

**FACTORS INFLUENCING LEVELS OF VOTER REGISTRATION IN TIGANIA
EAST CONSTITUENCY, MERU COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented to any other university for award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my children, Christine K. Kobia, Esther K. Kobia, Esther and George M. Kobia, for their sacrifice, moral support and encouragement during the time of my studies.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ECK: Electoral Commission of Kenya

BVR: Biometric Voter Registration

GOK: Government of Kenya

IEBC: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

ID: Identity Card

IIEBC: Interim Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

MVR: Mass Voter Registration

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NRB: National Registration Bureau

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency, Meru County. Specifically, the study intended to establish how voter sensitization influences levels of voter registration; to assess how eligible voters' attitudes influence levels of voter registration; to evaluate how accessibility of registration centres influences levels of voter registration, and assess how the availability of voters' legal documents (National Identification Card or a Valid Passport) influences levels of voter registration. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised 24,225 persons eligible to register as voters in the constituency. Proportionate stratified sampling was used to derive a sample of 378 persons aged 18 years of age and over from the population. Questionnaires were used to collect data, while data analysis and presentation was conducted using descriptive statistics with the help of SPSS. The study established that voter sensitization had a strong positive influence on levels of voter registration; eligible voters' attitudes had a strong positive influence on levels of voter registration; accessibility of registration centres had a moderate positive influence on levels of voter registration and availability of voter's legal documents had a moderate positive influence on levels of voter registration. The study concluded that greater sensitization of eligible voters using effective communication channels increase the possibility of eligible voters' enlistment; voter education is a critical determinant of voter registration; eligible voters prioritize their democratic rights above the inconveniences they undergo to register; and eligible voters face no formidable barriers in accessing voters' legal documents. The study recommends that the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) should review and restructure its process and methods of communicating with eligible voters; revise and update voter registration education content; decentralize the process of voter registration to polling station level and that the National Registration Bureau (NRB) should institute measures to ease the process of acquiring national identity cards.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

According to Pintor and Gratschew (2002), voter registration is a central pillar of participation within any democratic space. The connection between legitimate governance and the freedom of the governed in a democracy is enshrined in universal suffrage. A voters' register is, in most democracies, the reference point for citizens who wish to exercise their voting rights. An ideal voter register should be built on inclusivity, equality, personal participation and privacy. Considering voter turnout cannot be absolute at a global level, it is important that the number of registered voters for any democratic elections be scaled up (Evrensel, 2010). Desilver (2015) considers voter registration in the US to be significantly lower compared to other developed nations. This is because the US had a voter registration rate of 53.6% in 2012 at a time when Belgium, Turkey and Sweden had registered 87.2%, 86.4% and 82.6%, respectively, of the citizens eligible for voting. Switzerland was ranked the lowest with 40% voter registration. Chavlin (2014) observes that voter registration in Belize and Mexico was as high as 95% in 2014.

Pintor and Gratschew (2002) attribute low voter enlistment in the United States to the fact that the government does not interfere in the exercise, leaving it to the discretion of the individual voter. Moreover, in countries such as Belgium and Turkey, voting is mandatory, thus forcing citizens to register. However, while voting is compulsory in Switzerland, this does not deter people from eschewing to register as voters. In essence, as long as voter registration and voting are not enforced, creating concomitant legislation does not change the situation.

Evrensel (2010) opines that in Africa, voter registration is arguably the most expensive aspect of the electoral process, but it remains the most crucial for free and fair elections. Rosenberg and Chen (2009) assert that Burundi and South Africa had the highest voter registration rates at 91% and 77% in 2005 and 2009, respectively. Moreover, while many African countries still use manual registers, there is a gradual movement towards electronic voter registration and voting in countries such as South Africa, Ghana and Kenya.

According to IIDEA (2016) voter registration in Kenya has been increasing since 1997, except for 2002 when a decline was recorded. While in 1992 the country had a registration rate of 58.84%, there was an improvement in 1997 when 65.45 eligible voters registered. In 2002, registration of voters stood at 57.18% but increased to 69.09% in 2007. The year 2013 witnessed the highest number of registered voters at 85.91%.

In the build-up to the upcoming 2017 General Election, two Mass Voter Registration (MVRs) were carried out and were interspersed by continuous voter registration in IEBC constituency offices. MVR I, which took place between 15th February 2016 and 16th March 2016, did not achieve the set target nationally, with only 34% of eligible voters being enlisted. MVR II took place between January 16, 2017 and February 15, 2017, but was extended by 5 days following an order by the High Court of Kenya. In Meru County, 169,803 people were registered, against a target of 219,472, which was a turnout of 77.37%.

Tigania East Constituency had a target of 24,255 people to be registered over that period. By the end of this exercise, the constituency had registered 18,495 people or 76.3% of the target, as indicated in Table 1.1.

Table 1:1. Tigania East Constituency Voter Registration

S. No.	Ward	Targeted potential voters for MVR I, II and continuous registration	No. of registered voters during MVR I, II and continuous registration	Percentage of registered voters	No. of prospective voters not registered	Percentage of prospective voters not registered
1	Thangatha	6,192	5,236	84.6%	956	15.4%
2	Mikinduri	5,206	4,495	86.3%	711	13.7%
3	Kiguchwa	2,954	1,974	66.8%	980	33.2%
4	Muthara	6,012	4,054	67.4%	1,958	32.6%
5	Karama	3,861	2,736	70.9%	1,125	29.1%
Total		24,225	18,495	76.3%	5,730	23.7%

Source: Tigania East IEBC Office

According to Dundas (2015), the issue of the youth in democracy is crucial, especially when voter registration is voluntary. In countries like Kenya and Pakistan, young people must first obtain national identity cards to be eligible for enlistment. Although obtaining an ID is compulsory for those who reach the mandatory age of 18 years, the process and outcome depend largely on government agencies charged with that responsibility, and this means that even where young people are willing and fulfil all preconditions, IDs may not be released in good time for one to be registered as a voter. In addition, registered voters who lose their IDs may also not vote if the IDs are not replaced in time, an issue that is not within the ordinary's citizen's power.

Moreover, as Lawrence and Cummins (2017) assert, eligible voters may not be keen to enlist as voters because of apathy towards political processes and unfulfilled promises made by elected leaders. There is also general lack of awareness concerning the timing of voter registration especially in rural areas. Even where people are aware, biometric voter registration (BVR) kits may be few and scattered.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Voter registration is one of the pillars of democracy, without which there can be no free, fair and transparent elections (Pintor & Gratschew, 2002). On a global scale, voter registration varies depending on whether it is a compulsory or voluntary exercise for citizens (Desilver, 2015). In Kenya, where citizens enlist as voters once they attain the age of eighteen years, the decision is left to the citizen. The IEBC carried out a Mass Voter Registration (MVR) exercises in 2016 and 2017, in addition to continuous voter registration, but these initiatives fell short of the targets (IEBC, 2017). It is significant that the mass media, government officials, politicians and civil society always urge people to register as voters, especially as Kenya heads to the General Elections in August 2017, yet a significant number of eligible Kenyans remain unregistered. In Tigania East Constituency, Meru County, 76.3% of the targeted individuals were registered during various exercises. It is, important, therefore, to study both the registered and unregistered individuals to establish reasons for respective decisions. This study sought to establish the factors that influence voter registration with a view of recommending strategies for increasing the turnout for future elections.

1.3. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish factors that influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency, Meru County.

1.4. Research Objectives

1. To establish how voter sensitization influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.
2. To assess how eligible voters' attitudes influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.
3. To evaluate how accessibility of registration centres influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.
4. To assess how the availability of voters' legal documents (National Identification Card or a Valid Passport) influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.

1.5. Research Questions

1. How does voter sensitization influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency?
2. What extent do voter attitudes influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency?
3. How does accessibility of registration centres influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency?
4. To what extent does the availability of voters' legal documents (National Identification Card and Valid Passport) influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency?

1.6. Significance of the study

The findings of this study will help to sensitize citizens on the importance of registering as voters. Policy makers in the government and Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), donors, as well as current and aspiring political leaders and political parties, will use the findings of this study to reform the voter registration infrastructure to increase the number of registered voter. Finally, this study is now part of the existing corpus of literature on democracy and electoral processes.

1.7. Assumption of the study

This study presupposed that the people of Tigania East would volunteer to participate in the study and that they would volunteer honest and accurate responses.

1.8. Delimitation of the study

This study was carried out among people aged 18 years and above, and who were eligible to register as voters in Tigania East Constituency, Meru County. This included registered voters and those who had not registered but were eligible.

1.9. Limitation of the study

The researcher faced logistical and monetary challenges in the course of the study. To mitigate these issues, the researcher recruited and trained research assistants to help with data collection.

1.10. Definition of key terms

Voter: A person who is registered to cast the ballot in respective democratic elections.

Eligible voter: A person that has attained 18 years of age but cannot vote because they have not been registered to vote.

Voter register: A list of all eligible voters based on their polling stations.

Voter registration: The process of collecting data from persons who are eligible to vote.

1.11. Organization of the study

Chapter One, 'Background to the Study', presents the background, states the problem of the study, enumerates the research objectives and questions, explains the limitations and delimitations of the study and also the assumptions the researcher is going to make during the research. Chapter Two, 'Literature Review' examines pertinent literature on issues related to voter registration among the youth. Specifically, it explains the theoretical framework of the study, before delving into voter registration, voter education and awareness of voter registration, youth attitudes and voter registration, proximity to voter registration and ID cards in the context of voter registration. The final part in this section is the conceptual framework. Chapter Three, 'Research Methodology' deals with research methodology; how the research will be carried out. In particular, it explains the research design to be used, the sampling technique and sampling frame, the data collection instrument and how it was tested for validity and reliability, data analysis and presentation, ethical considerations and how each of the variables is defined. Chapter Four, 'Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation', contains a presentation of the study's data in frequency tables, followed by relevant interpretations in prose. Finally, Chapter Five, 'Summary of Findings, Discussions, Conclusions and Recommendations' summarizes and discusses the findings of the study before making conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter summarizes contents of existing literature on issues of voter registration globally, regionally and locally. It contains information derived from secondary and primary data, with emphasis on research studies conducted on the topic of the study. Specifically, this segment contains a discussion of the theoretical framework that guided the study, an incisive discussion of each of the four variables or objectives of the study and a conceptual framework to illustrate the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables.

2.2. Levels of Voter registration

From the onset, it is important to observe that there is a dearth of literature on voter registration, especially in the African context, with most emphasis being accorded to voter turnout (Babeiya, 2013). Tokaji (2008) opines that voter registration is crucial, and political players have always understood this fact, with some seeking for ways to influence the process to the disadvantage of their political rivals and minority or marginalized voters. He laments that despite the importance of voter registration, not much scholarly work has gone into it. Rosenberg and Chen (2009) assert that the importance of voter registration in democratic practice cannot be overemphasized and voter registration processes and outcomes comprise a major criterion of the fairness, transparency and freeness of an election.

According to the Association of European Election Officials (2010), voter registration is important because it safeguards two important principles of democratic elections – equal and universal suffrage. The first principle deals with identifying who is eligible to vote while the second ensures the one-man one-vote ideal is actualized. It is also important to update voters' registers regularly in order to take care of issues such as death of voters or transfer of voters from one polling station to another. This is in tandem with Babeiya (2013) who asserts that Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar were forced to reform their voter registration systems by introducing permanent voter registers. This followed claims by election losers that many eligible voters were being disenfranchised because their names would not be found on respective voter registers on election days.

There are several ways of categorizing voter registration. Passive voter registration is a situation which the government or state agency charged with the responsibility of enlisting voters use the civil registry to decide who is eligible to vote. On the other hand, active voter registration is not controlled by the state, but by individuals who volunteer relevant information to be considered officially as voters. Moreover, active registration may be initiated by individuals when they visit respective offices to be enlisted, or by the state, when it sends its officers to meet people and register them. In countries like Kenya, a blend of the two is applied. Moreover, active registration can be voluntary or compulsory. The former applies to Kenya. Voter registration can also be periodic or continuous, with the former denoting a situation where a new voter register is created before an election and the latter implying that there is one register that is updated on an on-going and regular basis (Association of European Election Officials, 2010).

The body that prepares the voter register differs from country-to-country. For example, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the State Statistical Institute, the Population Registration Centre, the State Police and the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs are the custodians of the voters' registers in Estonia, Macedonia, Finland, Spain, Armenia and Latvia respectively. In the UK, local governments employ officials who register voters and keep the registers within respective constituencies. The registration system is also active. In some countries of Eastern Europe, local administrations and leaders, such as the mayor of a municipality, participate actively in preparing the register and endorsing it after it is completed (Association of European Election Officials, 2010).

Other countries delegate the responsibility of voter registration to specific electoral bodies. In this case, the electoral commission may operate an active system that is not connected to state registers. However, in most cases, since registering for national identity cards is a prerequisite for voter registration, the two systems interact most of the time. The body charged with registering voters assumes different titles in different nations. For example, in Georgia it is called the Central Election Commission; in Lithuania, it is referred to as the Central Electoral Commission, while in Romania it is referred to as the Central Election Authority. Names of

electoral management bodies in other countries include, The Independent Electoral Commission (South Africa), Independent National Electoral Commission (Nigeria), The National Independent Electoral Commission (Burundi), The National Electoral Commission (Rwanda) and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission in Kenya, to name a few (Makulilo & Ntaganda, 2015; Association of European Election Officials, 2010).

In Kenya, the IEBC, which is a successor to the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) and the Interim Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IIEC), conducts voter registration. Any person who has attained the age of 18 years and has a national identity card or valid Kenya passport can be registered as a voter. Kenyans are also free to register and to vote wherever they are. Voter registration was recently expanded to countries with large Kenyan diaspora. In addition, the Kenya voter registration process is voluntary and continuous, which means an individual can walk into an IEBC office, produce relevant documentation and get registered. However, it is the period before an election that witnesses a spike in new voters and those wishing to vote in different polling stations from the ones they registered in. The IEBC normally launches Mass Voter Registration exercises to encourage more entrants into voter registers (IEBC, 2016).

It should be understood that a voter's register also plays an important role of providing information relevant to the election planning and logistics as well as informing the public about its rights as an electorate. Moreover, a register assists the electoral management body to allocate polling stations, demarcation of constituencies and wards, developing electoral participation data and statistics and curbing fraud in the voting process (Evrensel, 2010). However, as Pintor and Gratschew (2002) argue, the same register can be used to disenfranchise the minority and marginalized such as people living with disability, peasants, women and the poor. The most common way of keeping minorities off voting is to leave out their names from the voter's register, an issue they will realize when they come to vote, and when it is too late to make amends. Secondly, disenfranchisement happens through imposition of stringent requirements for registration of voters, for example the need to have a national ID card, and this locks out many, especially young people.

2.3. Voter sensitization and levels of voter registration

NYCI (2015) complained about lack of awareness among young people in the run-up to the Ireland's referendum in 2015. Five days before the referendum, it was reported that over 120,000 young people were in the dark about the upcoming event. Some of the youth were not aware that they were required to register as voters before casting their ballots and that there was a deadline for voter registration. One of the most important components of voter registration, especially when the agency concerned wants to increase registration in an individual-driven registration context, is voter education and awareness creation among prospective voters.

According to the UN (n.d.), it is imperative for prospective voters to understand their political systems, their rights, the contest they are about to participate in and the place and methods of participation. Voter education refers to dissemination of pertinent information, programs and materials with a view of informing voters and those not yet registered as voters on the specifics and methods involved in registering and voting in a specified election exercise. People who undergo voter education are taught about eligibility to vote, the registration process, verification of voters' details on the register, and the nature of the election being held among other issues (Dundas, 2011).

Dundas (2011) further opines that voter education is purposed to avail as much information as possible to all eligible voters. Such campaigns target universal coverage. This implies that even disadvantaged groups must be addressed even as sensitization is scaled up among mainstream voters. A credible voter education exercise must employ the language of the target group, which means the campaign messages and materials should be presented in local languages. Moreover, voter education must reach women, people living with disability and internally displaced people. In addition, young people who are eligible to cast the ballot for the first time should have special messages on the entire voter registration and voting exercise. More importantly, publicity materials should encourage people to vote or to register as voters. UN (n.d.) further asserts that the body mandated with registering voters must organize meetings targeted at specific groups in order to raise awareness in a platform where questions can be asked and relevant responses offered.

According to the Uganda Electoral Commission (2012) one of the main reasons for people not registering as voters is ignorance. People who are aware of the importance of registering as voters are likely to take the option. However, pertinent information must be disseminated in the context of the entire election infrastructure since the bigger picture may help eligible voters to value their contributions as registered voters. While those who have voted before may not need to be reminded on the need to vote, they are young people who are attaining the legal age for voting every day and they need to be sensitized on the importance of participating in this democratic process. Obviously, the methodology used in sensitizing young eligible voters cannot be similar to the one used on their parents. Moreover, since the Kenya system of voter registration is continuous and there are permanent registers, the IEBC cannot rely on 30-day mass registration exercises to build its register (Babeiya, 2013).

According to Lusike and Macharia (2016), the IEBC used traditional mass media before the 2013 General Elections in Kenya to reach out to prospective people to register as voters and to participate in the elections. Eight TV stations, 96 radio stations and the main daily newspapers were all used as part of voter education. However, most of these efforts were carried out a week to the elections, implying they did not have a powerful impact on the intended audience. It is important, therefore, to create a more responsive and effective strategy of sensitizing people to register as voters, using mainstream media, social media as well as meeting people where they can be easily accessed – at the grassroots.

2.4. People's Attitudes and levels of voter registration

According to CMD Kenya (2015), prospective voters, especially the young, are keen to participate in democratic activities, but there are significant issues that hinder this desire and this can be explained from a global perspective. D.K. (2014), asserts that the number of young people participating in midterm elections in the US was at 59% in 2012. In the UK, only 44% of the youth took part in the 2010 elections. Moreover, in the larger Europe, young people were outnumbered by the elderly in terms of voting in respective elections. This trend could be attributed to laziness as others asserted, but mainly to apathy. Young people believed they did not have a significant stake in society. Having everything they needed at a younger age, or

being too busy pursuing a livelihood, left them with no time to think about politics. Most of them also kept on moving from one area to the other in pursuit of jobs, meaning they did not consider themselves residents of that area, thus seeing no reason to register as voters. Another important reason for this trend is apathy and disenchantment with life. Most young people felt there was no reason to vote considering the same politicians who had brought about political and economic turmoil would continue to rule. In essence, negativity and cynicism was prevalent among the youth thus making them eschew voting. Sherrod (2006) corroborates this information by asserting that the number of youth registering as voters in the US has been on the decline over the years. Additionally, the same attitudes are carried into adulthood.

The UK Electoral Commission (2012) published a report detailing the relationship between young people and voting. Youth asserted that their vote would not determine who would win. Another group indicated lack of interest in the political process especially because of the disillusionment of knowing their vote would not count. There were also a number of youth who felt that their singular vote would not make a difference. This signifies a lack of understanding of how democracy works and how a single vote can make a difference. In addition, young people did not find it important to vote because they felt alienated by the older generation. Politics was regarded by the youth as a preserve of the elderly. Finally, some young people felt that voting would be a time-consuming activity yet they had other more important things to do. Without addressing issues of social exclusion, it would be impossible to improve voter registration and turnout. According to Russell (1999), people that feel their votes did not count during the first time they voted are not likely to vote another time. This information is passed on to the younger generations and through socialization, it can become a norm. Low turnout of voters during elections is also an indicator that even those with voting cards or rights do not see the importance of exercising them.

In Kenya, the IEBC (2015) reported that voter registration was very low among the youth. YAA (2012) carried out a study among Kenya youth prior to the general election to determine their preparedness for the electoral process. It was established that young people had negative attitudes and beliefs towards voter registration and the voting exercise in general. For example, in Machakos, some young people asserted that they would only vote for the person who gave

them money. This is not surprising considering politicians often buy voters' cards and national IDs from areas perceived to be opposing them to minimize the impact of the rival politician. Moreover, in regions that had experience post-election violence in 2007/2008, young and old people alike were not willing to register as voters because they feared they would be targeted for punishment for presenting divergent opinions. Moreover, some people who had taken money from opposing candidates expressed the desire not to vote because they did not want to antagonize the opposing candidates. The study also established that poor leadership discouraged young people from participating in the electoral process. Many youths also believed that irrespective of the way they would vote, rigging would occur thus negating their noble intentions. All these examples point to a general disillusionment with the electoral process across generations and age groups, an issue that impacts both voter registration and turnout negatively.

2.5. Accessibility of registration centres and levels of voter registration

While Kenya has had fewer voter registration anomalies compared to Uganda and other countries, there are numerous complications that need to be addressed to streamline the process (Babeiya, 2013). YAA (2012) observed that people were concerned about the adequacy of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) kits and the number of personnel employed to carry out the voter registration exercise. They asserted that poor weather and dilapidated roads would hamper the efforts of registration clerks to reach people where they were – at the grassroots. In essence, logistical and structural barriers affected and continue to affect voter registration in Kenya.

Following the piloting of electronic voting and BVR kits in the 2010 referendum, the IEBC introduced the technology during the 2013 General Elections, albeit with some challenges. According to Andago (2013), the IEBC made use of new technology such as, “(i) Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) during voter registration; (ii) Electronic Voter Identification (EVID) on polling day; and (iii) Results Transmission System (RTS) during tallying.” Some of the challenges included the fact that the commission did not have adequate experienced personnel to run the machines. Moreover, the machines were vulnerable to bad weather. Another complication was technological constraints such as lack of adequate internet bandwidth and

lack of power supply. The statutory deadline and how the people would respond to the deadline that was given for registration also presented a challenge. Moreover, people with some forms of disability, and whose fingerprints could not be taken, were likely not to be registered easily. Finally, there were people who believed that BVR kits could harm them health-wise.

For the public though, the fact that not every polling station had a BVR kit and people had to travel long distances to register as voters, was a challenge. This is especially when prospective voters did not want to wait for the BVR kits to be brought to their locality. Many people were not patient to wait for the kits to reach their areas and did not participate in the exercise. The CEO of IEBC, Mr. Ezra Chiloba, observed that voter registration among the youth was very low, yet most new voters were expected to come from this age group.

2.6. Availability of Legal Documents and levels of voter registration

Ansolabehere and Konisky (2005) opine that easing registration requirements is likely to have a positive effect on turnout and participation in elections. In Kenya, an ID card is considered proof of citizenship and is a mandatory requirement before one is registered as a voter. It is an offence for one not to have an ID card after attaining the mandatory age of 18 years. Unfortunately, once the youth has registered for the ID, the rest of the process depends on the pertinent government agencies. It is beyond the ability and comprehension of the young person. In Kenya, cases of delays in getting an ID after registering for it are rampant, even without considering it as the most crucial requirement for one to be registered as a voter.

While it is understandable that the National Registration Bureau (NRB) and the IEBC are different agencies with varying mandates, collaboration between government agents that are interdependent cannot be overemphasized. For most young people who do not understand the functions of various arms of government, it is difficult to understand how the same government can deny one an ID and ask the same person to register as a voter using an ID. In a voluntary voter registration system like the one practised in Kenya, this is a recipe for dismal registration rates especially among the most crucial demographic of potential voters – the youth. Denying young people IDs and voters' cards is disenfranchising them yet they comprise the largest number of eligible voters in the country and can influence the outcome of elections to a large

extent. As CMD Kenya (2015) asserts, youth are supposed to and are eager to play significant roles in political parties but this can only be made possible through the acquisition of both the national ID card and a voter's card. It behoves the government to expedite the process of issuing Identity cards to young people to enable them register as voters. Moreover, as Ansolabehere and Konisky (2005) opine, the government should consider making the national ID the voter's card so that young people only have to get one crucial document. Merging civil registration records and the records of voters so that one automatically becomes a voter when they acquire national ID cards would also significantly boost voters' registers and boost turnout during elections.

However, as Dundas (2015) further asserts, it is not automatic that when people have ID cards they will vote. Negative attitudes towards elected and prospective leaders, contribute significantly to decisions of people who have no IDs not voting. Moreover, NRB may delay to issue duplicate IDs to applicants thus hindering registration as voters and even the voting exercise itself.

2.7. Theoretical Framework

This study adopted the rational choice theory. Lichbach (2006) posits that this theory was developed to explain economic but also social behaviour. Initially, the idea developed from what was called a rational man in economics. This is a person who acts rationally when purchasing a product instead of acting from emotions. The rational choice theory holds that average conduct is a product of individual decisions. This theory found wide application in economics because it helped to understand why a consumer would decide to buy one product and not the other. It is important to understand that a rational person has a number of choices and has to choose the most favourable through a rational process. The individual can also rate the items in terms of which one is better than the other.

To make a rational decision, an individual must have the right information. This includes the costs and benefits of choosing one item or product over the other and the probability of one event happening and not the other. Moreover, the rational individual must be consistent in deciding the most appropriate option. At the societal level, the rational choice theory is

interpreted to mean that the average behaviour of a society is based on decisions made by each individual. The individual must have considered the available options and the accompanying consequences of each. Generally, the rational individual is expected to make the decision that maximizes his or her pleasure or advantage vis-à-vis the cost of making the decision (Hauptmann, 1996).

In the context of voter registration, the rational choice theory applies to both the individual and the society. Following the two MVRs and continuous voter registration conducted between February 2016 and February 2017, IEBC (2017) acknowledges that the number of people who were registered were lower than the number the commission expected. Since individual decisions make up societal behaviour, it is important to consider the reason individuals failed to register. The individuals in this case is the prospective voter. To this end, one must consider this group of people rational beings who are likely to make rational decisions. Since rational beings make decisions based on available information, and it is assumed that they have complete information, one must ask whether the available information on voter registration is actually complete. The ensuing analysis will lead to the question of whether voter education and sensitization were adequate and comprehensive for prospective voters. In addition, it is important to understand that people act on available information thus raising the possibility of such people having erroneous or incomplete information about the voter registration exercise and its significance for them.

Another crucial issue to address is the cost-benefit analysis that every rational being makes (Dryzek & Dunleavy, 2009). Busy people, trying to eke out a living, may question whether there is any benefit to be derived from registering as voters arises. According to the UK Electoral Commission (2012), young voters in the Great Britain, were so engrossed with searching for work and making a livelihood that they did not see the importance of registering as voters. Many people did not find the exercise worthwhile because they felt their votes would not change the situation in any way. In essence, unless the people are convinced that there will be some kind of tangible benefit from registering as voters and actually acting their ballots, they are likely to avoid the exercise and prioritize other activities that are more economically beneficial. This raises the issue of voter attitudes.

According to Abraham Maslow, people prioritize needs based on the most basic, which explains why a person may spend the whole day at work and not create time to go and register as a voter. Additionally, considering the inadequacy of BVR kits and the fact that prospective voters had to look for information on where registration clerks were stationed and follow them there, it is possible for people to consider this too much of a sacrifice for an activity they feel will not be of immediate or significant gratification to them. This again raises the issue of voter education on the importance of participating in the democratic activity of voting. It also brings into focus the issues of accessibility of registration centres.

The rational choice theory is also applicable in the case of a young person who needs to have a national ID before registering as a voter yet getting the ID is a challenge. The youth is confronted by a dual-challenge – obtaining an ID and registering as a voter. Both processes require the young person to sacrifice time and money, resources that are scarce especially for jobless young people. As a rational being, and having weighed the cost and benefits against available resources, the decision to forego voter registration is logical. In essence, the decision of whether to register as a voter or not should not be misconstrued to imply that youth are not patriotic or they don't care about the welfare of their nation. Left to themselves, they must make rational decisions, and if they do not envision any tangible benefits of registering as voters, they will turn their attention to worthier activities. The same applies to people who have lost their IDs or have not renewed their posts.

2.8. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1. presents the conceptual framework that will be utilized in this study. A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation of the relationship between variables.

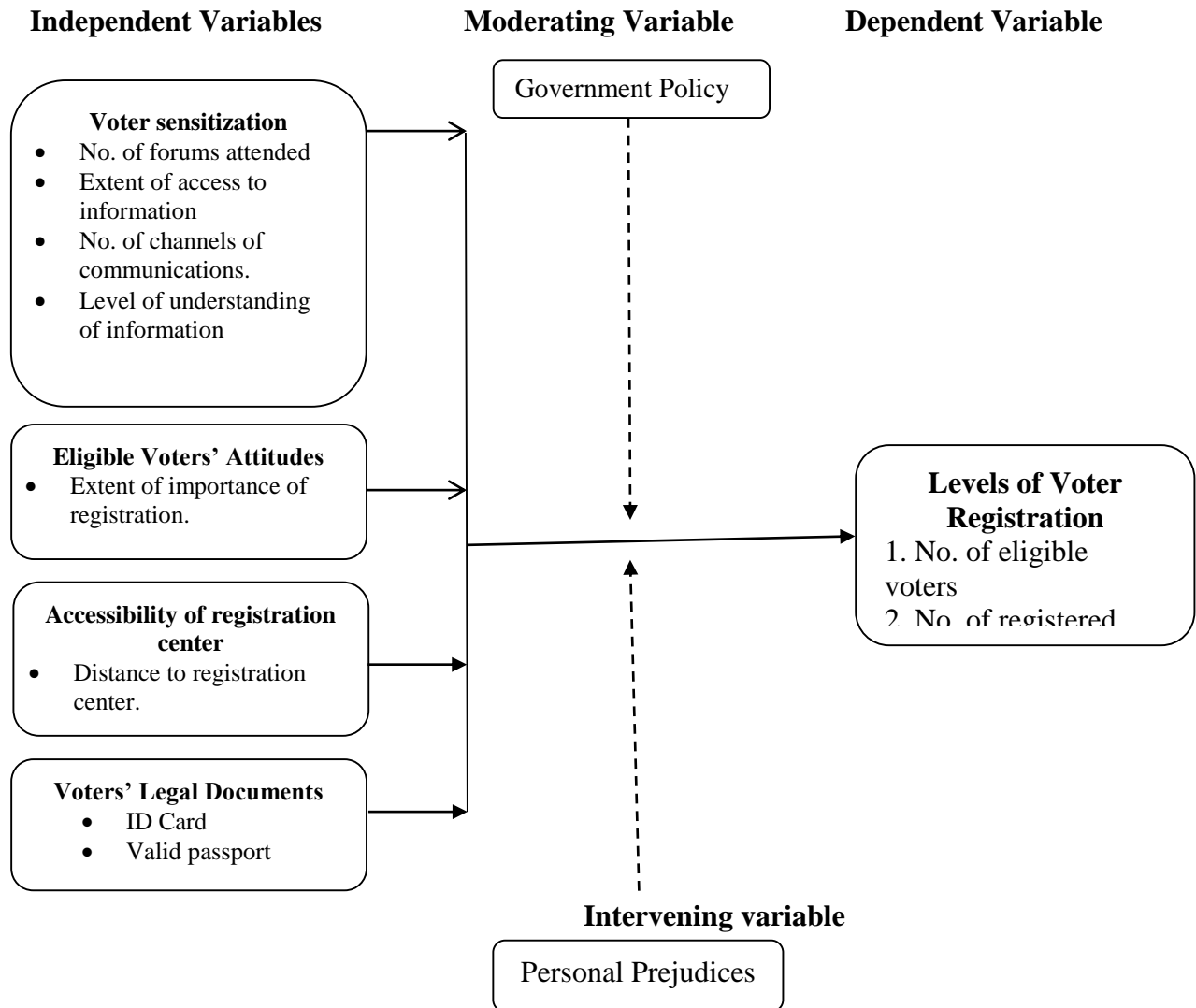


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2.9. Relationship between Variables

In this study, the dependent variable is levels of voter registration which entails the number of eligible voters targeted by Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) versus the number of actual registered voters during continuous voter registration, Mass Voter Registration (MVR) I and MVR II in Tigania East Constituency. The independent variables, which influence the dependent variable, include voter awareness and education, which entails levels of awareness of the existence of voter registration exercises. Public attitudes are the predispositions of the public towards registering as voters, especially the significance of the exercise to them. Accessibility of registration centres entails proximity to these facilities in terms of physical infrastructure and distances. Voters legal documents are the mandatory documentation for one to be registered as a voter, such as ID Cards and valid passports, in addition to auxiliary documents that one is required to produce when applying for an ID card. Since voter registration is an exercise conducted by the state, government policy is a moderating variable, which has influence on voter registration decisions, for example when to conduct mass voter registration and when the exercise is closed for voters' registers to be inspected, but is not a factor under study currently. Finally, the intervening variable in this study is personal beliefs, since it mediates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, but does not have a significant effect.

2.10. Research Gaps

There is a dearth of academic studies on voter registration in existing literature. Most literature is secondary in nature. The few existing primary studies are skewed towards voter turnout during elections and the attendant factors. Voter registration is often referred to in the context of voter turnout. Evrensel (2010), for example, conducted a comparative analysis of voter registration in Africa, while IIDEA (2016) analysed voter turnout data in Kenya. Ansolabehere and Konisky (2005) analysed how introduction of voter registration affects voter turnout. National Youth Council of Ireland (2015) wrote a report questioning why about 120,000 young people had not registered at a time when several referendums were days away. Babeiya (2013) studied voter registration in Tanzania from the perspective of inclusion and exclusion during elections. These examples encapsulate a situation in which a crucial aspect of the

electioneering process has received little or no attention from academia. The proposed study has not been attempted before, within or outside Kenya. It is, therefore, significant, to study the factors that influence voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. Hopefully, this will spawn similar and relate studies in Kenya and abroad and open up this important democratic process to scrutiny and academic examination.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter details the procedure that were employed in collecting and analysing data as well as the interpretation of pertinent findings. Specifically, this section elaborates on the research design, target population and sample, sampling design, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of the data collection tools, strategies for analysing data and ethical issues among other issues.

3.2. Research design

According to Trochim and Donnelly (2006), a research design is like glue that sticks together the various elements of a research. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Descriptive designs purpose to elucidate the characteristics of a population or the items in it at a specific time (Kothari, 2003) without any attempt to manipulate the specimen being studied (Mertler, 2006). The study investigated the factors that influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency, Meru County.

3.3. Target population

According to McBurney and White (2009), a population is the sum of all the individuals that carry the characteristics that the study is looking for and which are eligible for study. The target population of this study was all adult residents of Tigania East Constituency, totalling 24,255 as indicated in Table 3.1. This comprised those who have registered (18,495 or 76.3%) and those who were yet to register (5,730 or 23.7%) because both sets had respective reasons for their decisions.

Table 3.1. Target Population

S. No.	Ward	Eligible Voters	Registered voters	Percentage
1.	Thangatha	6,192	5,236	84.6%
2.	Mikinduri	5,206	4,495	86.3%
3.	Kiguchwa	2,954	1,974	66.8%
4.	Muthara	6,012	4,054	67.4%
5.	Karama	3,861	2,736	70.9%
Total		24,225	18,495	76.3%

3.4. Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

This section describes the number of respondents for the study and the procedure that was used to identify these individuals.

3.4.1. Sample Size

This study utilized the “Table for Determining Sample Size for a Given Population”, which was developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), to derive the sample from the population. According to Sahu (2013), Krejcie & Morgan used the following formula to determine sampling size for a specific population.

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where:

S = the required sample size

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom at the desired confidence level.

N = the population size.

P = the population (assumed to be 50 since this would provide the maximum sample size)

d= the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05)

Based on this table, a population of 20,000 requires a sample of 377, while a population of 30,000 should have a sample of 379. The population of 24,225 eligible voters in Tigania East

Constituency falls between 20,000 and 30,000, which means it should have a population of between 377 and 379, hence 378.

3.4.2. Sampling Procedure

The study used stratified random sampling method, to distribute the sample of 378 eligible voters across the five wards of the constituency as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Sampling Frame

S. No.	Ward	Population	Sample ($n \times 378$) \div 24,225	Percentage
1.	Thangatha	6,192	97	25.7
2.	Mikinduri	5,206	81	21.4
3.	Kiguchwa	2,954	46	12.2
4.	Muthara	6,012	94	24.9
5.	Karama	3,861	60	15.8
Total		24,225	378	100

3.5. Data collection instruments

Data for this study was collected using a questionnaire. This is an instrument that collects both primary and secondary data from respondents by asking the latter to offer written responses to both closed and open-ended questions. According to Denscombe (2007), questionnaires elicit both factual data and opinions, all of which are crucial in data analysis. Since the same questionnaire is issued to all respondents, this instrument yields consistent data. The questionnaire issued to respondents in this study captured both qualitative and quantitative data. It had five sections. The first one contained personal information while the next four collected data on each of the objectives.

3.5.1. Pilot Study

Prior to the actual study, a pilot study was conducted to test the research instrument. The pilot study involved 10% of the sample size, which was 37.8 or 38 individuals. Respondents

for the pilot study were not be eligible for the main study. The pilot study helped to ascertain the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

3.5.2. Validity of instruments

Connaway and Powell (2010) assert that a data collection instrument has validity when it measures the variables it was meant to. The study used test-retest method to measure the validity of the questionnaire. Thirty-eight eligible voters from the neighbouring Tigania East Constituency were given the questionnaire to fill and the responses were assessed for consistency. In addition, the study's supervisor helped to establish gaps that needed to be filled to complement information that resulted from test-retest exercise. The final instrument was used to collect data during the study.

3.5.3. Reliability of data instruments

A data collection instrument is said to have reliability when it measures variables in a precise and dependable manner (Connaway and Powell, 2010). In this study, the measure of reliability was the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha. It was used to assess the test-retest questionnaires to establish whether they were reliable. According to Andrew, Pedersen and McEvoy (2011), a Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha above 7.0 is the minimum acceptable for reliability. The questionnaire achieved a Cronbach Coefficient Alpha of 7.1 when it was subjected to the test using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), thus indicating it was suitable for data collection.

3.6. Data collection procedure

Data was collected from eligible voters especially within market centres where there were large concentrations of people. Four graduate research assistants were trained and deployed four to administer questionnaires in four wards, with the researcher handling the remaining ward. Research assistants were able to explain contents of the questionnaire to respondents, especially illiterate and semi-illiterate registered and unregistered voters.

3.7. Data analysis technique

The aim of data analysis aims at reduce data into units that can be interpreted logically in a manner that enables the testing of relationships between variables and the drawing of conclusions from findings (De Vaus, Fouche & Delport, 2005). The data collected from this study was edited, coded and classified based on the research objectives. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to generate frequency tables and charts for presentation of results since this is a descriptive study. The findings were presented and discussed thematically i.e. according to research objectives / questions.

3.8. Ethical issues

Data collection was sanctioned through pertinent written authorization to carry out the research. Moreover, the letter of transmittal for data collection was attached to the questionnaires that were issued to respondents. Respondents were also assured that the data being collected from them would only be used for academic purposes. Eligible voters were further instructed not to indicate their names on the questionnaire, and no respondents were coerced to participate in the study.

3.9. Operational Definition of variables

Table 3.3. defines each of the variables in this study by expounding on what type of variable it is, its indicator, and how the latter was measured. Moreover, is delineates the method that was used to collect data, the level of scale employed, as well as the type and level of analysis.

Table 3.3. Operationalization of Variables

	Research Objective	Type of Variable	Indicator	How to Measure Indicator	Level of Scale	Type of Analysis	Level of Analysis
1	To establish how voter sensitization influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.	Independent: voter education and awareness and voter registration	Voter education	No. of forums attended	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive
			Sensitization	Extent of access to information	Ordinal	Qualitative	
			Dissemination	No. of channels of communication	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive
			Understanding	Level of understanding of information	Ordinal	Qualitative	Descriptive
2	To assess how eligible voters' attitudes influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.	Independent: attitudes	Importance of registering	Extent of importance of registration.	Ordinal	Quantitative	Descriptive
3	To evaluate how accessibility of registration centres influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.	Independent: proximity to registration centres	Distance	Distance to registration centre.	Ratio	Qualitative	Descriptive
			Impact of distance	Extent to which distance is important	Ordinal	Qualitative	Descriptive
4	To assess how availability of voters' legal documents influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency.	Independent: acquiring a National Identification Card	Challenges	Type of barriers faced when accessing it	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
			Waiting duration	Average waiting time	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive
5	Levels of Voter Registration	Dependent: Voter Registration	Targeted voters	No. of expected voters.	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive Descriptive
			Actual registration	No. of youth voters registered	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter encompasses analysis of data, presentation and interpretation based on the study's objectives and respective questionnaire responses. Data is presented in frequencies and percentages, followed by pertinent interpretations. The purpose of the study was to investigate factors that influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency, Meru County.

4.2. Questionnaire Return Rate

The study purposed to administer and collect 378 questionnaires. However, 368 questionnaires were returned, representing 97% of the total documents issued. This return rate is acceptable since it is above the 70% rate that is regarded as being very good (Mugenda & Mugenda (2003).

4.3. Demographic Information of Respondents

The study sought to establish the gender, age, educational levels, occupations and registration statuses of respondents.

4.3.1. Gender of Eligible Voters

Table 4.1 presents the distribution of eligible voters according to gender.

Table 4.1. Gender Distribution of Eligible Voters

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	210	57.1
Female	158	42.9
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.1, majority of the eligible voters (57.1%) were male, although the number of females was equally significant (42.9%).

4.3.2. Age Distribution of Eligible Voters

The study also sought information on the ages of respective respondents. Table 4.2 presents the findings.

Table 4.2. Age Distribution of Eligible Voters

Age	Frequency	Percent
18 - 34 Years	206	56.0
35 - 40 Years	95	25.8
41 - 45 Years	33	9.0
46 - 50 Years	24	6.5
51 Years and above	10	2.7
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.2, majority of eligible voters (56%) were youth (between 18 and 34 years). This is a reflection of population trends in the country, whereby there is a youth bulge. Moreover, the main target of voter registration is young people who have attained the age of 18 and are, therefore, first time voters.

4.3.3. Education Levels of Eligible Voters

Respondents were requested to indicate their highest education levels. Table 4.3 presents the findings:

Table 4.3. Education Levels of Eligible Voters

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
Primary School	85	23.1
Secondary School	167	45.4
College / University	93	25.3
None	23	6.3
Total	368	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.3, majority of eligible voters (45.4%), were secondary school graduates. Only 6.3% of the respondents had not attended school. This data indicated that eligible voters are likely to understand information on voter registration and its importance, thus increasing their desire to register as voters.

4.3.4. Occupations of Eligible Voters

The study further sought to establish the occupations of the respondents. Table 4.4 summarizes the findings.

Table 4.4. Occupations of Eligible Voters

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Unemployed	78	21.2
Student	55	14.9
Formally employed	41	11.1
Self-employed	194	52.7
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.4, majority of the eligible voters (52.7%) were self-employed, while significant number (21.2%) were unemployed. Most of those in the two categories were young people. This being a rural constituency, it is understandable that only 11.1% of the respondents were in formal employment.

4.3.5. Status of Registration

Eligible voters were also requested to indicate whether they had registered as voters. Table 4.5 indicates that majority (77.2%) were registered. This compares favourably with registration data (See Table 1.1) which indicated that 76.3% of targeted voters had been registered in Tigania East Constituency.

4.4. Voter Sensitization and Levels of Voter Registration

The study sought to assess how eligible voters' attitudes influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. To this end, eligible voters were asked questions on voter

attendance of sensitization forums, access to information, channels of communication and comprehension of disseminated information.

4.4.1. Channels of Voter Registration Information

Eligible voters were requested to indicate the channels through which they received information that there was a voter registration exercise going on. Their responses are summarized in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Channels of Voter Registration Information

Channels of Communication	Frequency	Percent
Radio	121	32.9
Television	102	27.7
Newspapers	24	6.5
Social Media	47	12.8
IEBC Field Staff	16	4.3
Public Barazas	31	8.4
Announcement in religious places	27	7.3
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.5, most of the eligible voters (32.9%) received information through radio, followed by television (27.7%) and social media (12.8%). Radio is arguably the most accessed mass communication media in the country and television is also growing in popularity, implying these findings are reliable. The growing influence of social media, especially among the youth, is evident from this data.

4.4.2. Attendance of Voter Sensitization Forums

When asked whether they had attended voter sensitization forums, majority of eligible voters (75%) answered in the negative. Voter registration forums are important in voter registration because they offer eligible voters to get in-depth information and to ask questions and seek clarifications. It is evident that IEBC and the government did not conduct enough such forums.

This buttresses earlier findings (Table 4.5) that only 8.4% and 4.3% received information on voter registration through public barazas and IEBC field staff, respectively.

4.4.3. Respondents’ Understanding of Disseminated Information

The study also probed respondents on whether they understood the information on voter registration as disseminated through various channels. Majority of eligible voters (72.3%) indicated that they had understood the information that was disseminated.

The study further sought for reasons on why the information was understood or not understood by eligible voters. Their responses are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. Explanations on Understanding of Voter Registration Information

Explanations	Frequency	Percent
Dissemination Forum Allowed Questions and Clarifications	57	15.5
Information was clear and detailed	208	56.5
Disseminated Information was inadequate or not clear	103	28.0
Total	368	100.0

Majority of the respondents (56.5%) said they understood the disseminated materials because the information was clear and detailed. Some of those who attended dissemination forum said they had opportunity to ask questions and seek clarifications. Those who did not understand the information said it was not adequate or clear.

4.4.4. Eligible Voters’ Awareness of Continuous Registration

Eligible voters were also required to indicate whether they were aware that one can register as a voter at any time of the year at the Constituency IEBC Office, without having to wait until announcement of Mass Voter Registration (MVR) exercises. Majority of the respondents (73.4%) said they were not aware. This data indicates lapses in communication by IEBC because continuous voter registration would have reduced the numbers of registered voters that often get locked out of the voters’ register due to lateness.

4.4.5. Extent to Which IEBC Communication Methods are Effective

Eligible voters were requested to rate the extent to which the methods used by IEBC to communicate to targeted individuals were effective. Table 4.7. summarizes their responses:

Table 4.7. Effectiveness of IEBC Communication Methods on Voter Registration

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very Great Extent	97	26.4
Great Extent	110	29.9
Moderate Extent	63	17.1
Less Extent	55	14.9
No Extent at All	43	11.7
Total	368	100.0

From Table 4.7, it is evident that cumulatively 56.3% believe that IEBC’s methods were effective. However, it is important to consider the 43.7% others who were either did not favour IEBC’s approach to voter sensitization or were not sure that the methods were effective.

4.4.6. Extent to Which Voter Sensitization Influenced Eligible Voters’ Decisions

The study further sought to know the extent to which availability of information, or lack of it, influenced the decision to either register or not register as a voter. The responses are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Extent to Which Voter Sensitization Influenced Eligible Voters’ Decisions

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very Great Extent	84	22.8
Great Extent	116	31.5
Moderate Extent	88	23.9
Less Extent	51	13.9
No Extent at All	29	7.9
Total	368	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.8, majority of the respondents (54.3%) indicated that voter sensitization influenced their decisions to register or not register as voters. However, it is important to bear in mind that an almost similar number (46.7%) did not support these sentiments, implying that IEBC voter sensitization strategies need to be improved.

4.4.7. How Availability of Information Influences Decision to Register as a Voter

Eligible voters were asked to explain how availability of information influenced their decisions to register or not. Depending on how they had rated the relationship between voter sensitization’s influence on decision to register, respondents gave various explanations. Some said that the information they had received convinced them to register Others asserted that the information reminded constantly of the need to register. On the other hand, there were those who said they already knew the importance of registering as voters; several indicated that they would have registered even without voter sensitization, and the final category claimed they did not register because they did not get adequate information.

4.4.8. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Influence of Voter Sensitization on Levels of Voter Registration

To establish the influence of voter sensitization on levels of voter registration, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used. Table 4.9 summarizes the results.

Table 4.9. Correlations of Voter Sensitization and Levels of Voter Registration

		Voter Sensitization	Levels of Voter Registration
Pearson	Levels of Voter Sensitization	1.000	0.88
Si 2 - tailed	Levels of Voter Registration	0.88	1.000
N	368	368	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 4.9, there is a strong positive correlation (0.88) between voter sensitization and levels of voter registration, and the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that levels of voter registration increase as voter sensitization increases and vice versa.

4.5. Eligible Voters' Attitudes and Levels of Voter Registration

The study also investigated the influence of eligible voters' attitudes on levels of voter registration. Respondents were required to provide information on how significant voter registration was to them and whether they would re-elect the current crop of leaders.

4.5.1. Extent to Which Voter Registration is Important to Eligible Voters

The study sought to find out the extent to which voter registration was important. The responses of eligible voters are summarized in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10. Extent to Which Voter Registration is Important to Eligible Voters

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very Great Extent	203	55.2
Great Extent	73	19.8
Moderate Extent	59	16.0
Less Extent	20	5.4
No Extent at All	13	3.5
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.10, majority of the respondents (75%) believed that voter registration was important to them, to a very great extent or to a great extent. This information is crucial considering that 22.8% of eligible voters were not registered by the end of the exercise.

4.5.2. Reasons for Importance of Voter Registration to Eligible Voters

The study also probed eligible voters for explanations on the importance of voter registration. Their responses are summarized in table 4.11.

Table 4.11. Reasons for Importance of Voter Registration

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
It enables me to exercise my democratic right	75	20.4
I want to vote for the leaders who will bring positive change	147	39.9
It will be my first time to vote	49	13.3
The status quo will continue	61	16.6
The election process will not be free and fair	36	9.8
Total	368	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.11, majority of the eligible voters (73.6%) understood the importance of registering as a voter, citing it as a democratic right; as a strategy for effecting change in society, or as important because they had attained the right age. However, it is important to consider the apathy displayed by the remaining number (26.4%) who indicated that either the election process would not be free or fair or registering as a voter and voting would not alter the current state of affairs.

4.5.3. Influence of Current Elected Leadership on Decision to Register as a Voter

The study further questioned eligible votes on whether they would register to vote if they knew the current elected leaders would be re-elected. Majority (82.1%) answered in the affirmative.

Probed on why they would vote or not vote considering the performance of current leadership, eligible voters gave the responses contained in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12. Explanations of Influence of Political Leadership on Voter Registration

Responses	Frequency	Percent
It is my democratic right	136	37.0
No leader is guaranteed re-election	167	45.4

Current leadership has not been effective	65	17.6
Total	368	100.0

Based on Table 4.12, majority of eligible voters (45.4%) felt that political leadership had performed well, intimating they were likely to register as voters or had registered to re-elect these leaders. However, a significant number (37%) indicated that voting was a democratic right, thus the need to register as a voter.

4.5.4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Eligible Voters' Attitudes and Levels of Voter Registration

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run to establish the influence of eligible voters' attitudes on levels of voter registration. Table 4.13 summarizes the results.

Table 4.13. Correlations of Eligible Voters' Attitudes and Levels of Voter Registration

		Eligible Voters' Attitudes	Levels of Voter Registration
Pearson	Eligible Voters' Attitudes	1.000	0.62
Si 2 - tailed	Levels of Voter Registration	0.62	1.000
N	368	368	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 4.13, there is a strong positive correlation (0.62) between eligible voters' attitudes and levels of voter registration, and the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that as eligible voters' biases increase so does level of voter registration and vice versa.

4.6. Accessibility of Registration Centres and Levels of Voter Registration

The study also sought to evaluate how accessibility of registration centres influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. Eligible voters were asked to comment on distance and time to registration centres and waiting time at the centre before being attended to.

4.6.1. Time Taken to Reach Nearest Voter Registration Centre

Eligible voters were asked to indicate the time they took to reach the nearest voter registration centres from their respective homes. The responses are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14. Time Taken to Reach the Nearest Voter Registration Centre

Time	Frequency	Percent
15 Minutes or Less	133	36.1
16 Minutes to 30 Minutes	132	35.9
31 Minutes to 1 Hour	86	23.4
Over 1 Hour	17	4.6
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.14, a slight majority (36.1%) of the respondents took 15 minutes or less to reach voter registration venues, which is almost the same number as those who spent between 16 and 30 minutes (35.9%). However, one cannot ignore the 23.4% who said they took between 31 minutes and an hour to reach respective registration centres.

4.6.2. Extent to Which Distance to Registration Centre Determined Decision to Register

Eligible voters were asked to rate the extent to which distance to the registration centre influenced the decision to register as a voter. Their responses are contained in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15. Influence of Distance to Voter Registration Centre on Decision to Register

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very Great Extent	41	11.1
Great Extent	156	42.4

Moderate Extent	72	19.6
Less Extent	37	10.1
No Extent at All	62	16.8
Total	368	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.15, a cumulative majority of the respondents (53.5%) indicated that distance to registrations station played a role in their decision to register as voters. It is evident that most of the respondents did not find the distance a demotivating factor when deciding to register as voters.

4.6.3. Waiting Time Before Registration as a Voter

The study further requested for information on the time it took for eligible voters to be registered once they reached respective registration centres. Their responses are summarized in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16. Waiting Time Before Registration

Waiting Time	Frequency	Percent
15 Minutes or Less	189	51.4
16 - 30 Minutes	80	21.7
More than 30 Minutes	16	4.3
N/A	83	22.6
Total	368	100.0

As indicated in Table 4.16, majority of eligible voters (51.4) who visited respective centres waited for up to 15 minutes to be enlisted. However, there were those who reported waiting for between 16 minutes and half an hour or more, which is a significant amount of time.

The study also requested eligible voters to suggest how IEBC could improve on issues of distance to polling stations and waiting time before being registered, to encourage voter registration. The suggestions volunteered by respondents were: to increase number of registration centres, to provide transport to polling stations, to increase the numbers and

efficiency of registration machines, to increase number of registration personnel, to conduct door-to-door registration of voters and to allow eligible voters to register online.

4.6.4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Accessibility of Registration Centres and Levels of Voter Registration

To establish the relationship between accessibility of registration centres and levels of voter registration, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run. Table 4.17 summarizes the results.

Table 4.17. Correlations of Accessibility of Registration Centres and Levels of Voter Registration

		Accessibility of Registration Centres	Levels of Voter Registration
Pearson	Accessibility of Registration Centres	1.000	0.32
Si 2 - tailed	Levels of Voter Registration	0.32	1.000
N	368	368	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It is evident from Table 4.17, that there is a moderate positive correlation (0.32) between accessibility of registration centres and levels of voter registration, and the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that as accessibility of registration centres eases, levels of voter registration increase and vice versa.

4.7. Availability of Voter’s Legal Documents and Levels of Voter Registration

The study further wanted to assess how the availability of voters’ legal documents (National Identification Card or a Valid Passport) influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency, and pertinent questions were posed to eligible voters.

4.7.1. National Identity Card and Levels of Voter Registration

Eligible voters were required to indicate whether they had been issued with National ID cards, which are mandatory for one to be registered as a voter. Majority (96.7%) had national ID

cards, implying they were eligible for enlistment as voters. When probed on how long they had to wait to receive national ID cards after applying with the National Registration Bureau (NRB), majority of the respondents (85.6%) indicated that it took between one and three months. However, those who had applied for national ID cards and had not received them indicated they had been waiting for more than three months to receive the documents.

4.7.2. Necessity of National ID Card for Voter Registration

The study also wanted to establish the opinions of eligible voters on the fact that the National ID Card is mandatory for voter registration. Majority of the respondents (70.1%) agreed that national ID Cards should be obligatory for registration as a voter.

The study probed eligible voters for explanations following their responses on whether the national ID should be compulsory for one to be enlisted to vote. Table 4.18 summarizes their explanations.

Table 4.18. Whether National ID Card Should be Mandatory Registration

Responses	Frequency	Percent
To ascertain citizenship	54	14.7
To safeguard the voting process	205	55.7
The process of acquiring ID cards is long and strenuous	109	29.6
Total	368	100.0

According to Table 4.18, majority of the eligible voters (70.4%) who supported the need for a national ID card before one is registered as a voter, indicated that the ID was important for identification of Kenyan citizens and also to ensure the voting process was safeguarded from people with ill-motives. However, it is important to note the significant number of respondents (29.6%) who felt that the process of acquiring an ID card was long and strenuous, to the point of locking out eligible voters from registering. In essence, while majority of the respondents (75%) had indicated that voter registration was very important for them (see Table 4.9), some would be locked out for lacking ID cards, thus the opinion that this requirement should be shelved.

4.7.3. Strategies of Easing Voter Registration Process

The study further requested respondents to suggest ways in which IEBC could ease the process of voter registration for eligible voters. Table 4.19 presents the findings.

Table 4.19. Strategies of Easing Voter Registration Process

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Increase number of registration centers	114	31.0
Increase rate and spread of public sensitization	97	26.4
Set up permanent registration centers at grassroot levels	104	28.3
Provide mobile registration centers	39	10.6
Allow registration for adults without ID Cards	14	3.8
Total	368	100.0

The responses on Table 4.19 indicate that majority of eligible voters (31%) proposed that the number of registration centers be increased, especially because the felt distances from respective homes to registration centers was long. Another important suggestion was to create continuous registration centers at grassroot level (28.3%). Equally significant was the suggestion that the IEBC should improve its public sensitization campaigns by moving to the grassroots and using as many channels of communication as possible.

4.6.4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Availability of Voter’s Legal Documents and Levels of Voter Registration

To establish the relationship between availability of voter’s legal documents and levels of voter registration, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was Table 4.20 summarizes the results.

Table 4.20. Correlations of Availability of Voter’s Legal Documents and Levels of Voter Registration

	Availability of Voter’s Legal Documents	Levels of Voter Registration
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Pearson	Availability of Voter's Legal Documents	1.000	0.34
Si 2 - tailed	Levels of Voter Registration	0.34	1.000
N	368	368	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It is evident from Table 4.20, that there is a moderate positive correlation (0.34) between availability of voter's legal documents and voter registration, and the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that as availability of voter's legal documents increases levels of voter registration increase and vice versa.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter consists of the summary of findings, pertinent discussions as well as recommendations and suggestions for further research. The overarching purpose of the study was to establish factors that influence voter registration in Tigania East Constituency, Meru County, Kenya.

5.2. Summary of Findings

The study had four main objectives on which the summary of findings is premised.

The first objective was to establish how voter sensitization influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. It was established the majority of eligible voters received information on Mass Voter Registration through radio. In addition, most of the respondents did not attend any voter registration sensitization forum. Moreover, majority of eligible voters indicated that they had understood the information that was disseminated, with most of them indicating the information was detailed and clear. Additionally, most eligible voters were not aware of continuous voter registration at IEBC constituency offices. The study also established that a cumulative majority believed that IEBC's communication methods were effective. In addition, majority of the respondents indicated that voter sensitization influenced their decisions to register or not register as voters. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run on the data. It revealed a strong positive correlation between voter sensitization and voter registration.

The second objective of the study was to assess how eligible voters' attitudes influence levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. The study established that majority of eligible voters considered voter registration to be of great importance. Most of the eligible voters also understood the importance of registering as a voter, citing it as a democratic right; as a strategy for effecting change in society, or as important because they had attained the right age. Moreover, majority of the respondents indicated they would register to vote if whether the

current elected leaders would be re-elected or not. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was run through the data. It revealed a strong positive correlation between eligible voters' attitudes and voter registration.

The third objective of the study was to evaluate how accessibility of registration centres influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. It was found out that a slight majority of the respondents took 15 minutes or less to reach voter registration venues. Moreover, a cumulative majority of the respondents indicated that distance to registrations station played a role in their decision to register as voters. In addition, most eligible voters who visited respective centres waited for up to 15 minutes to be enlisted. Respondents suggested that the number of registration centres should be increased as a strategy of encouraging eligible voters to enlist. Using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, the study established that there was a moderate, positive relationship between accessibility of registration centres and voter registration.

The study's fourth objective was to assess how the availability of voters' legal documents (National Identification Card or a Valid Passport) influences levels of voter registration in Tigania East Constituency. It was established that most of the respondents had national ID cards. Moreover, majority of the eligible voters indicated that it took between one and three months to acquire a national ID card. Moreover, majority of the respondents agreed that national ID Cards should be obligatory for registration as a voter. Additionally, majority of the eligible voters indicated that the ID was important for identification of Kenyan citizens and also to ensure the voting process was safeguarded from people with ill-motives. Finally, majority of eligible voters proposed that the number of registration centers be increased, especially because they felt distances from respective homes to registration centers was long. The study applied Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to the data set, and established that there was a moderate positive correlation between availability of voter's legal documents and voter registration.

5.3. Discussion of Findings

The following is a discussion of the main findings of the study, based on respective objectives.

5.3.1. Voter Sensitization and Levels of Voter Registration

The findings of this study indicate that voter sensitization has a strong positive influence on levels of voter registration. Radio messages were the most accessed as radio is arguably the most accessed mass communication media in the country. The other important media in this case was television, which is also gaining popularity, especially with the advent of digital channels, and vernacular television stations in particular. It is also evident that social media played a significant role in spreading voter registration information. The use of mainstream media for voter sensitization was prevalent in the Kenya General Election of 2013 as observed by Lusike and Macharia (2016). However, the IEBC and GOK appear not to have organized enough sensitization forums for voter education, yet these forums create fecund ground to listen to the public and to give comprehensive information and answers. Government agencies, nevertheless, fared well when it came to eligible voters' understanding of disseminated information among respondents. While continuous voter registration would have eased the registration process by reducing numbers of eligible voters, most of the respondents were not aware of it. It is apparent that there are lapses in communication by IEBC. About half of the respondents believed that IEBC methods were effective, but one cannot ignore the other half that believes IEBC needs to improve its strategies of disseminating information to eligible voters. From the findings of the study, while 96.7% had national ID cards only 77.2% had registered as voters, partly due to inadequate or incoherent information.

5.3.2. Eligible Voters' Attitudes and Levels of Voter Registration

From the findings of this study, the attitudes of eligible voters have a strong positive influence on the decision to register as a voter. the fact that majority of respondents believe that voter registration is an important exercise, should not negate the fact that a quarter of the respondents are not of the same conviction. As observed by CMD Kenya (2015), young people are especially vulnerable to apathy in relation to voter registration. This information was corroborated by IEBC (2015), which observed that young people were eschewing voter registration. Ideally, every citizen should anticipate participation in elections and the inherent democratic process. While it is evident that most of the respondents understand the underlying reasons (at personal, societal and national levels) for registering to vote, this should not becloud

the insistence by some eligible voters that the voting process would not be free and fair, and that the status quo would remain, thus the feeling that the exercise is preposterous. The findings of these study also reveal that current political leaders do not have a significant influence on the registration process as people will enlist as voters, irrespective of the anticipated outcome of the elections. It is evident from this study that a substantial number of people understand why they should register as voters, but apathy among some eligible voters needs to be addressed, particularly through continuous grassroots voter education.

5.3.3. Accessibility of Registration Centres and Levels of Voter Registration

The findings of this study reveal that there is a moderate positive influence between accessibility of voter registration centre and levels voter registration. The fact that 73.9% of the people have to walk for more than fifteen minutes to reach the nearest registration centre indicates that these individuals are forced to walk long distances. However, the high number of people who registered indicates that they did not use distance as an excuse not to get enlisted. One cannot rule out that other equally-significant may have influenced the decision. For example, the desire to vote for the first time and the need to maintain current leaders or replace them with new ones, are likely to have influenced the decision to walk long distances to register as voters. The waiting time at the registration centre is not more than 30 minutes. For people engaged in other economic and personal activities, time is of the essence. Apparently, waiting time is a product of numerous factors including efficiency of Electronic Voter Identification devices (EVID), number of registration personnel and the skills level of the IEBC staff. The inadequacy of voter registration equipment was observed as a hindrance to voter enlistment by YAA (2012). In essence, of the registration time is to be curtailed to the advantage of the eligible voter, the three aspects need to be addressed. The recommendations for improvement of time and distance-related challenges volunteered by eligible voters also indicate the need to go after the targeted voters instead of merely waiting for them at enlistment venues.

5.3.4. Availability of Voter's Legal Documents and Levels of Voter Registration

Availability of voters' legal documents has a moderate positive influence on levels of voter registration. In Kenya, a national ID card is mandatory for enlistment to vote. The process of acquiring an ID is controlled by the government. All the respondents without ID cards in the

study did not register. However, a number of respondents had the vital document but chose not to register for other reasons. This observation was also made by Dundas (2015). Mass Voter Registrations (MVR) exercises that are slotted for one month often leave out those who have applied for ID cards and have not received them, since, as the findings indicate, some ID cards can take more than three months to be processed. Despite these findings, eligible voters vouched for the ID to remain an obligatory document before a voter is registered. Evidently, most eligible voters assert that only Kenya citizens (national ID card holders) should voter, and demanding this document is a strategy for safeguarding the voting process. However, the long and strenuous procedure of acquiring the document is still a key constraint to the youth, but also to older members of the society who may have lost their ID cards and have applied for replacements – the respondents who feel that IDs should not be compulsory for registration as voters. In essence, while eligible voters agree voter registration is important, the mandatory nature of the national ID card and the rigours of acquiring the document create formidable challenges that need to be addressed. The recommendations of eligible voters on how to ease the process of voter registration reveal the underlying need to decentralize voter registration to the grassroots, beyond what the IEBC practices.

5.4. Conclusions

The findings of the study indicate that voter sensitization had a strong positive influence on levels of voter registration. The more eligible voters are sensitized on the need to register and their rights in this regard, the more likely they are to enlist as voters. However, the choice of communication method and the extent to which eligible voters understand the message being communicated are important factors to be considered by IEBC and GOK.

Moreover, eligible voters' attitudes have a strong positive influence on levels of voter registration. This implies that the less bias eligible voters have against the entire registration process and the subsequent voting exercise the less likely eligible voters will register, and vice versa. Voter education is a crucial factor when voter attitudes are considered.

There is a moderate positive relationship between accessibility of voter registration centres and levels voter registration. Long distances and waiting durations do not necessarily discourage

eligible voters from enlisting. Eligible voters prioritize their democratic rights above the inconveniences they undergo to register.

Finally, availability of voter's legal documents has a moderate positive influence on levels of voter registration. The fact that most people have national ID cards and have registered as voters is indicative of ease of access of registration documents in Tigania East Constituency. Moreover, even those without IDs understand the importance of voter registration and, probably, would have registered if they had this mandatory document.

5.5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following policy recommendations are crucial for IEBC and the government to implement to improve the voter registration process.

1. Review and restructure the channels and processes of communication to include more forums, like public barazas, where eligible voters can ask for clarifications, preferably in their mother-tongues.
2. Revise and update the voter registration education content, with much emphasis being placed on explaining the rationale and importance of voter registration, beyond mere casting of ballots in elections.
3. Decentralize the process of voter registration to the actual polling stations, increase the number of polling clerks, ensure equipment are working efficiently, conduct door-to-door registration and explore the possibility of online voter registration.
4. Ease the process of acquiring a national ID card, and explore the possibility of registering voters at the point of registering for the ID; in essence, ensuring that ID holders become voters with no need of further registration.

5.6. Suggestions for Further Research

The following topics were not within the purview of this study, but they present fecund ground for research.

1. A replication of this study in a different constituency for comparison purposes.
2. Determinants of levels of voter registration for youth or first- time voters.
3. The role of the media in voter registration.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Transmittal for Data Collection

Rebecca Mwontune
P.O. Box 333-60200
Isiolo

12 April 2017

Dear Respondent,

RE: RESEARCH STUDY DATA COLLECTION

I am a Master of Arts (Project Planning and Management) student at the University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a research on Factors Influencing Voter Registration in Tigania East Consistency, Meru County.

As part of my research, I am supposed to collect data from people above the age of eighteen years in Tigania East Constituency; those who have registered as voters and those who have not. I am, therefore, requesting you to assist me by filling in this questionnaire as accurately and honestly as possible. The data I will collect will be used purely for academic purposes and the information you volunteer will not be revealed to any other person.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Rebecca Mwontune

e. Other method (Please specify)

8. Did you attend any forum where information on voter registration and your rights and responsibilities as a voter were discussed?

YES [] NO []

9. Did you understand the information you received on voter education through the method(s) you indicated in Questions 7&8 (above)?

YES [] NO []

10. Please explain your answer in Question 9 (Above)

.....
.....
.....
.....

11. Are you aware that you can register as a voter at any time at the nearest IEBC office?

YES [] NO []

12. To what extent do you think IEBC communication methods to voters are effective?

Very Great Extent [] Great Extent [] Moderate Extent []
Less Extent [] No Extent at all []

13. To what extent did the availability of information or lack of it from IEBC influence your decision to register or not to register as a voter?

Very Great Extent [] Great Extent [] Moderate Extent []
Less Extent [] No Extent at all []

14. Please explain your answer in Question 13 (Above)

.....
.....
.....
.....

PART III: People's Attitudes

15. To what extent is registering as a voter important to you?

Very Great Extent [] Great Extent [] Moderate Extent []

Less Extent [] No Extent at all []

16. Please explain your answer in Question 15 (Above)

.....
.....
.....
.....

17. If you knew that the current leader(s) would be re-elected, would you still register as a voter?

YES [] NO []

18. Please explain your answer in Question 17 (Above).

.....
.....
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PART IV: Proximity to Registration Centres

19. How many minutes does it / did it take you to walk to the nearest voter registration centre?.....

20. To what extent did distance determine your decision to register or not to register as a voter?

Very Great Extent [] Great Extent [] Moderate Extent []

Less Extent [] No Extent at all []

21. How long (in minutes) did you have to wait before registering as a voter?

22. Please suggest ways in which IEBC can improve on the distance and waiting time for youth interested in registering as voters.

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Appendix 3: Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

Note: “N” is population size “S” is sample size.

Krejcie, Robert V., & Morgan, Daryle W., “Determining Sample Size for Research Activities”, Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1970.Vol 30 p 607 - 610