campaigns and come up with regulation framework in partnership with CCK to curb the use of hate speech and incitement on social media. The initiative to curb hate speech by former P.S information Dr. Bitange Ndemo and NCIS can be strengthened by tightening regulations on new media use in the country and tracking of sources of hate speech online while ensuring that controls don't infringe on Kenyans rights.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings from chapter four, conclusions and also recommendations based on the objectives of the study. The study had sought to establish the role of social media as a political campaigning tool in the March 4 General Election in Kenya.

This research study was done with the aim of answering three research questions. The first research question sought to find out how Social Media was used by citizens during the 2013 General Elections. It also looked at how politicians used social media and how the media used this platform. The questions looked at the effects of Social Media as a political campaign tool.

5.2 Summary of findings

The study established the following results as outlined below;

That the social media platforms that were used by most Kenyans were Facebook and Twitter.

The most talked about political parties on the social media were Jubilee Alliance and ODM.

That social media use by politicians as a campaign tool increased political participation as it enabled politicians to tap into the youth who hardly followed politics on the

traditional mass media. The older generation that is 35 years and over who were hardly known to use social media joined the bandwagon so as to get access to real time political updates.

Social medium proved to empower Kenyans as they were able to share their opinions, interact, campaign for their candidate and access numerous sources of information without any form of censorship from the government or the media.

Social Media provided Kenyans with a public sphere reversing the roles of the media, state and Kenyans as the media no longer determined what the citizens should think about but instead the people determined what the media reported. Kenyans became the authority on this platform and the government and media were forced to conform.

Findings show that the freedom citizens got from this platform led to the emergence of citizen journalists and bloggers who reported on various issues as they happened and shared photos and video on the same. The fact that the citizen journalists provided coverage real time threatened the journalism profession.

The findings found that social media use in the 2013 elections was mostly by the middle class and upper class in society. Apart from mobilizing the masses social media was also used to spread prejudicial messages in form of propaganda, hate speech, stereotypes and ethnicity among Kenyans leading to polarization of the country in lines of political affiliation.

Bloggers were seen to incite Kenyans online by being subjective in their reporting on various issues and providing Kenyans with biased information.

The study found that the media used social media to share messages of peace and encourage Kenyans to register and exercise their democratic right to vote. The traditional media audience have declined as most audience prefer using social media to access news on political campaigns as social media provides them with all what they used to access on television, radio and print on one platform. They can also access information on this space at any given time. Social media has also given the other mass media a challenge as it's cheap thus politicians can advertise at low cost.

The findings reveal that the agenda setting theory used is functional with the reversal of roles in society enabling Kenyans to set agenda. The public sphere theory is also supported as the social media provides Kenyans with a platform where they can share their views without any filter from the government or media. The last theory social identity theory shows that favourism of in-groups at the expense of out-group can lead to polarization.

While this study may not be representative of how social media is used universally in the democratic processes, it however provides an insight on perhaps what can be regarded as the shortcomings of new media as well as its capabilities in influencing the role of the populous in generating counter argument and in providing fairness and accuracy in reporting.

5.3 Recommendations on Social Media use in Political Campaigns in Kenya

Several factors can be derived from the findings of this study for improvement of social media use as an interactive tool in the political sphere.

First, the findings show that social media is to a large extent being used by the middle and upper class in society. They are thus using this platform to set their agenda, therefore it is recommended that the various counties in the country to take up social media use and in turn encourage their citizens to use this platform. The study was limited to Nairobi based against this background of social media use.

Upholding of professionalism by the bloggers and citizens online is important. With the study revealing that hate speech was used by the above promoting ethnicity which led to polarization of the nation. It is important that citizens express themselves responsibly so as to keep the country united thus enhancing democracy.

Current image of the social media to be where Kenyans can keep up with what is happening should be used by the media by monitoring the trends on this channel and covering news based on this so as to be able to keep their audiences. Politicians should also monitor this platform to understand Kenyans needs and get their feedback on various issues informing their objectives.

The study has shown best practices in the use of social media globally with Barack Obama's campaign being the most exemplary as it did not lead to prejudice against its

competitors or their supporters. Kenya needs to learn from this campaign by formulating stringent measures to ensure future elections do not result into polarization of the nation.

The government therefore needs to review the policies set up by NCIS on hate speech and tribalism on social media and set up a more stringent regulation framework that will then be passed by parliament. CCK should then ensure that the policies are followed and those who violate it are prosecuted. The policies should however not infringe on Kenyans right to express themselves.

Politicians ought to undergo social media use training to ensure that their communication to the masses is not top-down but horizontal thus enhancing their relationship with supporters and leveraging on this media.

However, the issue of whether discussions flowing from the grassroots affect power and the state of democracy remains unexplored. Ideally, social media tools could increase transparency in politics and enhance citizens' participation through enabling people to follow decision-making processes and hold discussions about issues of common concern. There is a need for making new media tools more accessible to those who are less fortunate (Makinen, 2008).

5.4 Areas for further studies

1. The scope of this study was limited to the Nairobi County using a very small sample size. Similar studies could be conducted in other counties to determine the extent of social media reach even in the least technologically cognizant areas of the country. These studies will help inform the county government's expansion strategy on IT infrastructure.

2. Similarly, the survey was limited to the Social networking sites and the internet. Studies could be conducted relating to other forms of media like the television, radio and print media. This can also be used to analyze and compare preferences for such media and any correlation if any.

3. County governments and various government departments could embrace the use of new media through developing their own webpage's and interactive web platforms where they can disseminate relevant and timely information to the public and receive feedback on the same. This could go a long way in sensitizing the public to embracing appropriate technology for development, while improving their own performance. This study will inform the government's digital strategies.

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Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TOOL

To All Respondents

I am Marita Obare, a student of the University of Nairobi. I am currently conducting a study on "The Role of the Social Media as a political Campaign Tool: a Case Study of presidential candidates and their Coalitions in the 2013 Kenya General Elections" In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Masters in Communication Studies by University of Nairobi,

I kindly request for your valuable time to support the study by completing the following questionnaire. Please answer all the questions by ticking in the appropriate box and filing in by writing where necessary.

1. Name: (Optional)

   …………………………………………………………………………..

2. Gender:

Male	

Female	

3. Designation:

Senior Management	
Middle Management	
Lower Management	

Any Other (please specify) _____

4. Age Bracket:

Below 25 years	
26 – 44 years	
Above 45 years	

5. Are You?

In formal Employment	
In Informal Employment	
In Self employment	
In University	

Not in school and unemployed ☐

6. How often do you use social media (Tick one)

Irregularly ☐

Fairly Regularly ☐

Very Regularly ☐

7. Which Social Media sites do you know?

8. Which Social Media site do you prefer most?

Please list your reasons:

9. Your political affiliation in the 2013 General Elections

☐ Jubilee Alliance

☐ CORD (Coalition for Reform & Democracy)

☐ Amani

☐ PK

☐ Narc Kenya

☐ Others

10. Which Social media did you use to keep you posted on the 2013 General Elections

☐ Facebook

☐ Twitter

☐ Google +

☐ Others

11. In your opinion how was social media used by the media in the 2013 general elections

_____

_____

12. In your opinion how did most Kenyans use the social media platform during the 2013 General Elections

_____

13. Give suggestions on what you think Politicians should do to improve the quality of their social media campaigns

_____

_____

14. As a social media user in Kenya what recommendations should the Government of Kenya take in adopting the use of Social Media

_____

_____

15. In your opinion how is social media affecting us as a nation?

_____

_____

End. Thank You.

Appendix 2

Focus Group Discussion

    I. How was social media used by Kenyans during the 2013 general elections?

   II. Describe specific ways that politicians used social media in the 2013 general elections?

  III. How did the media use social media in reporting the 2013 general elections?

  IV. What were the effects of social media use in the 2013 general elections? Did the use of social media affect the outcome of the 2013 general elections

   V. Will social media use in political campaigns eliminate physical violence?

  VI. What recommendations do you have for the government in enhancing social media use?