

**THE VOTER BEHAVIOUR: AN ANALYSIS OF
PRESIDENTIAL OPINION POLLS**

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate:

This study is my original work and has not been submitted for the award of a degree in this university or any other learning institution to the best of my knowledge.

K50/88270/2016

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Declaration by the Supervisor:

I do confirm that this study has my approval to be presented for examination as per The University of Nairobi regulations.

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Signature: Date.....

University of Nairobi,

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my father William Otieno and mother Emma Juma who found it worthwhile to invest in my education.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am grateful to my supervisor Dr. Elias Mokuu for being helpful in many significant ways; academic rigour, analysis, and advice, which have led to a great improvement of final work. He found time whenever I needed him and guided me meticulously throughout my study. To the school of Journalism and Mass Communication, I join the list of many great scholars who have passed through your able hands and for this, I will remain grateful for the knowledge imparted in me.

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Above all, I thank the Almighty God who has brought me this far.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAPOR - American Association for Public Opinion Research

ARC - Alliance for Real Change

CPP - Convention Peoples Party

FIDA - Federation of Women Lawyers

IEBC - Independence Elections and Boundaries Commission

IRI - International Republican Institute

KANU - Kenya Africa National Union

KPU - Kenya People's Union

MP - Member of Parliament

NAK - National Alliance Party of Kenya

NARC - National Rainbow Coalition

NASA - National Super Alliance

NCIC - National Cohesion and Integration Commission

NDP - National Development Party

NECEP - National Ecumenical Civic Education Programme

NEMU - National Election Monitoring Unit

NDP - National Development Party

OMW - Operation Moi Wins

TAK - Thirdway Alliance Kenya

UDP - United Democratic Party

WAPOR - World Association for Public Opinion Research

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the efficacy of opinion polls in influencing swing voters in presidential contest in both Dagoretti South and Kibra constituencies in Nairobi County. Anchored on David Morley's Audience Reception Theory, the study illustrates how the social positioning of a voter would influence their interpretation of opinion polls forecast from a dominant, negotiated, or oppositional position. This study used explanatory research design and the target population comprised 225,515 registered voters in Kibra and Dagoretti South constituencies. The 278 voters were selected through simple random and convenience sampling methods. The study achieved a response rate of 91 percent equivalent to 254 registered voters. Statistical Package for Social Sciences software was used to key data that enabled the generation of frequency distribution tables and bar charts for interpretation and analysis. The key informants were purposively sampled from a political party, academic scholar, opinion polling firm, political analyst and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission personnel. The study established that the kind of questions asked by opinion polling firms, a voter's political party of affiliation and their choice of a presidential candidate are some of the major factors that informed their perception of public opinion polls. Based on these factors, the voters agreed that opinion polls are a tool for testing public opinion but hold the view that they are not correct if they do not interview equal number of voters across the political divide. The study revealed that opinion polls influenced voting behaviour in presidential elections with the influence mainly at perception level and presidential level. Depending on a voter's inclination to a given presidential candidate or political party, they will perceive any opinion poll that rate their candidate as leading to be true and polls that rate them trailing their close competitor as false. The study recommends that for public opinion polls to be perceived empirically, their autonomy and impartiality is only guaranteed by them not undertaking polling sponsored in any way by special interest groups like political parties since analysts and voters in general have come to associate them with either favouring or anti particular to a given political establishment. Secondly, the accuracy of the pre-election survey is highly hinged on opinion polling's carried out closer to the elections day, as voters are more decided then. Lastly, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission should make deliberate and definite move to abate the prevalent influence of kinship cohesions and set-ups that manifest in the choice of a presidential candidate and political party formation in the country.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study, historical perspectives of opinion polls both universally and in Kenya, the link between opinion polls and public opinion, problem statement, study objectives, research questions, significance, limitations and scope of the study and conclusion.

1.1 Background of the Study

“Electoral opinion poll” means a survey of the public opinion or a sample of the public opinion to assess the views of the electorate on various matters relating to an election, political candidates, or political issues (Electoral Opinion Polls Act, 2012). During the general elections, there exists apprehension as to the possible support a given presidential candidate enjoys compared to their close competitor/s, especially if the contest is competitive. Therefore, the best way of measuring citizens’ views is by conducting a survey on presidential candidate’s popularity among registered voters.

Opinion poll are universally denoted as a “poll”, is a survey of public opinion from a selected specific sample. They exemplify opinions of a given population by conducting a series of questioning which afterwards investigators use to extrapolate generalities within calculated confidence intervals and further defined as the scientific measurement of voter attitudes conducted by a public opinion polling firm. The first known opinion poll was a straw poll conducted by *The Harrisburg Pennsylvanian* in 1824; it forecasted John Quincy Adams trailing Andrew Jackson by 169 votes to 335 in United States presidential contest. Given Jackson’s victory in the popular vote

in the full election, straw votes gained popularity amongst voters but they remained local, usually a citywide phenomenon. According to Hillygus (2011), there are three functions of surveys in U.S elections, where elections usually take place after every two years. The forecasted election results, help in understanding voter behaviour and is useful when it comes to planning of campaign strategy. As long as elections have been held globally, people have been predicting there outcomes. Before surveys started, people who were regarded proficient in observation, political insiders and states that were bellwether were often utilised for decision conjecture. The 1824 U.S presidential election were the first to have been decided by popular vote and the preliminary counts taken in scattered bars, volunteer army offices, and open gatherings. Today, every election cycle brings a flood of horserace polling numbers that feed the media, bloggers and even political addicts who endeavour to predict election results.

The advanced day public opinion surveying has been around since the Great Depression of October 1929. In 1936, George Gallup successfully predicted Franklin Roosevelt of the Democratic Party would defeat Alfred Landon of the Republican Party in the U.S. presidency. The predictions popularised his company and in 1938 Dr. Gallup and David Ogilvy who was Gallup Vice President, begun conducting market research for advertising firms and the film industry. To guarantee autonomy and objectivity of surveys, Gallup resolved not to undertake any polling sponsored in any way by special interest groups such as the political parties, a commitment Gallup upholds to this day. Gallup Polls are highly held and have been frequently referenced in mass media as being consistent and an impartial measurement of public opinion. Historically, Gallup Poll has measured public's attitudes regarding every political, social, and economic issues of the day. The Gallup Polls have been famed for their exactitude in forecasting presidential elections outcome in the United States and other countries.

In the present years, especially in the last American presidential elections of 2016, where Donald Trump was elected as president, there has been debate over the role pre-election surveys should play in democracies. Proponents of polling urge that, polls bear a direct way for the public to express their preference towards a given policy rather than going through elected representatives whose responsibility is supposed to be filtering, interpreting, bundling, and who sometimes ignore citizens' opinions. On the other hand, opinion polling has circumvented negotiation and other important features of decision-making (Lewis & Bartley, 2012). Many polls have failed to uncover the importance of the views gathered are to the respondents and whether they are likely to follow through with political action. Since expressing an opinion is easier than acting on it, decision makers tend to give more weight to concerns by their constituents to communicate directly, lobby, and vote. Polls usually report and form public opinion and consequently should be used judiciously. Poll results may be ambiguous and inconsistent, and sometimes they are not very reliable and not sufficient to guide policymaking. They are also subject to cherry picking that is, opinion poll enthusiasts search for surveys that support their political position and their opponents do the same. Opinion polling and elections entwined, in that it is difficult to visualise one without the other. Poll results have continually provided news stories and election expectations; they are capable of shaping candidate/s or voter/s behaviour during the campaign period, since they are a basis of understanding the meaning of outcomes in an election (Hilygus, 2011). The impact of polls depends largely on their visibility.

Elections are a pillar of democracy as they enable a voter to elect representative to exercise civic obligation on their behalf and therefore, media's role in this process is essential. A voter needs to be aptly cognisant so as to be able to elect a candidate who will best articulate his/her interests and views (Mwangi, 2016). The media in Kenya is playing a major role in educating, apprising, and even entertaining its audience. The abundance of viewership and listenership from both television

and radio stations for audience to choose from is not a recent spectacle in Kenya, but it dates back to about two decades ago when the airwaves were liberated. The availability of choice (variety of stations to choose from) then means audiences interact with the television or radio content and personalities that meet their needs and preferences. Often, audience are hypothesised to being a gigantic and loosely connected mass on the receiving end of media. In the English language, the concept of audience first arose in the fourteenth century and meant, “to hear”, as in to give audience. With the emergence of electronic media at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the word was adopted to include the far-flung listeners of radio and television. As a communication channel, media plays an equivocal role in ensuring opinion polling outcomes are accessed by citizens of a country and beyond.

Due to the availability of different media channels, Kenyan audience is spoilt of choices as over 39 percent of the mass media audience watch televisions, another over 90 percent listen to radio and 23 percent read newspapers. Close to 3 million Kenyans, access Internet services while over 14 million use their mobile phones to access information. Across the country, over 3.2 million households have television sets but there are more television viewers in urban centres compared to the rural areas. This could be attributed to urban areas enjoying higher living and having enhanced access to television resources. Local vernacular radio stations are many and spread across the nation making them to have a wide reach. Compared to both English and Kiswahili radio stations, vernacular radio stations coverage area is wider too and their popularity drawn from the fact that listeners tend to associate more with their individual lingoes and local events. The abundance of television and radio stations for audience to choose from then means voters interact with the content that meets their needs and preferences.

According to Oriare et al (2010), Kenya has 43 ethnic languages and all the major communities such as the Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin, Kamba, Meru etc. have their own vernacular/ethnic

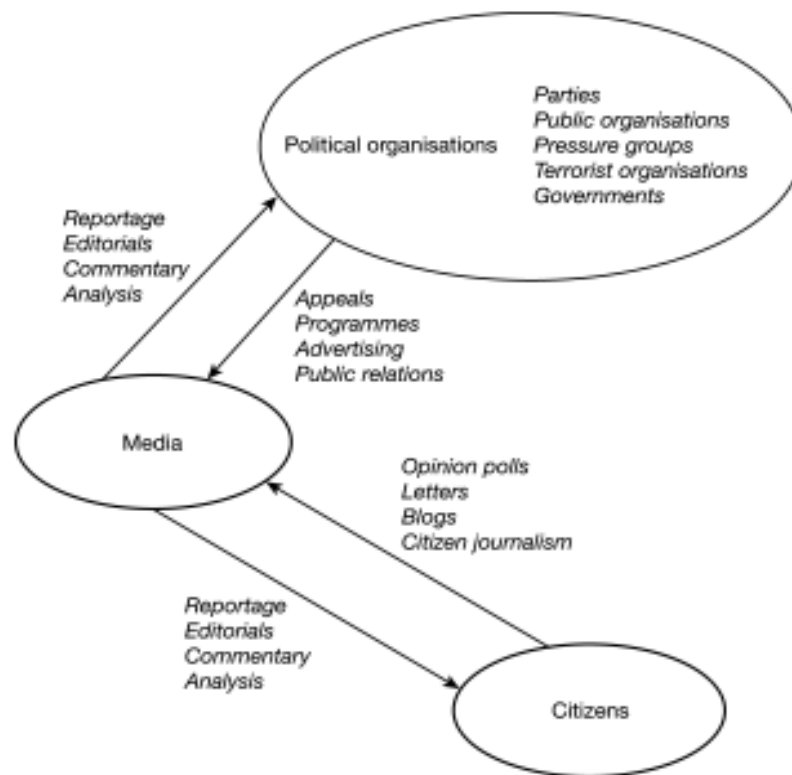
language radio stations. Since only 30 percent of Kenyan households had television sets, television ownership remains a luxury in Kenya and a trusted medium of news and information. Most television consumers are mainly interested in news, in spite of the fact that there are different elements that determine the audience selection of news platforms, access is one of the key determinants, there is an overarching view that the issues determine the popularity of news content (Nyabuga & Nancy Booker, 2013).

Regulation of opinion surveying before and during election is an internationally common practice in liberal democracies. Work on opinion polls regulation has devolved into contradiction between electoral exceptionalism and communicative freedom. ‘Electoral exceptionalism’ allows for priority to liberty but the reasons that elections are extraordinary occurrences when other regulatory objectives, particularly integrity and impartiality in voting and amongst political parties, could shift liberty. The regulations are often in two general categories namely the embargoes and disclosure. An embargo is more meddling regulatory approach that involves barring reporting, if not the conduct of electoral opinion polling during an election campaign. On the other hand, disclosure is a lighter-touch regulatory approach mandating the publication of key information such as the sample location, sample size, the margin of error, and the kind of questions asked, along with initial poll results reports (Orr & Levy, 2016). In Kenya, the regulation is more of disclosure rather than an embargo, given that reporting is permitted during the campaign period with exception of 5 days to elections limitation. During the 5 days, IEBC does not permit publication of pre-election survey results.

In recent years the question of political opinion polling has become strong, the reasons why are interlocking and range from relatively subsiding cost of polling to the escalation of media interest with pre-election survey results and the storylines they raise. When these forces combine, they instigate more polling and more polling is not necessarily bad if they have some scientific basis.

To ensure electoral integrity, each poll can be a check on each other and many poll outcomes might assemble into bigger data pool to produce fine-tuned forecasts and investigation. The other reason for rising interest in polling is the general sense that political discourses are driven gradually by triviality and philosophical reflexiveness, which opinion polling could raise or heighten (Orr & Levy, 2016). Figure 1.1 shows the elements of political communication that is, the relationship between citizens, media, and political organisations in the process through which political action is conceived and realised.

Figure 1.1 Diagram of Political Communication Elements



Source: An Introduction to Political Communication (2011)

Political communication is characterised by the sender/s intention/s to affect the political environment. The fundamental factor making communication to be ‘political’ is its content and the

intention of that message and not the source of the message. Political communication incorporates verbal or written statements, visual means of connotation such as dressing, make-up applied, the hairstyle and the design of a logo that is, all those communication elements that constitute a political 'identity' or 'image' (McNair, 2011). In Kenya, the different party colours and logos identify most political parties; the Jubilee party has handshake logo painted black in yellow and red colours while NASA's logo is a combination of green, white, and orange, representing the colours of affiliate political parties they identified with.

Electoral opinion polls can exercise certain impact on the outcome of an election. By opinion poll results being published or editors opining what the general public understanding is on given topic/s, it adds a component of likely influence. When public opinion is exemplified in media accounts, in the past accomplishes certain autonomy, which makes it an objective "social factor" that must be mulled over by political stakeholders. Pre-election polling, if conducted experimentally and in an unbiased manner, is vital when it comes to predicting the electorates' voting intentions in majority rule states. As a tool of communication, electoral opinion surveys may reflect registered voter's understandings and can likewise shape perspectives of others, that is individuals might be influenced on how they cast their ballot by what they acquire from an opinion poll outcome (Wambua, Ndeti, Muthini, & Siringi, 2016).

1.2 Political Institutionalisation of Opinion Polls

Premeditated polling investigations propose that polling can be considered comparable and functionally similar to elections and referenda. By participating in a survey, either as an investigator, an evaluator or a respondent, is natural than voting. Political elections and referenda on significant societal concerns vary from voting on party preferences and/or political attitudes in two respects: The first one being, surveying has no direct political or legal consequences, in

contrast to elections and referenda, which have immediate significant consequences on contending political parties and their candidates. Secondly, opinion polling is founded on random sampling, compared to self-selection in elections. Both opinion polling and elections are similar, given the fact that they are grounded on identical normative knowledge of representation. In polls, preference is measured on a random sample of the electorate (with modifications related to the stated objective of respondents to vote or not to); random sampling ‘demonstrates’ their scientific character. In a general election/s, a voter is usually self-selected with decisive preferences and this course is considered political participation.

In Africa, Ghana signalled the first surge of egalitarianism in 1957 (in an election that saw Kwame Nkrumah of Convention Peoples Party (CPP) become president) by holding elections based on universal suffrage (*the right of almost all adults to vote in political elections*) and no restraints on a contestant or political party. After the Independence euphoria, the elections custom continued in most parts of Africa from the 1960s, to the 80s. For instance, Kenya has had thirteen presidential elections from 1963 to 2018 (*1969, 1974, 1979, 1983, 1988, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2013, and 2017*) of which six were done during the single party elections system while the rest were done multiparty elections system. It was only in 2017 that presidential elections were held twice in the same year, after the Supreme Court of Kenya nullified the first presidential victory of President Uhuru Kenyatta and Independence Elections and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) had to repeat the exercise on 26th October after the 8th August 2017 general elections.

In Kenya, the history of opinion polling dates back to the main independence epoch when a trial survey was carried out on 261 voters in Central Nyanza and the polling predictions was realistically alike to the result. Political polling continued until 1966 advent of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga’s opposition through Kenya People’s Union (KPU) party, which President Jomo Kenyatta banned in 1969, and sent its entire national leadership into political incarceration (Ndati, Wambua,

& Mogambi, 2014). The use of public opinion polling was not published for a long period. There were pollsters that conducted opinion polling throughout the “dark ages” but their results were never published out of fear that they may be inferred as critical of the incumbent political regime Kenya Africa National Union (KANU). Consequently, the general population lacked an avenue of participating in governance. The government, legislators, and politicians thus adopted an authoritarian slant to decision making on concerns relating to public welfare. Hillary Ngweno’s Weekly Review attempted opinion polls at the constituency level by indicating the likelihood of Member of Parliament (MP) candidates win during the one party rule. Historian Charles Hornsby indicates that the Kenyan government then, had little interest in its citizen’s opinion. In 1979, Mr. Ng’weno’s attempt to conduct polls was dramatically scuttled when the government of the day threatened to withdraw advertising, an intimidation that Ng’weno succumbed to and later on became part of government propaganda machine (Kamau, 2017).

The first opinion polls to be ever published in the country was in 1992 when some donors brought together various interests to form the National Election Monitoring Unit (NEMU) which was led by late human rights activist Grace Githu. Though NEMU appeared to be independent, western donors who were keen on regime change was funding it. The unit was a formation of four bodies that included the National Ecumenical Civic Education Programme (NECEP), which brought in religious groups, the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), The International Commission of Jurists led by Charles Nyachae and the professional committee for democratic change headed by Lee Muthoga (Kamau, 2017). As KANU was accusing NEMU of being biased, amongst the western missions in Kenya it was highly regarded and was headed by a “Council of elders” chaired by Duncan Ndegwa who was deputised by Reverend Samuel Kobia. NEMU later transformed to Institute for Education in Democracy (IED), a body charged with conducting civic education besides carrying out elections monitoring in various countries. In 1992, NEMU

correctly predicted that KANU's presidential candidate Daniel Arap Moi would emerge victorious.

It was in 1992 that the then influential Society Magazine led by former Nation parliamentary reporter Pius Nyamora released opinion polls that were termed as being fake as it was predicted victory for its preferred candidate Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. The magazine wrote that the only serious presidential candidates in their opinion polls were Mr. Odinga, Mwai Kibaki, and Daniel Arap Moi, and dismissed Kenneth Matiba as a spoiler. However, in the end, it was Moi who won the race followed by Matiba who they perceived as the spoiler then Kibaki and finally Odinga. Apart from Ng'weno's opinion polls, Evans Ondieki conducted Operation Moi Wins (OMW) that too predicted a win for Moi. The 2002 general elections marked an end to what was extensively considered a bigoted political rule. With the genesis of a more democratic administration National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) under the headship of Mwai Kibaki, public opinion polling scene irradiated once again.

Opinion polls were conducted on a systematic base with no interruption from government or political pioneers. In 2002, there were around four pre-election surveys conducted and extensively published by the media. The survey results featured as key news articles that spawned interactive radio, television, and even electronic media programming. Devoid of any doubt, media in Kenya was influential in illuminating the course for opinion polls by supporting normal routine concerning opinion polling through giving platforms for poll results broadcasting (Ndati, Wambua, & Mogambi, 2014). The International Republican Institute (IRI) commissioned polls that accurately predicted the 2002 presidential outcome on the Election Day. The success by IRI reinforced increased confidence in opinion polling, which was additional augmented by developments in technological capability and better freedom for the media that have allowed emergence of a number of polling firms. The major polling companies in the 2017 elections were

Ipsos Synovate then known as Steadman Research Services International, which is an elite Kenyan conglomerate of Gallup International, Strategic Public Relations and Research and Daily Nation Newspapers, also developed their own intramural polling teams. Since 2002, opinion polls have been habitually conducted among the public and business leaders. The last presidential pre-election survey done by Ipsos Synovate was in 22nd to 30th July 2017 to a sample size of 4,308 voters across all the 47 counties and its results released a week before the 8th August 2017, which was the date, scheduled for the general election (Synovate, 2017). The surveys depend on an entirely representative sample of randomly arbitrarily chosen adults who are interviewed by fully trained interviewers from all regions of the country. Regular content on these surveys incorporate government performance rating, punter certainty, enactment, and offense that have been conducted in Kenya (Ireru & Wolf, 2010).

In Kenya, public opinion polls perform an essential role in politics as they are used in the course of election campaigns by candidate/s and the media to see which candidates are advancing their lead and who is probable to emerge triumphant. The results of these polls consecutively delineate where future campaign resources shall be spent and where each candidate's exertions shall be concentrated until the close of the campaign period. In the lead to August 2017 general elections, Ipsos Synovate, Strategic Research, and Infotrak Harris polling firms kept updating the nation through various media platforms of the performance of the presidential contestants for the duration of the campaign. Political science scholars have eluded that, sensitivity of political surveys tend to escalate in an election year because of opposition peak. In authoritarian rule, a voter will have an inducement to avoid reporting the opposition to the regime in order to circumvent them from being targets of state-sponsored coercion and violence, which is often extreme in the year immediately preceding an election. Therefore, the ever-glaring huge gaps between results of the different pollsters while polling same presidential candidates on same topical issues have always

been suspect. In 2007, various organisations conducted presidential pre-election surveys and predicted how the country would have voted and the state of play by the various political parties. Even then, the polls were criticised of employing unsound methodology and deliberate intent to release predetermined outcomes to the public. The polling sector was chaotic that in 2011, then Kigumo Member of Parliament (MP) Jamleck Kamau moved a motion in the National assembly seeking the establishment of an opinion poll control board for regulation and conduct of opinion polls that are factual and observe the rule of law. The Electoral Opinion Polls Act No.39 of 2012 is the legal framework that compels polling firms to reveal information (Ndati, Wambua, & Mogambi, 2014).

1.4 Why Opinion Polls are Important

In any given democracy, surveys are a fundamental contrivance as the logical sampling techniques utilised are comprehensive and they offer true forecasts of constituents that are restrictive and fair at the same time. For George Gallup who is debuted as the evangelist for opinion polls, he emphasise that without opinion polls, representatives to update themselves would use the letters written to congressional representatives and petitions from pressure groups (Toff, 2014). Before public opinion surveying was embraced in presidential campaigns and in the end in campaigns for separate offices levels, competitor/s depended on their neighbourhood party structure to assess the wants and needs of electorate. Public opinion polls were central to campaign stratagem that were utilised to figure out which issues should be underscored on, to analyse messages and to identify voters seen to be persuadable.

Amid his 1996 presidential address to the American Political Science Association, Sidney Verba echoed sentiment of an America scientist V. O Key (1942), who announced that survey furnishes possibly means for the deflation of the extraordinary cases of pressure groups and testing of their

excessive claims of public assumption in support of their requests. Verba contended that survey research can possibly counter the lopsided of political participation dependent financial assets and the democratic ideal of equal voice and by surveying Americans views, a researcher can consider the misgivings of those neglected in general public. According to Tenpas (2003), presidential reports and meetings with White House staff and pollsters from past administrations submit that presidents utilise surveying for two essential reasons. The first is strategic, given that they have constrained resources accessible to them; it is up to the new presidents' to decide the ideal way to sell their agenda in a way that minimises costs while amplifying their impact. The second reason is entrenched in democratic concept that a president's desire to represent his constituents by acting in consonance with a majority of the general population. Surveys encourage bundle and offer strategies inside respective political party tenure.

1.5 Problem Statement

As a country, Kenya has a history of mistrusting opinion polling dating to their inception in 1992 when multiparty democracy was introduced. As a liberal democracy, Kenya gives primacy to periodic elections done after every 5 years. Public opinion polls are therefore a vital form through which the public inputs into political decision-making. Where opinion polls outcomes is perceived to be credible, they help regular people to be heard since they inform what fraction of a population hold a specific perspective and are simply a measurement tool that tells how a population thinks and feels about a given topic (Gallup, 2007). In spite of opinion polls being scientific, there exists little academic evidence on the role they play in influencing voter behaviour, that is understanding how opinion polls impact the decision a voter makes on whom to vote for in a presidential contest. This study therefore seeks to investigate the efficacy of opinion polls as they often elicit varied feelings among voters when released especially in the lead to presidential elections. In instances where the survey result do not support a certain political

disposition, politicians drawn from that faction feel that the opinion polls are faulty, calculated and a subjective exercise.

1.6 Research Objectives

Main Objective

To assess public opinion polls influence on swing voter behaviour in presidential elections

1.6.1. Specific Objectives

1. To find out factors that influence pre-election public perception of opinion polls on presidential candidates in Kenya
2. To investigate the extent to which opinion polls sway swing voters in Kenya
3. To investigate consistency of voter behaviour in Kibra and Dagoretti South constituencies in presidential election

1.6.2 Research Questions

1. What factors influence pre-election public perception of opinion polls on presidential candidates in Kenya?
2. To what extent do opinion polls sway swing voters in Kenya?
3. What is the consistency in voter behaviour in Kibra and Dagoretti South constituencies in presidential election?

1.7 Justification of the Study

This study contributes to the available works on voter behaviour and builds on the opinion polls literature by closely examining if at all they have any consequence on voting behaviour. On 8th August 2017, Kenyans voted in the sixth elections since the reinstatement of multi-party

democracy in 1991. The elections were the second to be carried out under a new legal framework, spelt out by The Constitution of Kenya 2010. This research will better help in understanding factors responsible for assessing public opinion polls influence on voter behaviour especially the swing voters in presidential elections.

1.8 Significance

This study contributes to the available works on voter behaviour and builds on the opinion polls literature by closely examining if at all they have any consequence on voting behaviour. This research will better help in understanding factors responsible for influencing pre-election public perception of opinion polls on presidential candidates, establishing the extent opinion polls sway swing voters and investigating consistency in voter behaviour in Kenya's presidential election. The researcher envisions that by the end of the study, the main participants in the political field who include the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC); charged with the management of elections, the voters, academic scholars, and experts in elections matters will appreciate public opinion polls influence on swing voter behaviour in presidential elections.

1.9 Scope and Limitation

The study is limited to 8th August 2017 presidential elections, which Infotrak Harris and Ipsos Synovate among other pollsters published its pre-elections survey findings in the run up to the elections date. Their forecasts received extensive media coverage, often making news headline across the media. The study focused on Kenya electorate, how voter behaviour and opinion polls variables inform voting behaviour by commenting on the influence pre-election presidential surveys bear on voter behaviour in electing a president candidate. The study focus on voting behaviour during presidential elections, general elections in Kenya constitute six ballot votes, the Presidential, Gubernatorial, Senatorial, Parliamentary (MP), County Woman Representative, and

Member of County Assembly (MCA) that are held simultaneously. The study assessed public opinion polls influence on swing voter behaviour in presidential elections in Kibra and Dagoretti South constituencies, which are two out of the 290 constituencies due to time constraints. The study is limited to the two constituencies and restricted to voters registered in the respective constituencies and participated in the 8th August 2017 elections. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalised beyond Nairobi County given the cosmopolitan nature of the voters compared to the rest of the country.

1.10 Operational Definitions

Clientelism – The transaction between politicians and citizens whereby material favours are offered in return for political support (vote) at the polls

Incumbent – An aspirant presently holding a particular political office

Political alienation – It is according less importance to objectives and opinions mutual to majority in society

Proximity – The broad compensation citizen gets from voting for an aspirant, be it from a personal or from a collective /social perspective

Political participation – Any activity that influences or encompasses the political sphere of influence and can range from voting to attending a political rally

Swing/Undecided voter – A voter not affiliated to any political party

Voter behaviour – A voter's process of deciding suitability of one aspirant over another

Vote buying –The transfer of payments to voter/s or small groups during elections in subject to exchange for vote choice

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

The objective of this chapter is to assess available literature on voting behaviour and to evaluate the implications of opinion polls on voters during the presidential elections. The elections were held second under the 2010 Constitution of Kenya and third after the 2007 post elections violence. The chapter takes the following format: public opinion and the public sphere, influence of opinion polls on voter patterns, polls typology, elaboration of research objectives and the theoretical framework.

2.1 Voter Behaviour

Voter behaviour is the determinants of why electorate cast a ballot the manner in which they do and during presidential contests, there are numerous factors influencing voter/s around the world. Some of the prominent factors are not restricted only to political party inclination, the background of a voters and governments past execution of its mandate but more. As the factors that affect a voter's inclination are better comprehended, politics get closer to the encapsulation of making a “common good” for the general population, settling issues, and guaranteeing social welfare and trustworthiness.

In making a voting and political choice, voters have been premising their decisions on different factors other than issues, and to a majority of the voters the impression projected by specific presidential hopefuls and political parties affiliations are deeply entrenched, that their inclination/s is to some degree tethered around these factors. A voter's connection to some of the factors is predominant to a degree that a voter would generally realise whom to cast a ballot for in the

beginning of the campaigns. In spite of voters deciding earlier, there are uncommon events as an effective campaign that can influence a persuadable voter to change preference, which will thus affect projected election results.

According to Hollander (2009), the state of subjection and insignificance have undesirable effects on voter turnout, but feelings of cynicism often work to neutralise the effects of the other two. When a voter begins to feel less empowered by their ability to vote and they feel that their vote has less meaning, this has in turn brought down voter turnout. There are other factors that influence voter turnout which include the level of competitiveness, perceived level of democracy among electorates and the GDP per capita. In his work titled “The Factors Influencing Voting Preferences in Local Elections” Kurtbaşı (2015), states that a political position and tendency towards alienation like powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness and isolation, which are discrete from drivers, may repress politics into a stalemate. The more one has negative expectation, the more powerless s/he feels. The rejection of political goals, norms, and tools widely accepted by other members in society raises isolation.

2.2 The Public Sphere

The significance of having voters who are both informed and knowledgeable dictates that domestic politics need to be pursued in a public arena that is distinct from the concealment characteristic of autocratic administrations. The knowledge and information of which a voter will make political choices should circulate freely and should always be available as domestic policies are public in another sense (McNair, 2011). While domestic theory hypothesis accentuates the significance of an individual, the political procedure political process demands that individuals should act collectively in decision-making especially on who will govern them. An individual’s private political opinions develop into public opinion of the people as a whole, which is reflected

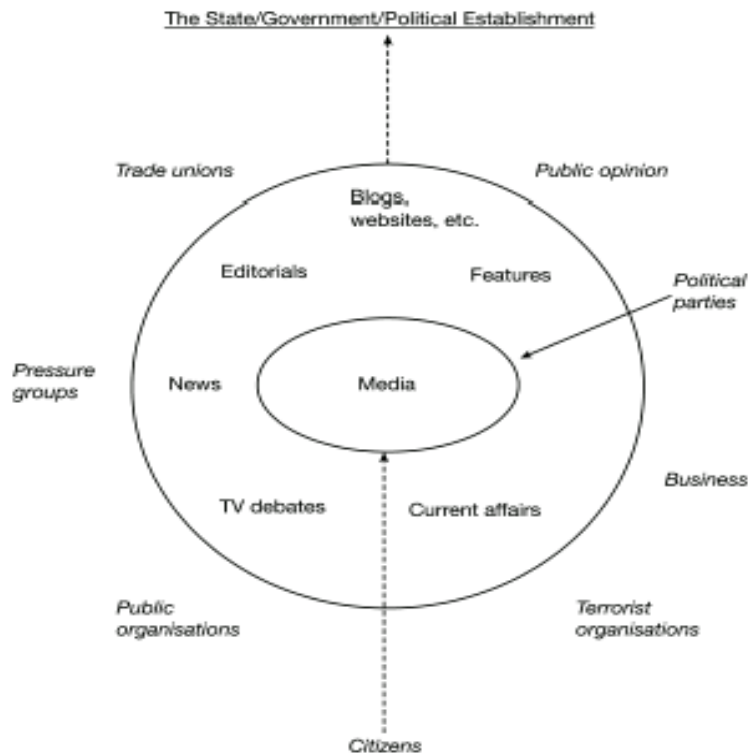
in the voting patterns and treated as recommendation by political leaders. Public opinion in this nous is formed in what German sociologist Jürgen Habermas termed as “The Public Sphere”.

Habermas traces the development of public sphere in the eighteenth century England, where the first daily newspaper had started performing their modern roles of disseminating information, establishing feedback, opinions, and comments. These modern roles encouraged consultations between the working class and the scholarly accomplished classes. Fundamentally, the public sphere included the communicative institutions found in the society through which opinions and facts are circulated, and by way of communal stock of knowledge manufactured as the source of collective political action. The modern “news” concept developed as a means of furnishing citizens with the most essential information from the point of view of their political activities and streamline, and guiding public discussion, functions that are taken for granted in present day journalism.

Public opining is intended for the search of truth in knowledge and never have they been understood this way but for creation and manifestation of general will. Koller (2010) suggests that segmentation of the public sphere shows dissimilar social solidarity networks and belongings within a given public sphere. Having been established by communication that is open to outsiders, public sphere processes create three different levels namely: the level of media mediated public sphere, face-to-face public sphere, and encounter and organised gatherings. A “poll” used to mean the top of one’s head. When voting started involving accumulating, calculating votes required counting of heads that is counting polls. In the end, a “survey” came to mean the tally itself and by the nineteenth century, to cast a ballot was to go to the polls, where more casting was done on paper. Figure 2.1 shows a “perfect” democratic society where media has the following capacities that is to advise citizens of what is going on around them like reconnaissance, to educate, to give a stage to open talk. It encourages formation of public opinion and feeding that same opinion back

to the public from where it came from and to serve as a channel for the advocacy of political viewpoints (McNair, 2011).

Figure 2.1 Public Sphere



Source: An Introduction to Political Communication

The ballots were often printed in newspapers; a voter would cut one out and go with them but with the advent of secret balloting, in the beginning of 1880's, the American government began to distribute ballots printed by newspapers. Prior to elections, a reader was expected to cut out the ballot from the newspaper and after filling it mail it back to the newspaper. The newspaper would in turn make prediction out of them (Lapore, 2015). From the late 1990's to 2012, twelve hundred polling organisations conducted nearly thirty-seven thousand polls more than three billion phone calls. A study on polls done in 2013, found that three out of four Americans suspect surveys of predisposition (Lapore, 2015).

2.3 Opinion Polls and Voter Behaviour

Predictions have a particular appeal to most voters, whether they are predictions about politics, stock markets, academy awards, and even World Series. Studies carried out between the periods of 1935-1962; offer foundation for social influence research from which major enlightenments of social influence are developed. According to Rothschild (2012) article “Understanding how polls affect voters”, he posits that there are mental mechanisms underlying conformity. The first elucidation advanced by Hudgson & Maloney (2013), bandwagon effect occurs out of desire to conform or fear of the consequences of non-conformity. While the second recommendation that people get information from decisions made by others and utilise this in unification to decide. Here voters hop on and off the main party's ship not out of want to adjust or be different, but because they realise that others have data that they need. They thusly utilise the voting or opinion polls surveys figures to refresh their judgment concerning whose administration would give them the most utility.

When opinion polls survey data are published, the outcome usually has a possibility of giving an unfair advantage to leading candidates and this phenomenon is what is regarded the bandwagon effect. It assumes information of the popular “tide” would probable change a voter’s intention in favour of the winning candidate. Data that show a candidate as leading in popularity surveys is inclined to influence a voter in selecting that candidate and therefore, it is paramount to consider the cumulative ramifications of bandwagon effect when combined with frequent and closely spaced reports of pre-election opinion polling. Supposing the effect is operable and the initial favourite candidate is leading by a svelte margin, reports intimating that candidate as the leader in the contest will increase his/her favourable margin. The ensuing reports based on latest and sturdier margins will in turn gradually reinforce that candidate’s lead.

Bandwagon effect weakens democracy if conformity pressure calms minority opinions. Nonetheless, a person will conform not because s/he sees empirical value in associating with the majority in society but because s/he trusts there is evidence in shared opinion. For citizens wanting to be well versed, the mutual astuteness of their fellow citizens is a source of information and if the effect is combined with regular poll reports, it can result to unstable equilibrium referred to as snowball effect. Snowballing influence could be reversed by either extremely melodramatic and advantageous or disadvantageous revelations. During the 1996 American presidential campaign, immediately after the nomination of Republican presidential candidate Robert Dole, majority of the weekly polls reported Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton leading. Such frequent reports can be said to have possibly assist in consolidating and strengthening Clinton's lead by assisting him overcome sporadic damaging publicity about his past record of accomplishment of and occasioned his resilient display on the election eve. The unstable equilibrium effect, assist in pinpointing out the probable means political organisations can be lured into influencing voting by funding biased polling studies and reports. There is need for voters to be educated about snowball effect so they can be cautious when bombarded by polling reports favouring one-candidate over the others or polls results that suggest popularity of a particular campaign issue. As a personal measure, it is important that a voter educate him/herself about political alignments of bodies that continually sponsor polling studies.

There are scholars who argue that not all voters have the tendency of following a winning candidate but some voters may want to support a losing candidate (underdog). The underdog effect is occurs when contestant is portrayed by opinion polls surveys as losing or being the weaker candidate and as a result, s/he may attract some sympathy votes (Kiss & Simonovits, 2014). Another school of thought argues that polling can have demotivating effect on a candidate and even a political party that has been indicated as losing. The poor polling results can actually

demoralise a party's campaign team together with its supporters and make them less effective. The opposite can be told of the side with strong polling results, that the outcome can encourage party campaign team and its supporters. At the same time, opinion polls surveys can also create a false sense of security to a candidate. Can voters in Kenya translate opinion polls result into action? The answer can be a yes and no. Yes because some voters may be influenced to vote for a candidate appearing to be the front-runner. Information published coupled with other factors such as political party inclination, ethnic and regional bloc may affect a voters' perception of various candidates' chances of winning thus the opinion polls surveys outcome may affect the vote.

Expectations do affect voting choice by influencing a voter to cast a strategic vote, thus a voter ends up not voting for their preferred candidate when they perceive that s/he is not likely clinch the position. There are also scenarios where voters do not translate surveys result into action, because they consider a candidates' ethnicity and not their popularity. In early 2002, political parties started realigning themselves for transitional elections with National Development Party (NDP) and Kenya African National Union (KANU) merging on 18th March 2002, an event that saw NDP dissolved. Then President, Daniel Moi supported the candidature of Uhuru Kenyatta, whom he had nominated as KANU's presidential flag bearer on 14th October 2002. Upon Moi's refusal to withdraw support for Kenyatta after internal differences playing out in the public, the senior members of KANU defected to the opposition. Having an incumbent president and state machinery, that were deemed to operate under the whims of the then president supporting Kenyatta, many had not anticipated their eminent defeat. For a political party that had ruled for 39 years, KANU had established itself as a political party to reckon with. The party luminaries had been known for proclamations that they would rule for 100 years, while others publicly christened the party "KANU baba na mama" (father and mother). With assumptions made suggesting that the

reason behind voters translating the opinion polls result into action could be attributed to the opposition supporting Constitutional Reforms.

Opinion polls that were commissioned on October 7th, 2002 by the Media Institute and conducted by Strategic Public Relations and Research gauged Kenyans' public opinion on the five candidates and their political parties in anticipation of the December general elections. The results of this poll marked a radical departure from the previous one released in August 2002 where Kenyatta had a commanding lead. After a strong push for the opposition to field a unified front producing a single candidate Mwai Kibaki, had a strong likelihood of defeating Uhuru Kenyatta in the general elections with a 25.6% against Kenyatta's 11.6%. The opinion polls surveys further suggested that if the presidential elections were a two horse race between Kibaki and Kenyatta, Mr. Kibaki would yield a landslide victory with 67.5% of the voters expressing preference for Kibaki's candidature compared to Kenyatta's 26.7%. The 27th, December 2002 general elections confined it within the surveys forecast. Strategic casting of a ballot otherwise called tactical voting ballot happens when a voter cast an insecure ballot in order to increment expected value for an election result. A typical case of this conduct is when supporters of a minority competitor vote in favour of their most preferred candidate, based on the that the minor party candidate is probably going to win. This may compel the voter to consider voting for another candidate who is portrayed as being likely to carry the day. Such a decision may then be guided by merit. The Kenyan political scene is tricky as voters' do not necessarily make political decision based on prevailing issues and manifestos but often on ethnicity and regions, something that has made voter representation near impossible.

The nation's legislative issues is synonymous with ethnicity going back to the late Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Moi's presidential tenures. Amid the two administrations, political regimes, political parties, public/civil service and government were seen to be tribal, something that added to absence of responsibility on the part of public servants, catalysed clashes and generally the

nation's poor administration of public resources. The distribution of state asset, for example, projects and funds meant for development were skewed towards particular ethnic communities that upheld the candidature of the officeholder, who were either their mandarins or the president's coethnic. The one-sided distribution of public resource contributed to arrangement of ethnic conclaves which birthed unions like the Kamatusa's (Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu), Luo and Akamba Associations, GEMA (Gikuyu, Embu, and Meru Affiliation), Baluhya Relationship during the 1980s. Nyabuga (2011) hypothesises that political association by GEMA's Uhuru Kenyatta and Kamatusa's William Ruto portrays the ascent in ethnic politics which has furnished the particular politicians with political leverage over fellow contestants. When associations are presumably used to deliver political and electoral results, it is a clear indicator of the country's political leadership inability to steer clear ethnicity/tribalism.

Strategic voting tend to presume that some knowledge of the way electoral system works and awareness of a presidential candidates chances. However, the differences in material circumstances, cognitive skills, educational attainment, and experience mean the distribution of political information is uneven. Before a candidate begins their presidential journey, s/he is expected to have their "own" ethnic backing. For those who do not have that backing, they tend to lack bargaining power as that is what determines ones political strength. There are instances when the electorate were ethnically strategic by casting ballot for their coethnic presidential candidate so as to deter a non-ethnic candidate from ascending to power. But it is not a perfect strategic vote since regional inclination that has often carried the aspiration of their ethnic political head/s. In Kenya, each and every ethnic group has a political head, if not one but two who have been used to deliver votes to different presidential candidate in return for a reward.

Bradley/Wilder, effect happens when the findings of a poll prove to be deceptive for reasons of political correctness. When questions asked in opinion polls are perceived to be politically

sensitive, respondents may choose to conceal their true beliefs. This may include questions that relate to ethnicity, religion, race, gender etc. the effect was dubbed “Bradley effect” circumstance that occurred amid the 1982 California gubernatorial challenge between Mayor Tom Bradley and George Deukmejian. As had been indicated in the post-election examination a sizable number of voters who were in excess of multiple times Deukmejian’s margin of victory, casted a ballot against Bradley for he was black. In those days, race was a “forbidden issue” then often caused great political harm to any public figure and also there existed an unwritten rule that was enforced by social consent limiting a candidate’s response to ethnic heritage of their opponent. Boomerang effect, occurs when the public opinion polls portray a candidate as the most likely to win, maybe with a landslide. The notion may influence some of her/his would be voters to assume that victory is assured even without their individual vote. In instances where a large number of voters supporting that candidate fail to vote as a result of this notion, it may cost the candidate thousands or millions of would be votes and even victory.

In a majority of African countries, ethnicity has remained a dominant factor that has continued to shapes presidential outcomes and as a result of the long history of ethnic contestation and conflict, ethnic political attachments are deeply engrained. In settings where ethnicity is politically salient, social identities such as clanism are likely to play an important role in differentiating what is considered a core and swing voter. The definition of the concept ethnicity is controversial, with some scholars considering it to be a community which claims common ancestry and see proof in the fact that its members display distinct attributes relating to language, religion and homeland origin (physiognomy). Others see it as a rational concept in the sense that, “we” and “they” are dichotomous concepts in the sense that “we” can only find relevance in “they” and those who define themselves as “we” ascribe to themselves positive attributes and reserve negative attributes to the “they”. A voter's past and present experience has the biggest effect on his/her choice of a

preferred candidate. Frequently, a presidential hopeful will deliberately equip campaign messages to particular voters, utilising a theme that conveys similarity. This equivalence can be founded on the general background, appearance or even the identity of the presidential candidate .

2.4 Poll Typology

A poll is the process of questioning people to get information about a general opinion. Different communication scholars describe polls using different terminologies. Nevertheless, the most common descriptions include:

2.4.1 Push/Straw Polls

Straw surveys ordinarily resemble the formal public opinion polls; however, they are conducted with negligible concern for the legitimacy of results. Prior to the advent of statistically based surveying during the 1930s, all surveying was straw surveying. The polls are spontaneous/ routine surveys that target particular audience but have been unempirical. The typical examples of these polls are conducted through radio or television broadcast. The outcomes from opinion poll are solicited from those accessing a particular medium/channel at that particular time. The polls are non-scientific owing to the factors of access, timing, participation, interest, and even affordability. Straw polls are a compromise between formal and informal methodologies.

2.4.2 Benchmark Polls

They are the most common type of polls for political campaigns and therefore conducted before a willing potential contestant declares his/her candidature. They are very useful in gauging a prospective contestant's initial popularity. Some political aspirants use it to decide whether to run for office or not. The best opinion poll is the actual vote by registered voter and therefore, for

political parties, party's delegate who can be the actual voters at that particular moment usually chooses a presidential candidate.

2.4.3 Track Polls

Track polls are regular and systematic surveys of popularity that intends to identify shifts in public perceptions such as campaign progresses. They can be conducted on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly, or even quarterly base during the campaign period. They reveal whether a candidate is gaining popularity, stagnant or losing ground. During the 2017 August elections, Ipsos Synovate and Infotrak Harris carried a series of opinion polls surveys in an attempt to inform the public of individual presidential candidates' performance over the campaign period.

According to polls conducted between July 8 and 13, by a U.S. pollster John Zogby that were commissioned by NASA, if elections were to be held during the one week survey period, 47.4% of Kenyans would vote for Raila Odinga, while 46.7% would vote for President Uhuru Kenyatta. Most of the private polls commissioned by different political parties are usually aimed at monitoring their candidate's performance as they inform their popularity and where they would invest campaign resources in future. Apart from being informed by privately commissioned polls, a candidate can also gain information from other polling entities. Non-political actors like media houses carry polls to track the performance of a presidential candidate. In spite of Raila narrowing the gap with Uhuru Kenyatta, neither of the two candidates would have an outright first round victory if the elections were held, reported Radio Africa Group carried out their own poll.

2.4.4 Exit Polls

Post-Poll-cum-Exit Poll is conducted after a voter has cast their vote and is exiting the polling station. Its objective is to find out how a voter voted but specifically to understand voters' demographics, experience at the polling station, the reason they voted for a particular candidate

and when they made a decision to vote for their favourite candidate. The surveys are to a great degree exact, since they do not have to contend with numerous variables that can meddle with the exactness of the forecast dependent on opinion polls surveys since just real voters are interviewed. There is likewise no requirement for relegating undecided voters to the different political parties or presidential hopefuls running and there is no way that some astounding occasion/s will happen that will suddenly change the political circumstance and thus citizens voting behaviour after the survey has already been completed (Petersen, 2012). The findings have a tradition of being released before the official announcement of the results by the mandated electoral institution. They are useful in forecasting the probable outcome of an election process. Empirically, they have proven to be very accurate in developed democracies such as USA, France, and Britain. The 2008 and 2014 USA elections of Barrack Obama's, Britain's 2012 election of David Cameron, Indians 2014 election of Narendra Modi and France's 2017 election of Emmanuel Macron respectively.

The reason why exit polls have been widely analysed, written about and its data set discussed in developed democracies for example, the United States of America is because in every 2 years, elections are held for the senate position. Despite the fact that exit polls are commended for predicting elections, they likewise happen to be the best apparatus for elucidating election results later on perhaps will be to give information about the administration of the franchise and about the voter's experience in casting a ballot (Greiner and Quinn, 2012). Exit polls chiefly measure real ballot casting conducted as opposed to electoral opinion or expectation. In spite of the fact that they sometimes gather reflections on voter inspirations, this has no prompt deliberative effect as it is once in a while published until after voting is concluded (Orr and Require, 2016).

In many countries, exit polls are seen to be tenable and in situations where their results go astray from the election result; this is in some cases taken as a sign that an election has been tampered with. In 2004, Venezuela held a referendum to choose whether President Hugo Chavez ought to be

expelled from office or not and in spite of the fact that the polls showed that Chavez had been obviously vanquished, he nevertheless won the vote by 58 to 42 percent according to the official vote tally. Subsequently, the Carter Center, which had monitored the election, commissioned the Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) to look at the methods employed by exit polls. At first look, the information showed that the disparity was because of methodological flaws in the leave surveys instead of election fraud. Nevertheless, AAPOR and WAPOR representatives investigating the inconsistency were so emphatically hindered that they were eventually unable to finish their examination of the survey's approach (Petersen, 2012).

2.5 Factors Influencing Public Perception on Opinion Polls on Presidential Candidates

In a deliberative majority rule government, an educated, informative, and intrigued citizen will go along with join others to form opinions on public affairs (Fishkin, 2011). Deliberative democracy is characterised as decision making by lay citizens who sincerely weigh all contentions dependent on evidence and not an individual pushing a specific view. Notwithstanding, theories of influence and experimental examinations have affirmed that citizen's judgments are not free from the impacts of sources but rather are regularly framed dependent on who conveys the political messages. Carlson (2018) is for the impression that opinion polls are progressively being utilised to anticipate and contemplate elections in new and feeble democracies, yet the strain encompassing elections in less liberal governments may make information from such reviews especially inclined to estimation errors. A voter who perceives too highly a cost to contradict the administration in the privacy of the polling booth is liable to voice resistance aloud to a stranger at the door. Watchful survey respondents in Africa's new majority rule governments will probably give pro-incumbent survey overview reactions and both the share of wary respondents, and the

degree of distorting among these respondents increase instantly before elections when the dangers of openly contradicting the administration are highest.

Even though it is hoped that every voter make political judgments by scrutinizing arguments based on evidence, not only voters who are apolitical but also those who are highly interested in politics may make biased judgments because of the source of political messages. When the issue being discussed in the message is unfamiliar, voters form their attitudes towards it based on their favourability towards the politician. This tendency is found in citizens with high and low levels of political intrigue and among members with low levels of interest. The impact of source favourability on a voter's state of mind towards issues was intervened by message pertinent considerations. These outcomes propose that citizen with low levels of enthusiasm for political issues externally process messages and make judgments on issues dependent on the wellspring of the message as opposed to its substance. For people with high levels of political interests, political message is processed in a more complex and engaged manner (Chung and Waheed, 2016). Orr & Levy (2016) called attention to that in the 2015 general decision held in United Kingdom, such expectations miscued severely in light of the fact that it pre-empted the discussion and even clouded substantive issues.

There is need for political stakeholders such as voters, politicians among others to be cognisant of limitations and pitfalls presented by polls inspite of revered as a tool useful in understanding certain aspects of mass preferences in public life that are of public interest. Polls are open to abuse and manipulation because some are loaded with wording, differences in question format, biasness when sampling and careless in analysis resulting to distortion of our understanding of the public's views (Lewis & Bartley, 2012). Some polls are perceived to be fraudulent public relations devices aimed at convincing a "respondent" of some viewpoint or that the sponsor cares about what they think. Self-selected online polls are not valid readings of opinions held by the public. The

following are instances where if strict adherence to opinion polls specifics are not observed, they may lead a voter to form a perception, either positive or negative.

2.5.1 Challenge of Reaching a Fair Sample

The making of phone calls for the sole purpose of data collection in surveys was a perfect methodology yet as time passed, the approach of mobile telephony and increased refusals by sampled respondents to partake in telephone survey have debilitated survey authenticity over the years. In on-going surveys, investigators have depended on sending of emails, making of phone calls and internet samples strengthened with measurable acclimations extend the perspectives of the public. In the ever-dynamic world, the need for newer approaches requiring superior sets of debatable assumptions, which have made it difficult to interpret and compare reports (Toff, 2014).

During the August 2017 presidential elections, Infotrak Harris pre-election survey sampled 5, 000 voters. The outcome showed Raila Odinga leading in the Coast, Eastern, Western, Nyanza, and Nairobi regions, while President Uhuru Kenyatta would carry the day in Rift Valley, Central and North Eastern regions. Such samples that are drawn from a candidate's perceived stronghold are not always representative. Kisii, Kisumu, Mombasa cannot be considered a representative of Kenyan voters, as its outcome will be skewed in favour of NASA even before the data is collected and analysed, the same can be said of a sample drawn from Kiambu, Nyeri and Madera counties to be biased to Jubilee Party.

The nature of forecast can be influenced by sampling mistake and non-sampling errors, which range from coverage, non-response, estimation, handling, and modification of errors. It is most perceived that arbitrary sampling errors can create fluctuations in surveying estimates dependent on chance alone i.e. an opinion poll includes a sample of respondents instead of the entire populace (Hilygus, 2011). Such an error is communicated with the margin of error that is

accounted for by surveying estimates and the simple solution is to increase the sample size. Of prominent concern are the fundamental errors that are presented by pollsters or investigators and respondents that can predisposition the election expectations.

2.5.2 How Poll Questions are asked

The manner in which questions are asked is of great concern, since they can shift results. Investigators have known for quite a while that with slight change in the manner in which a question is stated or even how reactions are classified, critical influence the responses they acquire from the different respondents. Opinion polls surveys have been held with high repute devote considerable amount of time and effort in testing, refining, and guaranteeing standardisation of the questions so they understand set objective/s. In instances where corporates and advocacy groups remotely commission surveys, it gives an avenue for the results to be influenced to meet particular interest/s. The survey respondents maybe having adequate information around the upcoming political contest than that being probed by voting intention question. For a respondent who knows about their current voting intention, the information set feeding into their expectation will be at least rich as that captured by the voting intention question. Past this, they may likewise have information about current voting intentions both the preferred presidential hopeful and the likelihood of voting casting of their friends and family.

Voter intention question: Whom do you think you will vote in favour of in 2022 presidential races?

Voter expectation question: Whom do you think will be elected in 2022 presidential races?

By comparing the performance of the two questions above, only when asked to the same individuals in the same survey, there is evidence suggesting that polls probing a voter's expectation will yield more accurate election results predictions compared to the question asked about whom they intend to vote in.

Rothschild & Wolfers (2012), found that relying on voters expectations rather than intentions yields substantial and statistically significant increases in predicting accuracy. The better performance of predictions based on asking voters about their expectations rather than intentions vary depending on the specific context. Expectation question usually perform well when voters are embedded in heterogeneous (informative) social networks. The voters do not rely too much on common information, small samples are involved i.e. when the extra information elicited by asking about intentions counters the large sampling error in polls of intentions and when voters are sufficiently engaged as to know what their friends and family are thinking.

A poll carried by Fox News on 8th to 9th, September 2008, prompted a headline claiming John McCain's lead in the intent question, but buried Barack Obama's continued lead in the expectation question. Almost any polling or news organisation would have made this editorial choice. Yet, occasionally McCain and Obama traded the lead in the intent question but Obama lead in every expectation question that Rothschild & Wolfers (2012) could find. The proper wording and phrasing of questions is vital in producing data that is objective. Neutral wording of items can make a big difference in the way respondents answer questions asked. In Phillip Ochieng column titled "Does Steadman take intelligence into account?" published by The Nation Newspaper, dated 8th, April 2008, he cast aspersions on the credibility of opinion polls, terming them unscientific and undemocratic.

"...It is absolutely unscientific and undemocratic to seek to pinpoint 'majority opinion' by throwing a few leading questions at individuals, chosen at random, who are likely to be totally ignorant of the social implications of the questions facing them. In any case, what exactly is the social value of knowing in advance which candidate a correspondent will vote for? Indeed, is not it dangerous? In any society where real issues matter so little, figures such as Steadman tosses around can powerfully sway the mass as to whom to vote for..."

2.5.3 Omitted Respondents

Critics of opinion polls have noted that pre-election survey that gauge support for a candidate fail to analyse responses that are stated as being unsure or do not know as such, the final findings may either underestimate or overstate the actual levels of support a candidate enjoys (Toff, 2014). This is so because these respondents are likely to have withheld their answers on the paused question/s, which in turn downplay their preferences. By withholding answers to the questions asked, they become a source of error in the surveys and any accurate election prediction depends on respondents giving genuine responses to the turnout and vote intention questions. In US, amid the 2008 races, the presence of an African American on the presidential ticket list increased concerns that respondents would mislead polling firms about their vote preference. In US, during the 2008 elections, the presence of an African American on the presidential ticket list increased concerns that respondents would lie to pollsters about their vote preference. According to Hillygus (2011), in the previous elections, there was evidence of “Bradley effect” in which opinion polls overestimated the support for a black candidate when they did not intend to.

2.5.4 Limited Information

Intelligence is not a result of tutoring but of the deep rooted endeavors to obtain it, consequently for citizens to be well informed about the current political affairs in the country there is need for an individual to invest his/her time by paying a considerable amount of time on political issues. Citizens who pay less attention to political affairs in their country are likely to have constrained information when compared to those who pay more attention. When it comes to surveys, citizens who have been sampled and are informed, hardly echo arguments consumed from news coverage unlike less informed citizens who will rely vague concepts, which they are familiar. A result from a survey carried out to a sample of mixed informed and less informed citizens is incapable of revealing their preferences and interest, given that they articulate issues differently.

A voter's basic knowledge about the political world is a noteworthy determinant of his/her capacity to organise political information and see existing contrasts. Voters who are educated display more predictable, steady and efficient conviction systems. Unexpectedly, one can be politically knowledgeable but lack the inspiration to become informed about specific elections issues. For a voter who is uninterested and uninformed about politics, on occasion, they will be motivated to learn about party's commitments through a presidential candidate and their party manifesto. Wolf (2009), posits that the fact that different pollsters have varied outcomes with regard to margin of errors and the failure by media houses to provide full details of differences in sampling methodology has made it easier for those interested in discrediting pre-election surveys to do so.

2.5.5 Assumptions

All surveys usually make assumptions on which respondents opinion matters compared to another respondent, eventually the assumptions made may capture or fail to capture what can be considered political relevant. The preference of a registered voter's likelihood to vote in a given election is what most political relater survey often seeks to assess (Toff, 2014), with politicians differing to opinions of the affluent voters than the middle-class and the poor. There are scholars who argue that organised public politics should be weighted heavily and criticise polling for paying more attention to private citizens while trying to mute the voices of organised groups that agitate for change. For a long time, the bedrock of participatory democracy in America were organised social movements and groups, which is contrary to the current over dependency on were seen continuous, momentary polls as a sole measure of public opinion. Since it may fail to appreciate the dynamic nature of attitudes, variations in intensity of opinion and the capacity of organisations to express and advance particular public views more effectively than others.

When can we say that a prediction is considered “accurate”, when it accurately predicts the winner, the winners vote share or the margin of victory. Yet, accuracy fluctuates dependent on the yardstick utilised and can be influenced by factors that incorporate the size of the sample, how the undecided voters and minor party voters are treated, and the field dates (Hilygus, 2011). Researchers have discovered that in occasions where the number and type of days (weekday’s verses weekends), in the field were nearly connected with the prescient accuracy, reflecting non-response predisposition. Election forecast can be side tracked since they anticipate future behaviour.

Voting patterns in Kenya’s previous elections can be considered to have been influenced by ethnic identity. The electorates have a tendency of supporting a presidential candidate drawn from their ethnic background, as ethnic grouping in the country are region base. In both 2013 and August 2017 general elections, Uhuru Kenyatta’s supporters were the Kikuyu community, the largest ethnic group, who were shored up by William Ruto, a Kalenjin who mobilised various ethnic groups in the Rift Valley a key voting bloc. This does not imply that every voter from those regions or ethnic communities voted for a coethnic candidate, but larger populations exceeding over 75% do vote for such candidates. With a mind-set in past elections, where you vote for “your own” it can be logically be assumed that a voters ethnic identity will inform their perception of opinion polls. Though voters remain loyal to ingrained voting patterns, they might well be receptive to suitors bearing better deal/s about personal circumstances such as cost of living and general confidence that the country will head in the right direction.

2.6 Extent Opinion Polls Sway Swing Voter

Polling firms like Gallup, Annenberg and Pew have equated swing voters with the undecided ones. The intuitive understanding that a swing voter is a person who is persuadable and henceforth

his/her vote is “up for grabs”, while the undecided voter may be likely “up for grab”, choosing a presidential hopeful does not consequently deny an individual the probability of being convinced to change to another under certain arrangement.

Amid election campaigns, a voter's last decision of a presidential hopeful depends on a host of factors that range from political party manifesto among other factors. The timing of that decision relies upon a few factors but also about the electorate and viability of election campaigns (Kogen and Gottfried, 2012). Early investigations on political campaigns discovered that the timing for settling on the choice of a presidential hopeful generally fell into two categories. A voter will pick a preferred candidate either very early in the campaign or too close to the Election Day. Considering the time a voter makes a decision on which candidate to vote for, voters can be broadly be categorised into early deciders, campaign deciders, and late deciders. The early deciders are either highly partisan or better educated or both compared to campaign and late deciders. For campaign deciders, they will in general tend to be less partisan, give careful consideration to the elections and mass media, they deliberately their vote decision and construct their choice with respect to campaign specific information instead of on inert party identification. Kageni and Gottfried (2012), place that late deciders expend less medium than campaign or early deciders.

In each pre-election survey, a critical proportion of respondents report that they have not yet developed any reasonable voting preference. In certain situations, even a couple of months to the elections, rates of 20% or more of undecided voters are unusual. In spite of the numerical criticalness of undecided/swing voters, there is no full comprehension of the mental procedures that characterises their course from being undecided to their department of a vote. Even with the sociodemographic knowledge of undecided voters' characteristics, less is known about their decision making process. As indicated by other surveys, as a rule the level of undecided voters is

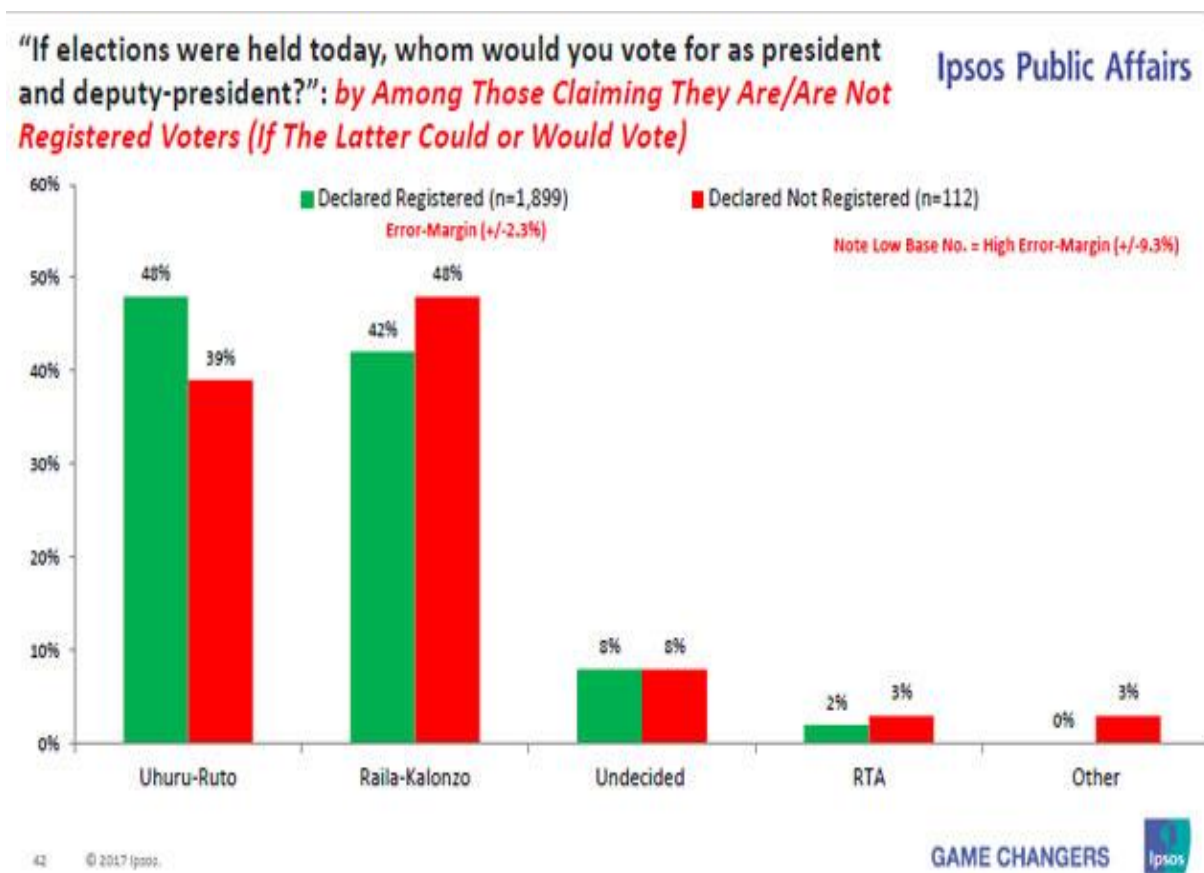
significantly bigger than the benefit of one party over another and in the event that that is the situation, signs on how these undecided voters will considerably enhance discretionary predictions.

Opinion polls held prior to August 2017 presidential elections by Ipsos Synovate and Infotrak Harris suggested a two-horse scenario with dead heat between the incumbent Uhuru Kenyatta and his main challenger Raila Odinga as both garnered 48percent. The general election results released by Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission after the elections however showed contrary outcome as Uhuru Kenyatta garnered 54.2% over Odinga's 44.7%. Given that, both candidates contested in the previous 2013 presidential elections, both had increased their share of the vote over that of the last election, when Odinga took 43.7% and Kenyatta won with a 50.5%. However, going by available data from IEBC on the number of registered voters, the country has 19,462,360 registered voters. If the number of registered voter is multiply by the number of undecided voters (10%), then it translates to 1,946,236 votes were up for grabs, a number that can guarantee victory for whoever they tilt to.

In Sub-Saharan Africa Ghana, Liberia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone and even Kenya have experienced competitive general elections that were decided by less than 10 percent point difference over the last decade (Long & Gibson, 2015). With only 37 days left to August 2017 general election, Ipsos Synovate and Infotrak Harris released pre-election survey outcomes that suggested between five to eight per cent of the voters they had interviewed were yet to make up their minds on who vote in. From the last surveys, it is apparent that as the Election Day drew nearer, the number of undecided voters declined. In Africa and in particular Kenya, geographically concentrated ethnic groups that are affiliated with particular political parties have been used as mechanism for mobilising support.

Ethnicity is a polygonal character and voters can be expected to be more or less “ethnic” in their apparent identity. Weghorst et al (2013), ethnic identity abridges the persuadability of voters who get “intellectual advantages” for supporting candidates like themselves and who utilise ethnicity as an alternate way to assessing a candidate ineffectively advertised strategy preferences. In Kenya, the Kikuyu and Luo communities are politicised ethnic groups that have historically been identified within contradicting political divide except for 2003 general elections when both supported the same presidential hopeful Mwai Kibaki. Figure 2.3 shows Ipsos Synovate last popularity survey outcome on president candidates and their deputies.

Figure 2.2 President Candidates and Deputy President Popularity Survey



Source: Ipsos Synovate

Hence, it is expected that members of these ethnic groups are more likely to be core voters hence less persuadable. The main ethnic conflict is usually between the large ethnic communities who are embroiled in competition to control the presidency. The desire to capture the presidency has always been driven by perceptions that the “ruling ethnic group” is entitled to state resources and other benefits to the exclusion of other ethnic communities. Past and present experience have shown that state resources, political appointments and other public opportunities were skewed in favour of the successive presidents’ home regions or ethnic communities.

During August 2017 general elections, Western Kenya registered the highest number of undecided voters at 18 percent, according to the survey released by Infotrak Harris. It was followed by Rift Valley at 10 percent and the Coast region at 9 percent. The Rift Valley had over 4.6 million registered voters, making it the single most important region for any electoral contest: 10 percent of 4.6 million voters. Numerically in terms of votes, 460,000 voters were undecided and 10 percent of 1.7 million voters in the Coast region. Nyanza had the lowest number of undecided voters at three percent, followed by Central Kenya and Eastern Kenya at five percent each.

When it comes to politics, the ethnic regional blocks tend to exhibit herd mentality that has is difficult to remove the voters from. The results from that exercise (Figure 2.2) suggested that Jubilee Party’s support was highest in Central Kenya (88 percent), North Eastern Kenya (73 percent), Eastern Kenya (56 percent), and Rift Valley (54 percent). Their support was lowest in Nyanza at 14 per cent, Western Kenya (26 percent), the Coast region (29 percent) and Nairobi (37 percent), where perceived NASA stronghold areas. On the other hand, support for NASA was highest in Nyanza (83 percent), Coast (58 percent), western Kenya (54 percent), and Nairobi (50 percent). It was lowest in Central Kenya (five percent), North Eastern Kenya (19 percent), and Rift Valley (34 percent), and Eastern Kenya (36 percent), areas perceived to be Jubilee Party’s stronghold.

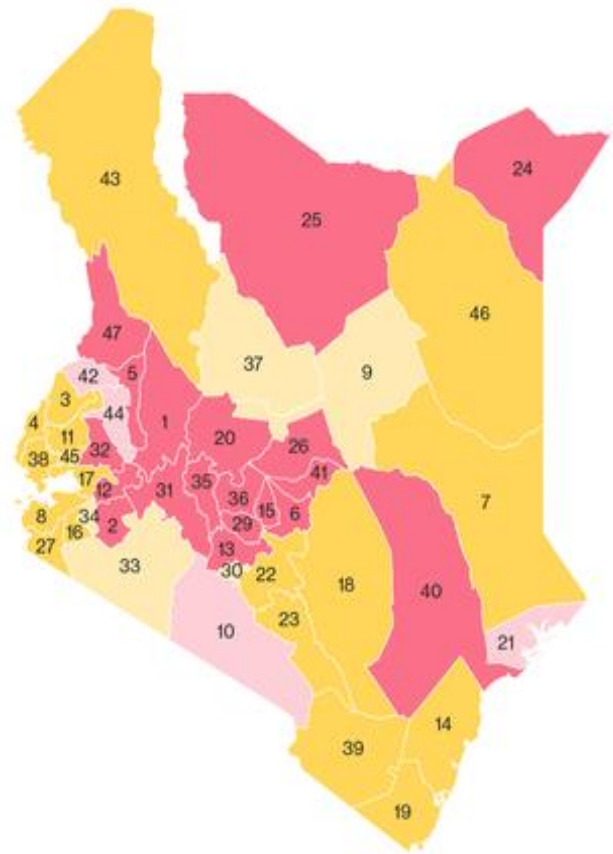
Figure 2.3 Swing Counties in August 2017 Presidential Elections

Kenya's 2017 Elections

Main party strongholds and battleground states

Strongholds ● Jubilee Party ● NASA party
Battlegrounds ● Jubilee leading ● NASA leading

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 ● Baringo | 25 ● Marsabit |
| 2 ● Bomet | 26 ● Meru |
| 3 ● Bungoma | 27 ● Migori |
| 4 ● Busia | 28 ● Mombasa |
| 5 ● Elgeyo-Marakwet | 29 ● Murang'a |
| 6 ● Embu | 30 ● Nairobi |
| 7 ● Garissa | 31 ● Nakuru |
| 8 ● Homa Bay | 32 ● Nandi |
| 9 ● Isiolo | 33 ● Narok |
| 10 ● Kajiado | 34 ● Nyamira |
| 11 ● Kakamega | 35 ● Nyandarua |
| 12 ● Kericho | 36 ● Nyeri |
| 13 ● Kiambu | 37 ● Samburu |
| 14 ● Kilifi | 38 ● Siaya |
| 15 ● Kirinyaga | 39 ● Taita-Taveta |
| 16 ● Kisii | 40 ● Tana River |
| 17 ● Kisumu | 41 ● Tharaka-Nithi |
| 18 ● Kitui | 42 ● Trans-Nzoia |
| 19 ● Kwale | 43 ● Turkana |
| 20 ● Laikipia | 44 ● Uasin Gishu |
| 21 ● Lamu | 45 ● Vihiga |
| 22 ● Machakos | 46 ● Wajir |
| 23 ● Makeni | 47 ● West Pokot |
| 24 ● Mandera | |



Sources: Infotrak, Ipsos Kenya, Verisk Maplecroft, Control Risks

Bloomberg

Source: Bloomberg

Kenya as an emerging democracy has expected to cast a ballot on ethnic cleavages. Swing voting for political parties ought to be viewed as an empirical anomaly especially along non-clientelistic lines (Weghorst & Lindberg, 2013). In areas where dominant political parties prevail, their representatives habitually are re-elected at under 50% rate during elections and in these areas, there are voters who will never change their ballot regardless of how inadequately a leader of their party or how well leaders of another party perform. Regions such as Nyanza, Central, and Eastern had the list number of undecided voters, western and coast had higher percentages. In spite of NASA being a brainchild of Musalia Mudavadi who hails from Western, the region registered the

highest number of swing voters. The reason behind Nyanza, central and eastern regions having less undecided voters is explained by the fact that, leading presidential contenders and their running mate came from these regions thus there were coethnic attachments that the leaders attracted.

Information can possibly activate or to estrange and with regards an imperfect democracy, furnishing eligible voters with information on self-serving elite' conduct can either negatively affects voting intentions or none. Information that is impartial may prepare those with constrained electoral experience but leaves an open inquiry of how to maintain a strategic distance from adverse impacts and keep the discussion going among people who gained experience with democratic system. The capacity of a voter to express his/her needs and wants in their choice of a political party on the Elections Day is hinged on their level of political information.

2.7 Consistency in Voter Behaviour

The degree of closeness between a presidential hopeful and a voter is a fundamental of the numerous ways to dealing with voter behaviour. Voter behaviour as indicated by Agomor and Adams (2014) is characterised as a set of personal electoral activities, which include but not restricted to participation in electoral campaigns, turnout at the surveys and picking who to vote in favour for. With the all things being equal, a voter will always pick a presidential hopeful closer to them on some evaluative dimension. Proximity to a political party is significant of a legislative because a candidate's characteristic is low key, difficult in identifying and subordinate to that of the party (Marquis, 2010). The more prominent the perceived distance is from a political party, the lesser the odds a voter will choose a candidate from that party and for a voter that needs knowledge, they will depend on other criteria like individual attributes of a party leader surmising their predilections to vote in favour of the parties. The influence on political behaviour is

identified with the attributes of the network with the interactions of that network being either formal or casual. The casual communication is viewed as vital in light of the fact that it opens voters to information in a spontaneous way and exerts influence unconsciously. The more an individual collaborates with other individuals, who share similar thoughts with him/her, the more probable they are to share same perspectives or same political behaviour are to share same political perspectives or the equivalent political behaviour (Evangelia & Theodore , 2017).

2.7.1 Degree of Political Involvement

The degree of political involvement intensively influences the arrangement of a voter's preference. The involvement allows the voter to approach a bigger amount of political information, which is diffused, expended and reused via the political discussion and the interaction and exposed voters affect political preference. A potential voter will take part in a political and social networks with different level of empowerment, is carefully linked to the frequency and the intensity of the contacts in given political networks. As the total number of the empowered social and political contacts increases, it likewise expands the likelihood to vote in favour of the same political party and vice versa.

Family networks have always been a place where political information is produced and consumed e.g. between life partners or among guardians and their kids. Guardians having the same political preferences are probably going to have kids with the same political preferences since parental influences on their mentalities and conduct of their kids is a frivolous matter. Not only are the relationships between the social and political mentalities of guardians and offspring positive and robust, trial research have shown that priming thoughts of a conservative or liberal guardians is sufficient to move grown-up political demeanours toward that guardians philosophy (Jost, West, & Gosling, 2009). Interpersonal family relationships are a special and unique interaction activity since the family is an important decision making centre and is influenced by values, skills, strategy

and communication of its members. The most direct and first attempt to political influence has been in the family relationship context. Families with high frequency of interaction, intimacy, respect, and trust with persons they coexist with facilitate political discussions and common political preferences. Research shows that interpersonal relationship is the main reason for the existence of many common political preferences in couples. Previous researches have indicated that the relationship in couples has three times greater influence than other relationships and all interpersonal influences determine the behaviour of people living in the same house. The trust and strength of the relationship is much more contagious in the family than in other networks.

2.7.2 Clientelism

According to Gadjanova (2017), electoral politics in Africa is generally viewed as clientelistic and lawmakers are expected to maintain and depend on patronage systems for electoral support. Whenever merchandise and money are being distributed during campaigns, it is ordinarily alluded to as electoral or campaign clientelism. Such practices present significant hindrances to democratisation and economic development since they constrain provision of public goods, exacerbate an incumbent's already considerable advantage, and may push the opposition to resort in political violence.

African politics is characterised as clientelistic and clientelism is the exchange of goods and services for political support, which involves implicit and explicit quid-pro-quo. This characterisation evolved from the concept of "neo-patrimonialism", which had widely discussed during post-colonial authoritarian era. When African countries stirred to multiparty democratic competition, the voters assumed the role of the ruler, as providing office to politicians through an election process (Young, 2009). For a majority of politicians in Africa, political authority is derived from "granting" favour to citizens in continuous cycle emanating from government to villages, motivated by the central idea that political power comes from direct and personal

exchanges continued. There exist several variations of clientelism, and all of them involve reciprocally constructive exchange between a supporter and politician.

Clientelism is what scholars from other regions refer to as constituency service and in Kenya; it would involve a hierarchy that starts with the elites who have access to government funds. The elites then filter the funds through homegrown intermediaries and this form of clientelism does not rely on direct and personal exchanges. Personality clientelism that involves “dyadic exchange” is the most common type of clientelism in Africa. Clientelistic voting is reliant on non-public particular, which are often individualised such as exchange of private goods in turn for political loyalty. In mature democracy, voting decisions are shaped by many factors, which include performance-based evaluations. Whether the political environment is highly clientelistic or not, an incumbent who wishes to be re-elected should seek to meet the demands of voters that include delivering of collective goods such as schools, roads, markets (Agomor & Adams, 2014).

In 2017 general election campaigns, President Uhuru Kenyatta in seeking re-election made promises with regard to some collective goods that were published in his political party manifesto. The collective goods ranged from creating 1.3 million jobs annually and working with county governments in establishing of at least an industry in the 47 counties, establishing government sponsored apprenticeship programme of up to 12 months for all university and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduands. There was also expanding of free maternity care to include government funded National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) cover for every expectant mother for one year among others (Jubilee Manifesto, 2017). The few mentioned were appealing to the youth population who constitute the largest number of voters and were major prevailing issues among the youth population.

The process of winning an election in new democratic dispensations is competitor inspired to provide higher quality of collective goods. Iterative electoral processes can create a learning

mechanism that democratic theory anticipates, that is broad participation of electorates in the direction and operation of political systems that leads politicians to behave in a way that is more aligned with the interests and needs of their people. In Kenya, ethnicity operates in ways that allow a voter to express his/her social identity or prejudice and expressing fear towards others i.e. ethnic outsiders. For a long time, ethnicity has been seen to be providing patronage distribution clues, an assumption that conventional wisdom claiming the continent's environment is scare of information a factor that can be attributed to their lack of knowledge in evaluating politician's performance records necessitating dependence on ethnicity (Long & Gibson, 2015).

To a voter who has no coethnic presidential candidate, ethnicity is of less significance something that makes their ballot choice to split among candidates than those of groups having a coethnic candidate. Individuals who are non-coethnic with any presidential candidate often vote with least cohesion unlike their counterpart who have ethnic candidate. Kolawole (2016), posit that in the case of a presidential candidate who also happens to be an incumbent, their performance greatly influences a voter's decision and emotive issues such as anger, anxiety, fear, pride, etc. can influence the voting decision of a voter. There is also the concept of issue voting where voters vote based on real issues of economy, immigration, workers' rights, and tax. No matter how popular a candidate is, his/her honour, reputation, integrity, records and desire to render selfless service if they are not financially capable to sustain election campaigns, one is considered a joker and this is so because elective posts usually go to the highest bidder.

2.7.3 Political Endorsements and Cross-Ethnic Voting

The casting of ballot in sub-Saharan African countries is thought to be a defining feature of elections as a presidential candidate constantly reaches out for supports of other politicians from other ethnic groupings. With the return of multiparty politics over the locale in the mid-1900s, not only have the incumbent presidents sought re-election with the help of politicians drawn from

multiple groupings, but also cross-ethnic endorsements among opposition politicians have also occurred in over one third of those alliances have resulted in executive alternation (Leornado, Donghyun, & Gichohi, 2017).

In Kenya's general election held on December 2007, the then opposition lead by Raila Odinga had forged an alliance with several leaders across the ethnic divide to form the pentagon. The pentagon comprised of William Ruto (Rift Valley), Raila Odinga (Nyanza), Charity Ngilu and Joseph Nyaga (Eastern), Najib Balala (Coast), Musalia Mudavadi (Western), as each of them representing their ethnic bloc in the different regions. The scenario was not that different in 2013, there was so realignment amongst the key pentagon members. When Uhuru Kenyatta was run for presidential office for a second time as an aspirant and come 2017 as an incumbent, he had to consolidate support from other regions by forming an umbrella party- Jubilee Party.

Ethnicity is politically useful in multi-ethnic social orders since it is the premise on which politicians are regularly expected to channel assets to voters. As recorded widely by researchers of multi-ethnic social orders, politicians depend on ethnicity to secure themselves a steady base of political support. They develop and retain their base through customised clientelistic connections that encourage access to public services and additionally individual support. A voter will expect just their coethnic politician/s to follow through on the distributive guarantees in light of the fact that there are shared identities that give standards of reciprocity to initiate compliance and additionally endorsing components to punish individuals who defect. By contrast, while lacking social ties, voters are probably going to see a non-coethnic politician as being more likely to engage in the kind of discrimination that will leave them out of future distribution of resources.

Politicians contending in an election process where voters are isolated along their socio-social cleavages must seek out the endorsement of politicians from other groups in order to become viable candidate/s hopeful/s (Agomor & Adams, 2014). In spite of the long-standing cases with

respect to the prevalence of ethnic ballot casting in multi-ethnic social orders around the world, politicians in those nations win votes from different groups by securing supports from the politicians representing them. Following decades of civil war fought along ethnic lines, Sri Lankan Freedom Party (a largely Sinhalese party) hopeful won a competitive race in 2015 presidential election after securing support of Tamil National Alliance leader, which represents the nation's ethnic minority.

A voter may take part in ethnic voting since s/he may lack other sources of information, in this way expecting a candidate's ethnic identity to be an indicator of distributive behaviour once in office. Hopefuls may utilise cross-ethnic supports to publicly signal their expectation to circulate assets across ethnic cleavages. If voters accept endorsements issued by their coethnic politician/s as trustworthy source of information, at that point they may emphatically refresh their assumptions regarding non-ethnic hopeful's guarantees to embrace non-prejudicial conveyance of asset after elections. Political supports issued by coethnic politicians can emphatically influence voters' assessments of non-coethnic hopefuls.

Voters are probably going to report eagerness to vote in favour of a no-coethnic candidate after becoming aware of an endorsement from one of their own coethnic politician and the level of this impact is sufficient to counterbalance the expected preference for coethnic hopefuls in specific conditions. The appeal that is contained in an endorsement of a candidate, which is public goods versus private merchandise, has no noteworthy effect on voters' assessment of hopefuls. During 2008 American presidential races, 95% of African-Americans voted in favour of a kindred African America candidate Barrack Obama. According to Wolf (2009), given that the biggest ethnic community in Kenya that is the Kikuyu comprise less a fourth of the populace, the three biggest ethnic groupings constitute hardly 50% of registered voters. Combined with a presidency-oriented, winner takes-it all electoral system, it implies that coalition building based on ethno-territorial

alliances is fundamental in any bid for state power. It also means that short term deals often underpin such alliances, with today's comrades-in-arms sometimes tomorrows most bitter adversaries.

2.7.6 Voter Buying

Vote buying continuous to be prevalent in many electoral regimes whereas the relationship between voting behaviour and vote buying in the context of secret ballot remains largely unknown. With conventional accounts suggesting that less privileged poor individuals and swing voters in the country's most electorally competitive regions being likely targets. Vote buying is a strategic act on the part of political parties. In the past, parties took advantage of the legal provision allowing "assisted voting", which allowed individuals who felt they could not properly vote by themselves, were permitted to bring along an individual of voting age to assist them in the voting booth. Vote buying is a strategic act on the part of political parties. In the past, parties took advantage of legal provisions allowing for "assisted voting", which allowed individuals who felt they could not properly vote by themselves were permitted to bring along an individual of voting age to assist them in the voting booth. According to Carter Centre's report on 2002 Kenyan general elections, Party agents were often involved in "assisted voting" and used the rule to their advantage. One of their observer states that:

"...in practice it was not uncommon to see several party agents as well as the presiding officer crowding around the voting booth to observe the voting process. In one polling station...nearly all women voters claimed illiteracy, requested assistance, and received assistances from the presiding officer..."

(Carter Center Report, 2003:30)

The same observer goes on to note that:

"...in several cases, assisted voting was conducted in full view of party agents, observers and others in the polling station. In other cases, it appears that the provision of assisted voting for illiterate voters may have been abused, with an

unusually high number of voters demanding such assistance in some stations and few or none in others...”

(Carter Center Report, 2003:33)

Given that assisted voting provisions violated the secrecy of the vote, Kenya’s Election Laws of 2017 criminalised it. It expresses that where a voter who is, because of an inability or being not able to read or write, and subsequently cannot vote in the manner prescribed in the Regulations. The presiding officer will allow the voter to be helped or supported by a person of the voters own free choice and who will not be a candidate or a party agent (Electoral Statute 2017). In occasions where the voter applying to be helped is not accompanied by a person who is fit to assist him/her, the presiding officer will help such a voter, in the presence of the various party agents.

Buying of votes in a political election is illegal in every country and vote buying undermines political equality and democracy. In spite of the fact that vote-buying bans are universal and uncontroversial, reasons offered for such bans are contestable. The immediate ramification of vote buying is that a voter shares and turnout would have been lower in the absence of electoral handouts. While there is little proof that candidates focus on specific voters with cash hand-out, it is unclear whether these hand-outs actually results in greater turnout or higher vote shares in favour of the distributing candidate.

Vote buying often rely on two implicit assumptions. The first being, party operatives are able to identify voters’ political inclinations through their social networks or personal interactions. For the party operatives to target a voter it is harder during campaigns since the political inclinations are fluid, something that reduces the precision of targeted efforts. Secondly, there is an assumption that those targeted with handouts behave in a way that would not have happened otherwise. In Kenya, the undecided voters and those with low incomes are perceived to be more likely to be targeted for mobilisation purposes. Kroman (2009), asks if voting is secret and voluntary, why

does voting have this impact? Vote buying influences perceptions of party monitoring and involvement in violence and improve perception of party credibility. The voting system is the greatest indicator of an individual voting behaviour and may have the greatest effect on the aggregate level. Although both compulsory voting and satisfaction with the democratic process is acceptable pointer of voting behaviour, voting system accounts for the greatest change in the logged odds of voting (Gadjonova, 2017).

A presidential candidates' record is substantially in signalling their capacity to provide local public goods and voters are both willing and ready to punish an underperforming incumbent. The hypothesis of gift giving as status affirmation is capable to reconcile the prevalence of campaign clientelism in sub-Saharan Africa with recent findings that voters think a candidate performance and party ideology when deciding whom to support (Gadjonova, 2017). Vote buying is a type is a type of clientelism.

2.7.7 Social Stratification

Their belonging to socially stratified groups influences life chances and behaviours' of voters across advanced industrial democracies. This applies to religion, health, educational attainment, and income and life style choices. Social stratification continues to be a real and important factor in the lives of modern individuals, which is reflects in the media too. In the USA, financial crisis brought renewed focus on social conflicts such as increasing inequality. Different politicians from different political parties refer to social groups in their communication, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney campaigned on a "*Plan for a stronger middle class* " while Swedish Conservative party, Moderaterna, dubbing themselves "*The working class party of our time*". Kurtbaş (2015), posits that sociologic, rational and the theory of psychological identification with a party are important factors that influence voters political choice. When making a choice, a voter can benefit from sociologic factors such as collective and social links, due to emotional links

developed since childhood, the voter can identify him/herself with a political party or make a choice by rationally examining the subject matter and provide service in line with their own interests.

An individual's choice of a political party will greatly have a bearing on their political decision, the same way their psychological attachment to a particular political party would. Investigations reveal that a majority of voters who claiming affiliation to a political party often cast their ballot to that party's presidential hopeful in the elections. In countries such as America where the major political divide is either Democratic or Republican, a voter is often informed by childhood party affiliation, where you find that children raised in Democratic families usually identifying themselves as being politically liberal, while their counterparts in Republican families identifying themselves as politically conservative. But also there are a number of voters identifying themselves as being "Independent", ironically close to 90% of these voters assert to ascribe to ideologies of a particular political party.

History has demonstrated that it is not easy for a sitting head of state to be defeated in their bid for re-election and if they were defeated, most likely there would have been a shift in their support base. In the United States, presidential elections of 1960, between Democrat John F. Kennedy and incumbent vice president Republican Richard Nixon, where Kennedys Roman Catholic religion was an issue, which worked to his advantage given that close to 80% of catholic voters, voted in his favour. In the Philippines, Cardinal Jaime Sin Lachina the spiritual leader of Filipino catholic led them in the People Power Revolution forcing the downfall of the 10th President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and impeaching of the 13th President Joseph Estrada in 2001 to step down as sitting heads. The Catholic Church has remained a powerful opposing force on issues divorce and reproductive health. The Catholic Church has remained a powerful opposing force on issues divorce and reproductive health. *The Philippines is the only country in the world, aside from the*

Vatican City that lack divorce laws. Maribel (2016) posits that in the Philippines, organised churches have been involved in electoral politics, which include selection of candidates, and church members who run in elections.

Sub-Sahara Africa has faith-based organisation, which cater for more than 50% of all health and education services. The politicisation of religion in Kenya has occurred on several occasions. Muslim preachers and activists sort support from veteran politicians in the public realm to address their perceived political disadvantage. In immediate Post-independence Kenya, the mainstream churches were not involved in political activism and largely maintained the status-quo. In the late 1980s democratisation wave in Africa, mainstream churches including those in Kenya took a prodemocracy stand by speaking against authoritarianism, holding conferences that created new constitutions as well mobilising their church members to join in the call for a democratic reform. During president's Moi KANU regime, churches under the United Evangelical Churches of Kenya (UECK), which included the Seventh Day Adventist, Salvation Army, Friends Church (Quakers), African Inland Church alongside Pentecostal churches stood against the Multipartism and supported KANU.

The main Christian churches in Kenya have played independent and critical political roles, which included demanding for an opened political space, speaking against corruption, negative ethnicity, and human rights violations perpetrated by former President Moi's authoritarian regime (Kenga, 2016). The church also opposed the abolition of the secret ballot that would ensure no opposition leader would be elected. The church joined the Law Society of Kenya in condemning the mlolongo (queuing) voting system. In retaliation, the government black listed some churches and banned open-air religious meetings and prayers without permits.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

A theory is a prearranged set of thoughts, explanations, and ideologies of some aspect of human experience. It provides a clear thought of the areas in which the connections between variables do exist. A theory is a statement that an investigator makes after observing two or more things, which would be common. For instance, if people vote for a presidential candidate hyped as leading by pre-election surveys published in the mainstream media, then it can be posited that the surveys published were informed and outlined in a way that makes them unforgettable to the voters, as poll results reach the public through the media.

2.8.1 Audience Reception Theory

There exist two aspects to Audience Reception studies, which are Audience Theory and Audience Research. Audience theory refers to a set of approaches that help an investigator to decode an audience for evidences to validate the assumptions of a particular approach with regard to the relation between media and audience. David Morley's (1980) investigation of the Nationwide was an early case of the encoding/decoding approach being used to research audience of media texts. Through connecting reception of the programmes ideology and mode of address, Morley analysed the reactions of various occupational groups according to class in order to monitor their acceptance or rejection of preferred meanings.

Morley study attempted to illustrate how a participant's social positioning would affect whether they read Nationwide from a prevailing, negotiated, or oppositional position. By mapping each group's reactions, he exhibited that the audience's responses were "politically designed". The investigation revealed that it was short sighted to describe the audience's reception of media within the prescribed categories of dominant, negotiated, and oppositional readings. The history of

research into media audience alternates between two theoretical standpoints, termed as either active or passive. These approaches to audience fall under either:

2.8.2 Passive Audience/Effect theory

A voter is perceived to be passive when the media message is seen to have a greater influence over them. Such an approach assumes a linear process of transmissions of messages, from the media to the voter, where a voter passively consumes media messages. The theory constitutes the early phase of audience research that focused on the effects of exposure to mass media that is media was perceived as being all powerful capable of controlling the way people think and act. The audiences were therefore considered to being “passive” recipient who absorb media message and acted upon them without thinking critically.

This theory is based on the premise that media has cultural effects and suggests to explain how media achieves that. According to Akhila Narayanan (2017), there are two dominant approaches to explaining media effect which emanate from two opposing political standpoints. The first one being, a right-wing perspective that claims that the popular media can affect a voter adversely as it leads to interruption of customary cultural values, which can have a negative impact on people’s consciousness. While the left-wing outlook, holds that those in power largely control mass media in terms of ownership and therefore representations within such a media will serve to retain the political status quo. The left wing also considers that such media through ideological training turns audience into passive beings.

2.8.3 Active Audience Theory

The theory marked a shift in the role of audience from just being dormant consumers to being actively engaged in media transaction. The fundamental question under this mode was, “What people do with media?” The responses range from information, personal identity, entertainment,

social interaction etc. The theory nullified the basic assumptions of the initial phase where media was seen as reigning over the inactive, mindless audience. Moreover, it recognised the massive variation in the audience thereby suggesting that there is no such thing as an audience but we have many audiences, made up of different categories of people within different contexts in different times who can respond to media in a wide variety of ways. The model of active audience theory and Uses and Gratification theory were launched together in the 1960s. Morley in his postscript to the nationwide study evaluates his own ideas and proposes further developments stemming from the belief that media readings cannot be reduced to social determinism. Furthermore, he suggests future studies should focus on genre and contextual based investigations grounded in audience's media consumption. Research, David Morley claims, needs to consider media products that engage various cultures and subcultures and establish patterns across genres:

“...By translating our concerns from the framework of the decoding model into that of genre theory, we may be able to develop a model of text-audience relations which is more flexible, and of wider application...it would involve us in dealing more with the relevance or irrelevance and comprehension/incomprehension dimensions of decoding rather than being directly concerned with the acceptance or rejection of substantive ideological themes...”

Audience studies are fundamentally concerned with the process of interpretation and meaning making. There are differences in the way a particular medium addresses its audience, the way the audience react to it and the way the audience themselves interact with each other. There are also variations in the way audience relate to a particular media.

In his seminal paper Encoding/Decoding (1980), Stuart Hall proposed that media producers “encoded” meanings into media texts, which carried “preferred” reading intended for the audience. By incorporating semiotic framework into his analysis, he posits that active audience do not simply digest messages encoded by the producers, but “decode” meanings from the media in accordance with their own social and cultural context. Thus, media texts are polysemic meaning the understanding of presidential pre-election survey outcomes is informed by different factors and

can be read in a number of ways to accepting, negotiating, or rejection of the message. However, he stresses that the encoding and decoding model does not claim that texts are open to an infinite number of interpretations, as they remain “structured in dominance”. Rather, audience can embrace one of a number of stances when decoding a message i.e. accepting the dominant reading, adopting an oppositional position, which is decoding a very contrary message to that intended by the producer, or a negotiated position in which the preferred reading is accommodated without accepting its ideology. Although Hall does not deny that media messages have effects, he reminds us that these effects are dependent upon an audience’s interpretation of the text.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature by various researchers on public opinion polls influence on voter behaviour. This literature will provide insight on the study’s main objective; assessing public opinion polls influence on swing voter behaviour in presidential elections. The study also reviewed David Morley’s audience reception theory.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted in realising the main objective: assessing public opinion polls influence on swing voter behaviour in presidential elections. It covers the research design, research approach, study location, target population, sampling techniques, data collection, and analysis, limitations and concludes with ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

Kothari (2004), define research design as the characteristics of a particular situation with the aim of obtaining complete and accurate information about the situation at hand. Research design is therefore a researchers' plan on how to proceed with the collection and analysis of research data (Creswell, 2014). The research design used in this study is explanatory. In this study, the researcher endeavours to explain the impact of presidential pre-election survey outcomes on voter behaviour in Kenya, as political communication is perceived along voters regional and ethnic bloc inclination.

3.2 Study Location

This study was carried out in Nairobi County. Nairobi being the capital city and being cosmopolitan has attracted people from different republics. In the past presidential elections, it establishes that the county has tendency of voting in leadership from across the major political divide. The two constituencies of Dagoretti South and Kibra were selected given there consistency in voting for specific presidential candidate over a period. The leading presidential candidates in 2017 elections have been in presidential contest for a period more than four election cycles.

3.3 Research Approach

This study embraced mixed method approach as the approach permits the use of statistical procedures to explain the findings. Qualitative data is often open-ended without predetermined responses while quantitative data often include closed-ended responses such as those found on questionnaires or in psychosomatic instruments (Creswell, 2014). Mixed method approach represents a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques in selecting sample/s providing strength that counterbalances weakness of both qualitative and quantitative research.

3.4 Population, Sampling Procedure and Data Collection

Population is the aggregate of people, things or the entire set of relevant cases that a researcher has in mind from which s/he obtains a sample to study in a bid to give answers to research objectives. According to Babbie (2008), a target population for a study is defined as a group of people from whom the researcher wants to draw conclusions. The relevant characteristics of the sample population comprised registered voters aged 18 years and above, and who participated on 8th August 2017 presidential elections. The study population in comprised of;

Registered Voters: The target population of this study is 225,515 registered voters in Kibra and Dagoretti South Constituencies. Data from IEBC register indicates Kibra Constituency has 118,276 while Dagoretti South Constituency has 107,239 voters. For a respondent to qualify to participate in the study, they must have registered as a voter in the respective constituencies and voted on 8th, August 2017 presidential elections. The study employed survey to provide for numerical description of attitudes, trends or opinions of the sample population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2014). Survey was used as it guarantees standardisation of

measurements given that all the voters' are questioned exactly similar questions in the same method consequently eliminating probable interviewer bias.

A survey research investigator chooses a sample size by selecting a segment of population and centered on the margin of error s/he is prepared to allow. Creswell (2014), suggest that confidence interval as an estimate in quantitative research of upper and lower statistical values consistent with observed data and likely to contain actual population mean. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), confidence interval is the percent of sureness and tells how confident a researcher is self-assured with the outcome of the study. It is how much uncertainty there is with any particular statistic as it communicates how accurate an estimate is like. The sample size for this study was obtained using Cooper and Schinder (2013) together with Kothari and Gang, (2014) formulae.

The sample population will be 225,515.

$$n = N / 1 + N (\alpha)^2$$

Where n= the sample size, N= the sample frame (population) and α =margin of error (0.06%)

$$n = 225,515 / 1 + 225,515 (0.06)^2 = 278.141$$

$$n = 278$$

From the sample size of 278 voters, 146 respondents were drawn from Kibra and 132 respondents from Dagoretti South Constituencies. Creswell (2014) posits that quantitative research method involves the processes of collection, analysing, interpreting, and writing of study findings. Administration of questionnaires is primary data source for quantitative research approach while Key Informant Interview (KII) is used in the collection of qualitative data. The informants were selected because they possess privilege knowledge that is being solicited by an investigator (Kumar, 1989). Contingent on the scope and nature of the inquiry, an investigator will identify

appropriate clusters from where the sample is drawn. Purposive sampling constitutes collection of open-ended data, picture, or text analysis, representation of information in tables and figures and interpretation of findings in form of qualitative methods (Creswell, 2014).

The key informant interviews were conducted using interview guides. In a structured interview, Nachmias (1996) contends that the sequence in which the questions asked is the same in every interview. While the core set of questions were used in guiding the interview, the researcher asked follow up questions whenever she felt there was need to seek explanation on concerns raised by the informant. In cases where such concerns were answered, the subsequent questions in the interview guide, the researcher skipped the already answered questions. In this study, the researcher did six structured face-to-face interviews. All the interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed by the researcher. The interviews lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes. The informants included one pollster firm, one academician, two political analysts, Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) personnel, and one political party.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

A sample is a subset of population in which an investigator is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions about a phenomenon from (Kothari, 2004). The researcher factored in the time and finances required to collect data, given voters are spread over a large geographical location spanning 47 counties. Therefore would have been impossible for the researcher to collect insights from the entire target population due to a lack of time and resources. Although IEBC voter register was ideal source of identifying the respective voters in the two constituencies, Samples provided the next best alternative. The study employed simple random sampling for respondent from Sacred Heart Parish Dagoretti corner and Victory World Outreach church, Institute for Meteorological Training and Research (IMTR), Youth social gathering (All Stars

Football club) while convenience sampling was administered at household level. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling where respondent/s is sampled purely because they are “suitable” source of data. Non-probability sampling does not contain known non zero likelihoods of selection (Lavrakas, 2008), but rather subjective methods used to decide elements to be included in the sample such as, are they registered voters in the two constituencies and did they participate by way of voting in the August 2017 presidential elections. This reason for blending was to sample as many voters given they are found in different structures.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection is gathering of specific information aimed at either proving or refuting a fact. The study makes use of primary data and primary data is data that is directly collected from first-hand occurrences and has not been open to processing or any other handling (Greener, 2008). In this study, qualitative primary data was collected using interview guide while quantitative data was collected by administering questionnaires. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments (Interview guides and Questionnaires).

Questionnaires (Appendix I) were used in the collection of data and were administered in Dagoretti South and Kibra Constituencies as provided for in section. According to Abawi (2013), posits that questionnaires as a data collection instrument is consistent of a series of questions and other prompts used for the purposes of collecting information from respondents. Krosnick & Presser (2010), posit that one of the first decisions a researcher must put into consideration when designing a survey question is whether to use open-ended or close-ended questionnaires. The advantages were that close-ended questions provided answers which the respondent was expected to choose from, open-ended questions allowed respondents to explain their responses in detail, as

s/he understood them. Questionnaires were employed in this study since they are economical based on time, energy, and finances.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), raw data from the field is difficult to interpret hence the need for cleaning and coding. The raw data were key punched in Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) computer software for basic analysis. The qualitative data was coded to create categories for objectives, after which the investigator classified and drew similar objectives comparing their relationships and examining how they relate to variables within the sampled population. The qualitative data were presented in the form of text while the resultant quantitative findings were presented in form of bar charts, tables containing percentages and frequencies distributions.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

The researcher initially carried out a series of four pilot tests with the questionnaire among the sample of the target population to test its validity. The areas tested include ascertaining whether the questionnaire addressed the research objectives and questions, if the questions prompted desired responses and if it covered main objective. The results of the several field-tests enabled the researcher to draft and revise the final questionnaire before administering to the sampled population. The researcher also ensured that there was credibility of the data collected from different sources by observing the expectation mentioned in Section 3.5 of this chapter.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues in conducting any given enquiry usually emanate from the kind of difficulties the investigator is studying and the methods s/he employs in gathering valid and reliable data

(Nachmias, 1996). To corroborate the requisite ethical standards were complied with during the study; the researcher twice appeared before a panel of academics at the University of Nairobi (UoN), and on the first instance presented her study proposal. The academics then gave their recommendations regarding the study and cleared the researcher for fieldwork as indicated on the Certificate of Fieldwork (Appendix VIII). After data collection and compilation of the final project, the researcher once again appeared before a panel of academics at UoN and defended her final work. The academics gave their recommendations and pointed out areas that needed amendments, recommendations the researcher complied with as evidenced by the Certificate of Corrections (Appendix IX). Having done all that, the final work was presented to the university to test its originality and ensure it was devoid of plagiarism. The Certificate of Originality, Turnitin Originality Report (Appendix X). While the researcher relied on numerous sources and materials to develop the main argument presented in the project, all the materials and sources used have been duly and properly acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Overview

The chapter describes the research findings as gathered from the respondents, based on data collected through questionnaires and interview guide, as the topics discussed were generated from the research questions. The responses were drawn from voters, political analysts, political Party, academic scholar, opinion poll firm, and Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC). Questionnaires were administered in the two sampled constituencies of Dagoretti South and Kibra.

4.1 Distribution of Questionnaires

Table 4.1a shows that 43.8 percent of the voters were drawn from Kibra constituency and 47.4 percent from Dagoretti South constituency. The study realised a 91.3 percent questionnaire return.

Table 4.1a Distribution of Sampled Voter by Constituency

Constituency	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Responded To	Percent (%)
Kibra	170	132	47.4
Dagoretti South	150	122	43.8
Total	320	254	91.3

Source: Field survey, 2018

4.1.0 Description of Sample

This section presents the socio demographic statistic attributes of voters that have the potential to shape voting behaviour during an electioneering period. They include the respective constituencies

of registration, gender, age, and level of education of voters, which the investigator used as independent variables in the study. In the next section, the study presents the distribution of voters by their demographic variables.

4.1.1 Gender of Respondents

The researcher sought to find out how many of the 254 voters were male and female by requiring them to indicate their gender on the questionnaires distributed. The number of voters who participated in the study in terms of gender is indicated in Table 4.1b. From the analysis of the questionnaires distributed across the two constituencies of Dagoretti South and Kibra, male respondents constituted 52.8 percent while the female respondents accounted for 46.1 percent.

Table 4.1b Distribution of Voters by Gender

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	3	1.2
Male	134	52.8
Female	117	46.1
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

With a 6.7 percent disparity of political involvement between men and women, this was in itself an indication of the central role women are playing in elective politics in Kenya. The gender equation is relevant, first because in the Kenyan context, it has become a legal requirement as provided for in Articles 27 and 81 of The 2010 Constitution of Kenya. The Article provides that women and men alike have equal rights to equal treatment that include the right to equal opportunities in political, economic, cultural, and social sphere hence their participation in political processes is critical. Article 1 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, also acknowledges' all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Human

beings are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood. Secondly, the exclusion of either gender in the study would have brought issues of bias towards one gender making the findings of the study skewed.

4.1.2 Age of Respondents

The researcher sought to establish the ages of the voters by grouping them within age brackets given the wide scatter of ages of the sampled voters. The researcher thought it wise to group the voters into age brackets as shown in Table 4.1b. Overall, age bracket distribution provided a good spread among voters to facilitate meaningful analysis. From the analysis of the questionnaires, the findings indicate majority of the voters were youth between the ages of 18 to 34 years, which translates to 67.4 percent of the sampled size.

Table 4.1b Distribution of Voters by Age

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	1	0.4
18-24 Years	86	33.9
25-34Years	85	33.5
35-44 Years	26	10.2
45-54 Years	38	15.0
Above 55	18	7.1
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

Voters above 55 years constituted 7.1 percent while those within 35-44 year and 45-54 years were 10.2 percent and 15.0 percent respectively. The findings indicate that youth play an active involvement in active politics and high (67.4 percent) compared to the other age brackets. Disputably, in Kenya there is a close connection between the challenges affecting the youth and good governance for instance youth unemployment. From the literature review, presidential

contenders in their respective manifestos captured unemployment among youth and for President Uhuru Kenyatta who was seeking re-election, he pledged that his government would create 1.3 million jobs annually and work with respective county governments in establishing one industry.

4.1.3 Respondents Level of Education

The researcher sought to find out the level of education of the voters who participated in the study. Education is a key variable since in most cases, ones level of education usually informs their voting decisions, though admittedly, this may not be necessarily the occasion especially in the case of Kenya where elections are largely ethnic driven (Horowitz, 2016; Weghorst & Lindberg, 2013; Nyabuga, 2011).

Table 4.1b Distribution of Voters by Education Levels

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	13	5.1
Primary Education	4	1.6
Secondary Education	38	15.0
University(First Degree)	103	40.6
University(Post graduate)	42	16.5
Tertiary Education	53	20.9
Others	1	.4
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

The findings show that 40.6 percent of the sampled voters attained university education (First degree) and 15.0 percent completed their secondary level education. 5.1 percent of the voters failed to state their level of education attainment. A further 20.9 percent had tertiary education, which includes college certificate and diploma. The voters who attained university (Postgraduate) were 16.5 percent while those who attained primary education were 1.6 percent. In other words, a

majority (78.0 percent) of the sampled voters had attained post-secondary education facilitating their understanding of the electoral process intricacies. According to the findings, most of the voters possess formal education, with majority being university grandaunts. This can be attributed to the fact that majority of the voters who participated in the study were youth as indicate in Table 4.1b on the distribution of voters by age. The major mission of education is to emancipate its recipients by placing them on a coherent plane of thinking and it is claimed to assist citizens absorb civic virtues such as tolerance and constant political identities (Wafula, 2014; Wanyande, 2002).

4.2 Application of the Theory

Audience reception theory endeavours to elucidate how a voter's social positioning would affect their understanding from either accepting the meaning of a message to negotiating over it and even rejecting the meanings promoted. The voters have been categorised into three distinct groupings premised on the time they made the decision on a preferred presidential candidate that is early deciders, campaign deciders, and late deciders.

4.2.1 Interpretative Framework

The researcher mentioned in chapter three, that the study is anchored on David Morley's audience reception and audience tend to embrace one of a number of stances when decoding given messages. They can either accept the dominant position or adopt an oppositional position, which is decoding a very contrary position to that intended by the producer of the message or even a negotiated position, where the preferred position is accommodated without accepting its philosophy.

Although Stuart Hall accepts that media messages have effects, these effects are dependent upon interpretation of the text by audience. During an electioneering period, a host of factors ranging

from a candidates manifesto, ethnicity, financial capability to sustain a campaign, political party of affiliation will inform a voter's final choice of a presidential candidate and generally, it is about the electorate and likely effectiveness of election campaigns (Kogen & Gottfried, 2012). The early deciders are perceived to be highly prejudiced and may have better education compared to the other deciders (Kogen & Gottfried, 2012). For campaign deciders, they are less biased, pay more attention to elections and the mass media reporting's, they also delay their vote choice and often base election decision on campaign specific information rather than on potential political party identification. Other than the late deciders consuming less campaign specific information than the campaign or early deciders, much of what inform their choice of a presidential candidate is what the study seeks to establish.

Table 4.1 shows that early deciders have a dominant understanding, campaign deciders negotiated understanding and late decider oppositional understanding. The factors that inform early and campaign deciders have been established and their characteristics noted, while the characteristics of late deciders, is what this study seeks to investigate.

Table 4.1c Interpretative Framework

Time	Read	Dominant	Negotiated	Oppositional	Characteristics
Early Deciders		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly partisan • Better educated • Ethnicity
Campaign Deciders			✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less partisan • Pay more attention to elections and the mass media reporting's • Delay their choice of a presidential candidate • Decision anchored on campaign specific information instead of potential party identification
Late Deciders				✓	?

Source: Field survey, 2018

✓ (Tick) - Indicates the read for each audience(Voters)

4.3 Data Presentation and Interpretation

This section discusses in detail data presentation and interpretation, with the discussion hinged around the main objective of the study, the three specific objectives as enumerated in chapter 1 and 2 of the study and the theory on which the study is founded on.

4.3.1 Knowledge of Public Opinion Polls

In Table 4.2, the researcher observes that 79.1 percent of the voters know of public opinion polls and 19.7 percent do not know of public opinion polls. Amongst voters who failed to state whether they know or do not know of opinion pollsters (1.2 percent), there are those voters who failed to state their response, but mentioned public opinion pollsters association with past presidential elections.

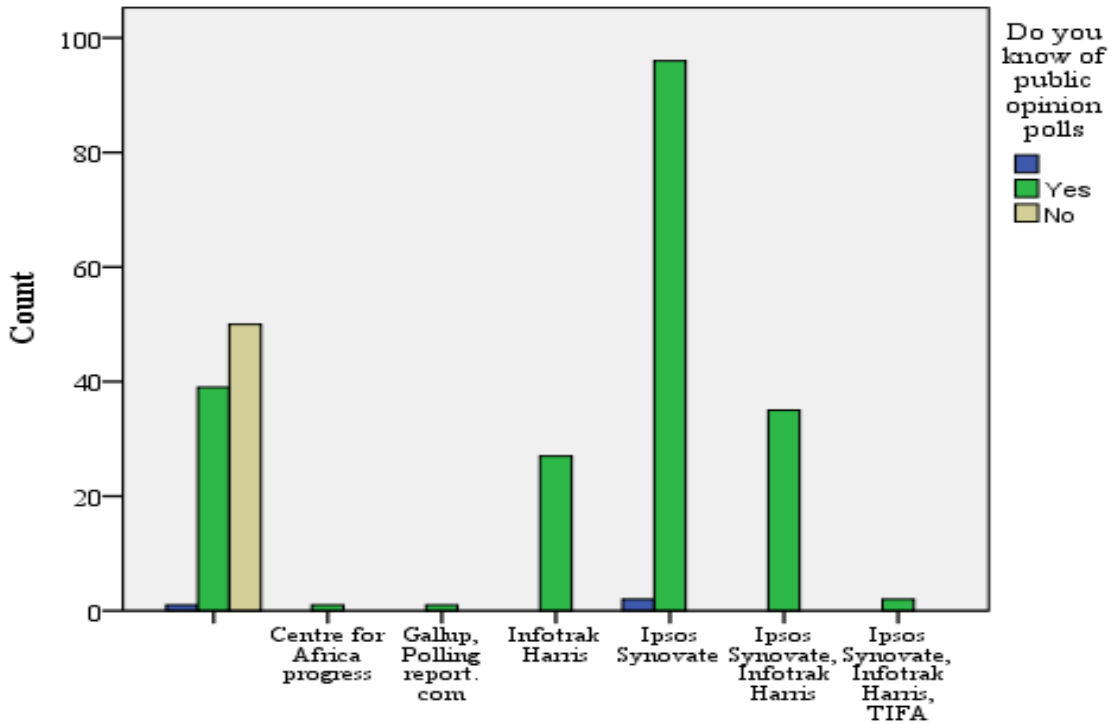
Table 4.2 Distribution of Voters by Awareness of Opinion Pollsters

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	3	1.2
Yes	201	79.1
No	50	19.7
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

From the findings in Table 4.2, it is evident that majority of the voters are aware of public opinion pollsters, an indicator that the topic of study is not foreign to voters but something they can relate to. On further probing the voters (79.1 percent) in Table 4.2, to mention the pollsters they know of by name as shown in Figure 4.1, Ipsos Synovate came out as the most popular amongst voters followed by Infotrak Harris. Combined, Ipsos Synovate and Infotrak Harris polling firms were mentioned mostly compared to the rest of the pollsters. Meaning, that the majority of voters were aware of public opinion pollsters and that their popularity is attributed to regular participation in conducting pre-election surveys in presidential contests dating back to 2002. Public opinion poll, whether they are self-commissioned or not, play an important role in politics as they are often used in the course of elections campaigns by aspirants mostly in presidential contests and media to, use them to monitor popularity and likelihood of an aspirant who is emerging victorious.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of Pollsters by Name



Source: Field survey, 2018

4.4 Factors Influencing Pre-elections Public Perception of Opinion Polls on Presidential Candidates

The researcher sought to establish the factors that influence pre-election public perceptions of opinion polls during a presidential contest. Pre-election surveying is universal as polling captures the mood of the electorate just like a snapshot. Their outcomes and trends are highly influential in making and shaping careers, a party’s political strategy, and in some instances, the fate of an incumbent government. In the lead up to general elections, they have been widely respected for their predicative value.

Table 4.3a shows voters’ preference on factors that influenced their understanding of opinion polls. The results shows that 69.7 percent of the voters’ pre-elections public perception was influenced by a voter’s choice of a presidential candidate, followed by the kind of questions

polling firms ask (52.8 percent) and one's political party of affiliation (52.4 percent). A further 43.3 percent alluded to the timing when the surveys are done and released, as other voters stated the respective opinion polling firm's reputation (38.6 percent) to having informed them. Other voters cited ethnicity (33.9 percent) and sample location (35.4 percent) to have influenced them.

Table 4.3a Factors Influencing Respondents Understanding of Public Opinion Polls

	Not Stated		Yes		No		Don't Know	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Presidential candidate	25	9.8	177	69.7	39	15.4	13	5.1
Timing when opinion polls surveys are done and released	38	15	110	43.3	77	30.3	29	11.4
Pollster reputation	42	16.5	98	38.6	82	32.3	32	12.6
Questions asked	31	12.2	134	52.8	60	23.6	29	11.4
Political party affiliation	36	14.3	133	52.4	68	26.8	17	6.7
Ethnicity	32	12.6	86	33.9	109	42.9	27	10.6
Sample location	42	16.5	90	35.4	90	35.4	32	12.6

Source: Field survey, 2018

The researcher can authoritatively state that the political party a presidential candidate is vying in greatly influence the pre-election perception their supporters hold of public opinion polls outcomes. What this means is, in instances where a presidential candidate receives unfavourable ratings from pre-election surveys, supporters drawn from that faction will always view the polling

by that firm and their outcomes with suspicion. Nevertheless, in instances where the ratings are favourable, just like the contenders, their supporters will hail them. The findings echo Lewis & Bartley (2012) assertion, that public opinion polls are open to abuse and manipulation subject to the kind of questions asked, timing when the polls are carried out and sample location. In both the literature and the findings, the reputation of the polling firm for a majority of the voters is viewed as that the ratings projected of their choice presidential candidate influenced their perspective. Sentiment shared by Informant A and B respectively,

“...People who follow pollsters have come to associate them with either favouring or anti particular political establishment. If Infotrak Harris releases a poll, the perception of Jubilee supporters will be that it is a pro-NASA poll, the same with if Ipsos Synovate releases a poll it will be perceived a pro-Jubilee poll. Secondly, Political belonging-People who belong to a political divide perceive any poll that is pro them to be true and polls against them to be false...”

(29th, August 2018)

“...the company’s reputation, people will see and validate those polls depending on the company and link those polls to certain groupings/parties/people. People tend to look at the pollsters’ history, are they pro-government or pro-opposition...”

(30th, August 2018)

The findings in Table 4.3a imply that a voter’s choice of a presidential contestant, their political party affiliation and the kind of questions public opinion polls ask to be the prevailing factors that influence a voter’s perception of opinion polls. The three factors mentioned recorded over 50 percent response, while 42.9 percent of the voters said ethnicity did not influence their understanding of public opinion polls. The findings confirm that both less interested and highly engrossed voters make political decisions by examining evidence, make biased deductions because of the source of a given political message. In instances where the issue discussed is not familiar to the voter, they form their attitude/s toward an issue initiated by their political party inclination or their choice of presidential candidate (Chung & Waheed, 2016). Pre-election surveys may give

projections that can be considered to be correct or near correct (fall within the margin of error) but a voter's support for a given presidential candidate affects their view of the polling outcome, if they do not confirm their expectations, chance are they will be considered not accurate.

In spite of the findings showing almost a third (33.9 percent) of the voters admitting ethnicity to having minimal influence in their understanding of polls, a voters choice of a presidential candidate has always been determined by ethnicity. Weghorst & Lindberg (2013) posit that the desire to capture the presidency is driven by perceptions that the "ruling ethnic group" is entitled to state resources and other benefits to the exclusion of other ethnic communities. Past and present experience have shown that state resources, political appointments and other public opportunities were skewed in favour of the successive presidents' home regions or ethnic communities. So there is no way a presidential candidate can be alienated from ethnicity, given that Kenya's voter demography is ethnic based as politicians rely on their ethnic identities to secure stable support base. Informant C states that,

"...They are useful instruments in elections where there are clear demographics such as the USA where we have white male, educated white male, college educated blacks, evangelicals, Latinos etc. Opinion polls can help you have an idea of the clear trends, patterns, and makes serious projections and even then, those demographics are influenced. Tribe is the only demography, which is why opinion polls rarely don't matter i.e. they don't play the role they should be playing like in other jurisdictions..."

(22nd, August 2018)

Table 4.3b shows that 80.3 percent of the voters bought the fact that surveys are a tool for testing public opinion on issues, as other voters (57.1 percent) felt that public opinion polls are scientific. Nearly a half (49.6 percent) of the voters admitted that opinion polls give the public an independent voice while other set of voters (48.4 percent) saw opinion polls surveys as being reliable that is informative. Given that the following statement "They aren't correct if they don't

interview equal numbers of voters across the political divide” is not true, majority (59.1 percent) of the voters felt it was.

Table 4.3b Statements about Public Opinion Polls

	Not Stated		True		False	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Public opinion polls are scientific	23	9.1	145	57.1	86	39.9
They aren't correct if they don't interview equal numbers of voters across the political divide	22	8.7	150	59.1	82	32.3
They give the public an independent voice	19	7.5	126	49.6	109	42.9
It is a tool for testing public opinion on an issue or a topic	17	6.7	204	80.3	33	13.0
Public opinion polls are reliable i.e. informative	22	8.7	123	48.4	109	42.9

Source: Field survey, 2018

It confirms the allegations by most politicians and voters alike that pollsters are not objective since they do not interview equal number of voters from the different political divide. The statement is clear manifestation that voters do not understand the specifics in opinion polling such as the sample size is usually determined scientifically and as such, the sample population informs the number of respondents that a researcher is going to interview in a study.

4.5 Extent Opinion Polls Sway Swing Voters

The degree of proximity between a presidential candidate and a voter is a central tenet of many approaches to determining voting behaviour. With all other factors being equal, a voter will not hesitate to choose a presidential candidate whom s/he perceives to be on the same evaluative element as them. In the literature, Horowitz (2016) has stated that in highly diverse societies where ethnicity is politically salient, voters who do not have a preferred candidate from his/her coethnic in a presidential race is likely to update their preferences during the campaign period. In this study, the early deciders are voters who decided on whom to vote for way before 30th, May 2017 when Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC) officially announced the official start of political campaign period.

Table 4.4a Deciding Time of a Preferred Presidential Candidate

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	36	14.2
Early decider	138	54.3
Campaign decider	54	21.3
Late decider	25	9.8
Others	1	.4
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

The campaign decider are voters perceived to have decided within 68 days IEBC timeframe (30th, May to 5th, August 2017) while the late decider, made their decision after fifth, August 2017 and before eighth of August 2017 elections date. In the led up to 8th, August general elections, the number of undecided voters stood between 5-8 percent as captured by both Ipsos Synovate and

Infotrak Harris. In Table 4.4a, the researcher sort to find out the time voters decided on their preferred presidential candidate. From the findings, voters who decided early into the elections amounted to 54.3 percent, campaign deciders were 21.3 percent, and late deciders were 9.8 percent. A majority (54.3 percent) of voters usually have their minds made up on whom they will vote for even before IEBC announces the official campaign period. On further inquiring whether there was a time the voter was undecided, 82.3 percent compared to 17.7 percent were undecided. From the distribution table 4.4b, it is evident that a majority (82.3 percent) of the voters were decided on whom they will vote for a month to the presidential elections.

Table 4.4b Undecided Voters in 2017

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	45	17.7
No	209	82.3
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

According to informant A, B, C and F, undecided voters exist in Kenya during elections and have the propensity of swaying the elections outcome on whichever side of the political divide they tilt. The three informants concur that in tightly contested elections, swing voters can make a huge difference depending on how many they are, and they may be huge but rather determinative.

“...In the event that the election campaigns have just begun, we do not know how many people are going to be in the ballot. The undecided may not be that an undecided, but still do not know who will be in the ballot paper and once they know all the contenders, they then decide...”

(30th, August 2018)

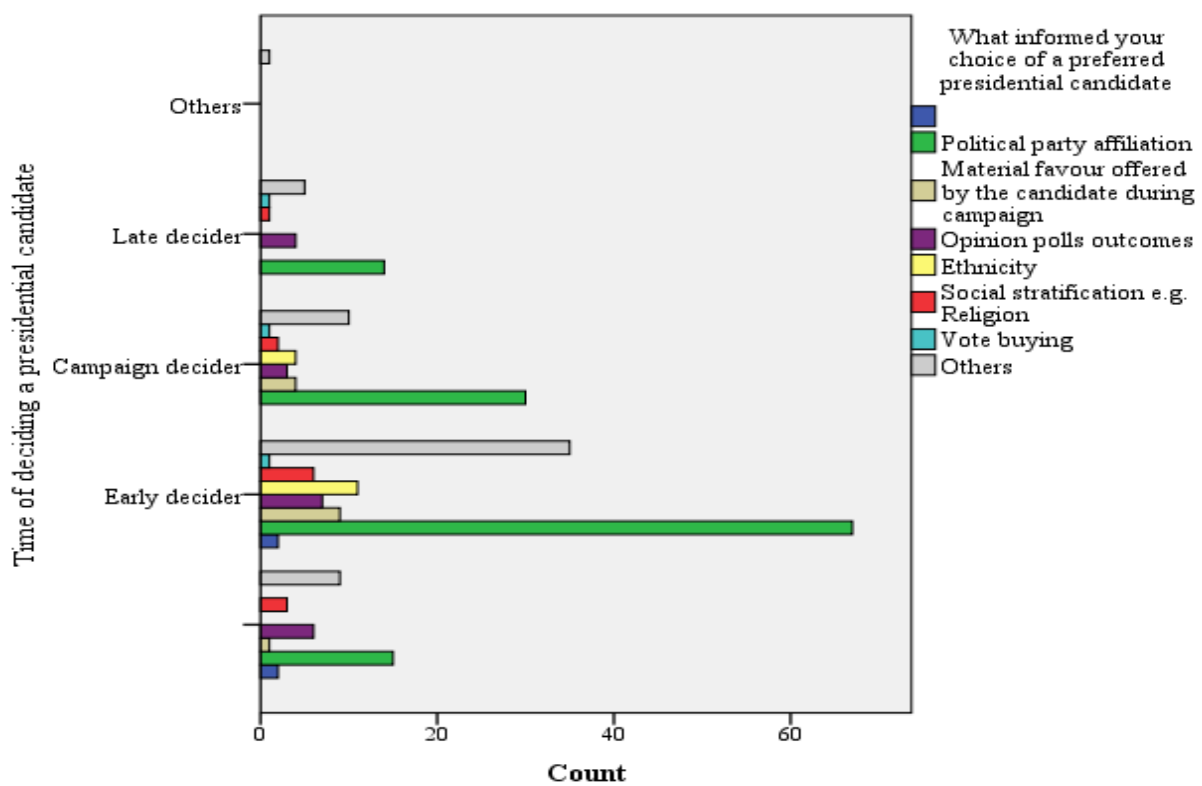
The statement support the assertion by Informant F that as the Election Day draws nearer, the number of swing voters reduces from a double digit to a single digit.

“... the April 2016 opinion polls survey, indicating that the undecided voters at that time were 20 percent, was because respondent never knew who NASA’s presidential candidate was.... until NASA named their candidate, about a quarter of the registered voters were undecided. In the final opinion polls survey there were 5 percent undecided...”

(7th, September 2018)

Figure 4.2 shows most of the swing voters decided on a preferred presidential candidate based on their political party affiliation, opinion polls outcomes, social stratification, and vote buying. Both late, campaign and early deciders state opinion polls outcomes to have informed their choice of a preferred presidential candidate, though minimal compared to political party affiliation.

Figure 4. 2 Deciding time of Preferred Presidential Candidate by Deciders



Source: Field survey, 2018

The reason why vote buying is minimal across the three categories of voters can be attributed to The Kenya Election Laws of 2017, which criminalised the practise (Electoral Statute 2017). Initially, vote buying was a strategy employed by political parties where their agents would “assist” a voter to vote at the polling booth in the polling station. However, with the enactment of the new Elections laws, IEBC’s presiding officer is the only person permitted to assist a voter but in instances where a person of a voters own free choice accompanies them and the person is not a candidate or a political party agent, they can assist.

Inspite of Christianity being a predominant religion that is adhered to by 84.8 percent of Kenyans (Kenya Population and Housing Census, 2009), the findings has established that its influence among voters is negligible as other factors prevail over it. The main Christian churches in Kenya have played independent and critical political roles that included demanding for an open political space, speaking against corruption, negative ethnicity and human rights violations (Kenga, 2016). Nevertheless, when it comes to supporting a presidential candidate by rallying their congregants, the mainstream churches have refrained. Informant A posits, that religious affiliation can influence a voters choice in some parts of Kenya like the northern frontier, where they share the Islamic faith. “...*The northern frontier of Kenya is predominantly Muslim and Muslims are likely to vote for a fellow Muslim unlike Christians...*”

4.6 Factors Informing Choice of a Preferred Presidential Candidate among Late Deciders

It is clear that the factors influencing early deciders are not different from those that inform the late and campaign deciders. The factors generally range from a voter’s political party of affiliation, material favour offered by the presidential candidate during campaigns, opinion polls outcomes, ethnicity of both the voter’s and presidential aspirant, the social stratification of both the voter’s and presidential aspirant and vote buying. However, for the swing/undecided voters, their decision

is hinged on their political party affiliation, opinion polls outcomes, the voter's, and presidential aspirant social stratification and lastly votes buying in that order. Among the late deciders, just as the early and campaign deciders, their political party affiliation, opinion polls outcome, the voter's and presidential aspirant social stratification, and vote buying are the prevailing factors that inform their choice of a presidential candidate. Voters who decide early in the electioneering period are characterised as being highly partisan compared to campaign deciders who are less partisan and are seen to pay extra attention to the elections and mass media (Kogen & Gottfried, 2012).

The distinctive factor that distinguishes the undecided voter from the decided voter as the findings in Figure 4.2 shows is that material favours offered by candidate/s during campaigns do not influence them. Informant B and C noted that, the reason behind most of the larger Kuria, Somali, Maasai and other regions occupied by minority ethnic communities had higher numbers of swing voter, can be linked to them not having a coethnic presidential candidate. In cases where there was a coethnic presidential candidate, his manifesto never resonated well with their coethnic bloc or to that of the non-coethnic. Informant C and F recap that:

“...They already know. It is a tribal kind of arrangement in Kenya so that those communities that do not have a presidential candidate and they are strongly behind their man in a manner that they are willing to die for him, they are always open to attack from political parties who/which have candidates. The Luhya community did not have a candidate and Musalia Mudavadi did not have quite a big stake in NASA despite NASA having been his brainchild, Jubilee Party would definitely attack there although it is assumed a NASA zone...”

(22nd, August 2018)

“...The people who voted for Kalonzo in 2007, it did not depress their turnout, they still voted for him even when they knew he had no chance of winning for those who had seen the surveys. They were not happy and said they were politically building him up for the future...”

(7th, September 2018)

Informant B and C, had a contrary opinion as to why there are many swing voters. They argued that the reason behind the two digit number of swing voters was that voters do not see why they should vote in every election cycle and do not see changes. They were undecided in the sense that there is voter apathy, ignorance, and lack of civic education. If civic education were carried out across the country, then the number of swing voters would have reduced drastically. The findings in Table 4.4a shows that there are voters who decided on whom to vote for during the campaign period, but the truth of the matter is political campaigns are carried out early even before the sanctioned time. As a country, Kenya is characterised by early political campaigns as the political elites align and realign themselves for the next presidential election. Mokuia (ibid) said:

“...While most of us voters have moved on to our daily businesses as we wait for the return train in 2022, the political elite are busy luring us into the very train they say left the station last year... Al ready holding campaign rallies disguised in some form, pledging of loyalties, switching political parties, disciplining rebellious party members, determining successors, and of course trading candidates from this to that party is in high gear. What else characterised electioneering campaigns if not this...”

The findings in Table 4.4c, shows that a candidate’s education level, their political association/ friends, and political party affiliation informed voter’s choice of a presidential candidate. There are voters who were not informed by age of the presidential candidate (35.6 percent), the gender of the candidate (40.0 percent), and the swing voters were not informed the presidential candidate’s ethnicity (51.1 percent). Other voters intimated that a presidential candidate’s character, clear manifesto, and the degree of reality in the promises they make informed their choice. Of interest to note is that, irrespective of the time a voter arrives to the choice of a presidential candidate, factors that informed the early and campaign, deciders inform late deciders are the same across the three categories of voters. Informant B posits that, the issue of undecided voters is pronounced in Africa and in particular, Kenya because policies and party structure is tribal, regional, and not issue based. The informant emphasising that in issue based democracies, voters know what each party

stands for and even vote for a candidate automatically without necessarily knowing whom s/he is. However, in Kenya our political parties are not strong, party politics is not good necessitating the high number of undecided voters.

Table 4.4c Other Factors that Influence Swing Voter Choice of Presidential Candidates

	Not Stated		Very Much		Much		A Little		Very Little		Never	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Age	13	5.1	45	17.7	21	8.3	47	18.5	34	14.6	91	35.8
Gender	17	6.7	23	9.1	22	8.7	41	16.1	29	11.4	122	48.0
Candidate's ethnicity	21	8.3	24	9.4	16	6.3	33	13.0	32	13.4	126	49.6
Education	17	6.7	109	42.9	51	20.1	23	9.1	15	5.9	39	15.4
Associates/Friends	27	10.6	38	15.0	25	9.8	34	13.4	36	15.4	91	35.8
Opinion polls	18	7.1	31	12.2	20	7.9	46	18.1	42	16.5	97	38.2

Source: Field survey, 2018

4.7 Consistency in Voter Behaviour in Kibra and Dagoretti South Constituencies

The researcher sought to establish the number of voters who voted in the same presidential candidate in both 2013 and 2017. This question was important since in the last two presidential elections of Monday 4th, March 2013 and Tuesday 8th, August 2017, there were three presidential candidates who were consistent namely Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga, and Abduba Dida. From the findings in Table 4.5a, 51.6 percent of the voters admitted to having voted for the same presidential candidate while 44.9 percent of the voters voted in different presidential candidates.

Table 4.5a Respondents who Voted Same Presidential Candidate in 2013 and August 2017

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	9	3.5
Yes	131	51.6
No	114	44.9
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

From the findings, it is evident that voters kept their commitment to their preferred candidates and shows that the specific presidential candidates had a following that transitioned beyond March of 2013 general election. Given that in the past elections the Dagoretti South and Kibra constituencies have leaned along the two leading political contenders Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, it can be concluded that a voter voted a similar candidate.

The findings in Table 4.5b shows that voting for the same presidential candidate is prevalent among voters in the age bracket of 25-34 years (38.9 percent) who are mainly the youth and among voters within the age bracket of 45-54 years (25.2). Voting for the same presidential candidate was least among voters within the age bracket of 18-24 years (14.5 percent) whom

Majority are mostly first time voters, voters within 35-44 years (11.5 percent), and voters above 55 years (9.9 percent).

Table 4.5b Respondents who Voted Same Presidential Candidate in 2013 and August 2017 by Age

Did you vote for the Same presidential candidate in 2013 and 2017		Age Bracket (Yrs.)						Total
			18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	Above 55	
		Frequency						
	Not Stated	0	6	2	1	0	0	9
	Yes	0	19	51	15	33	13	131
	No	1	61	32	10	5	5	114
Total		1	86	85	26	38	18	254

Source: Field survey, 2018

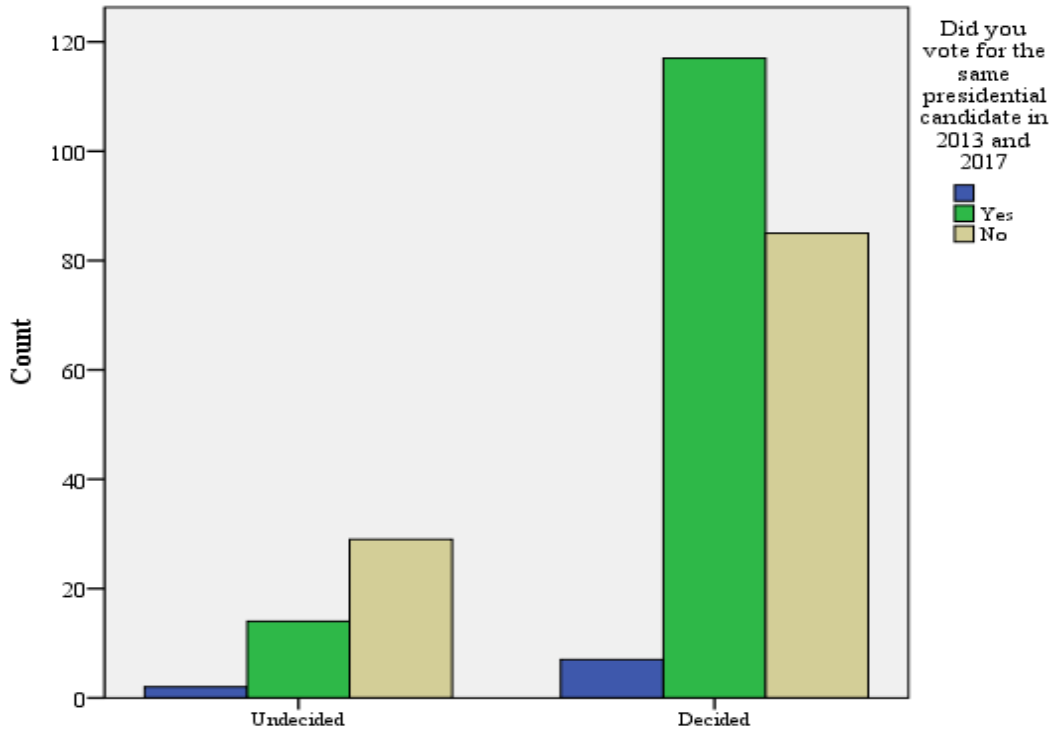
The findings in Table 4.5c shows that 53.4 percent of the male voters voted in the same presidential candidate compared to 45.0 percent of the female voters. The variance in male to female voters who did not vote for the same candidate was 0.9 percent.

Table 4.5c Respondents who Voted Same Presidential Candidate in 2013 and August 2017 by Gender

Did you vote for the same presidential candidate in 2013 and 2017?		Gender			Total
			Male	Female	
		Frequency			
	Not Stated	0	7	2	9
	Yes	2	70	59	131
	No	1	57	56	114
Total		3	134	117	254

Source: Field survey, 2018

Figure 4.3 Undecided voters Consistency in Voting Same Presidential candidates



Source: Field survey, 2018

The findings show that among undecided voters, there are those voters who voted in the same presidential candidates in 2013 and August 2017 general elections. These findings could be translated to mean that either, the swing voters who voted the same presidential candidates in both March 2013 and August 2017 general elections lacked alternative presidential candidate given that in 2017 there were five new presidential aspirants. Informant A advances the view that; undecided voters in most occasions are not undecided but speculating on who will be in the ballot.

In the event that the election campaigns have just begun, we do not know how many people are going to be in the ballot. The undecided may not be that an undecided, but still do not know who will be in the ballot paper and once they know all the contenders, they then decide.

(29th, August 2018)

His sentiment are supported by the fact that two months into the 8th, August 2017 general elections, Thirdway Alliance Party had to seek court injunction to compel IEBC to have Ekuru Aukot, their presidential candidates name printed on the ballot paper and NASA named its presidential candidate later compared to Jubilee Party.

4.8 Political Party Membership

Any political party's membership base is vital for its internal functioning and as such, parties have always recruited individuals committed to its ideology and principles. These individuals must be able to participate in the party's government, policy formulation, and campaigns during elections. It is from these members that the parties' leader/ presidential candidate are nominated. The level of membership in political parties among voting population in a country is a vital indicator of political maturity of its citizens. The membership base of any political party is an important aspect of citizen participation in national politics and for those voters who are associated with certain political parties; they have extra political awareness and active compared to apolitical citizen. The politically informed members achieve higher levels of political participation than those who merely vote. The members are able to shape the party ideology and policies of their respective parties by demanding accountability from leaders and like their party leaders, party members usually have better chances of nomination as candidate/s in different national elective positions.

Table 4.6 Respondents Political Party Membership

	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	2	0.8
Yes	66	26.0
No	186	73.2
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 4.6 shows that, slightly a quarter (26.0 percent) of the voters interviewed registered as members of political parties compared to 73.2 percent who are not. Political parties in Kenya have a tendency of disappearing from political limelight and later appearing during elections to emotionally appeal to registered voters. According to Wolf (2009), political choices in Kenya are fluid in nature, as the ballot menus presented to voters in the last elections have varied in terms of parties fielding presidential candidates and alliances. Something that can be attributed to the ease with which political parties are formed and registered, with associated consequence on the generally short-lived nature of party membership among their followings.

The findings in Figure 4.4 shows that a voter's political party of affiliation informed majority of the voters on whom to vote in. Even amongst voters registered to a political party, material favours offered during the campaigns by a candidate, outcomes of opinion polls, ethnicity, social stratification, and voter buying informed their choice of a presidential candidate. Meaning that there are voters who are registered, as members in a political party but do not ascribe to the party's ideology something that necessitate them to vote in another party's candidate. According to voters who are registered members of political parties and those who were not, vote buying influenced their choice. Informant B shared these sentiments:

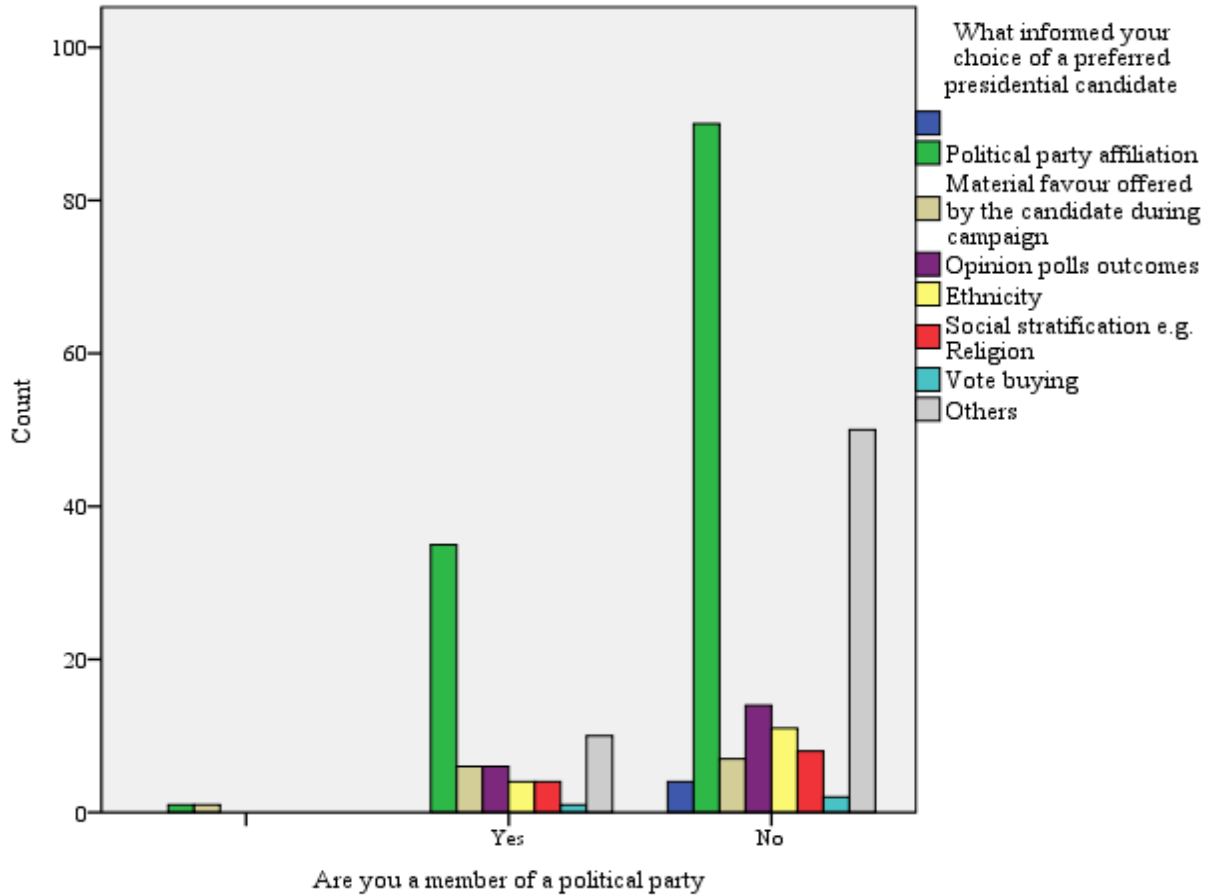
“...Party politics is individual based, not ideology, or issue based. If they were ideology based, the party will survive forever because it is an ideologist, socialist, democrat, liberal, people centred. The parties in Kenya do not have members, they call them supporters ; the Member of Parliament (MP) s, Members of County Assembly (MCA) s, and Senators are all supporters. New parties have been used as vehicles to reach certain interest that is why there are politicians hopping from one party to the next in every election cycle. ...”

(30th, August 2018)

A political party is not an individual but an institution that is built of aspirations (Ideology) and manifestos. Voters, who voted same presidential candidate in 2013 and August 2017, probably are registered members of a political party and of interest to note is that the two leading presidential

contenders in March 2013 and August 2017 elections, on two the occasions vied on different political party tickets. In 2013, Uhuru Kenyatta vied on The National Alliance (TNA) party while Raila Odinga on CORD ticket and in August 2017, Uhuru Kenyatta vied on a Jubilee Party ticket as his closest competitor on a NASA ticket.

Figure 4. 4 Factors influenced voters registered in political parties



Source: Field survey, 2018

4.9 Channels of Communication

Communication is the process of active and interactive exchange often between one or more transmitters and has numerous receivers. It is intended to get people to adopt a desirable and recommended attitudes and behaviours. In politics, communication is aimed at informing, educating, and satisfying needs in instances where it reaffirms expectations. Media is an important

part in everyday life as it deals with the aspects that are outside the formal life of education and work, and has the ability to define what individuals do during their free time, how they do it, and when they do it through its traditional functions of educating, informing, and entertaining. According to Hilygus (2011), the bearing opinion polls have on voters largely depends on their visibility. In an electioneering period, polls constitute one of the most systematic and objective sources of information for citizens, which inform politicians and journalists of what the public is thinking through polls.

Table 4.7a Respondents Preferred Communication Channels

Channels	Frequency	Percent (%)
Not Stated	5	20
Television	179	70.5
Radio	6	2.4
Newspaper	13	5.1
Discussion with family/ friends	5	2.0
Social media	45	17.7
Others	1	.4
Total	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

From the distribution in Table 4.7a, the most preferred communication channels used to access pre-election surveys results was the television (70.5 percent), social media (17.7 percent) and newspaper (5.1 percent). Radio listenership (2.4 percent) and discussion with family members/ friends (2.0 percent) were least preferred compared to the other communication channels. The majority of voters, almost two-thirds watched opinion polls surveys outcomes on television compared to other channels, a finding that can be attributed to the abundance of television viewership for audience to choose from dating back to about two decades ago when the airwaves were liberated.

The study further established in table 4.7b that television viewership was high across all age brackets among respondents compared to other communication channels. Radio listenership was fourth preferred choice of communication channel after social media amongst voters between 18-24 ages, newspaper readership was high amongst voters of 18-24 years and 45-54 years age brackets. Discussion of opinion polls with family and friends was popular among voters of 18-34 years age bracket, same with social media who are youth.

Table 4.7b Respondents Preferred Communication Channels by Age

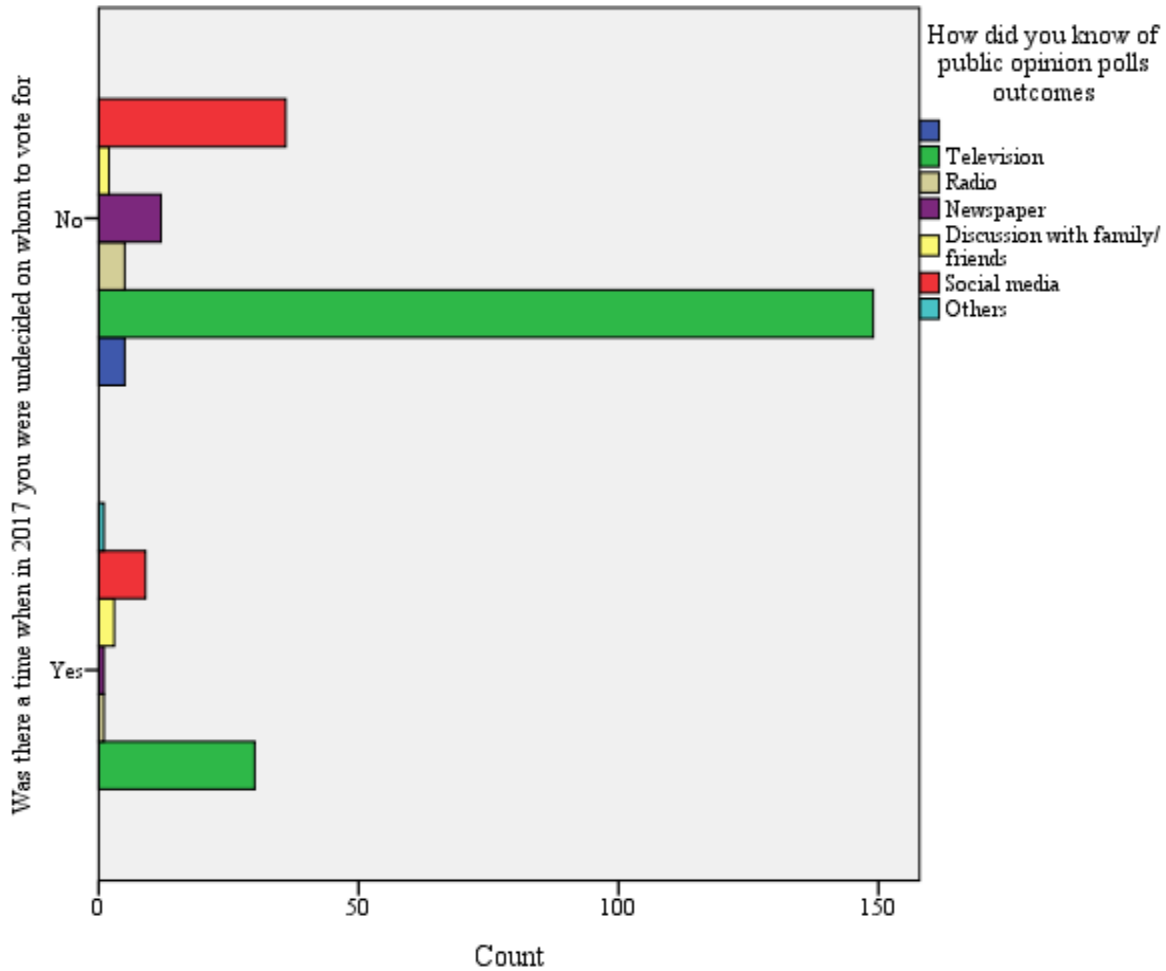
Channel	Age Brackets(Years)				
	18– 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	≥55
	Frequency				
Not Stated	3	1	0	1	0
Television	53	62	23	28	13
Radio	3	1	0	1	1
Newspaper	5	2	0	4	2
Discussion with family/friends	3	2	0	0	0
Social media	19	16	3	4	2
Others	0	1	0	0	0

Source: Field survey, 2018

The dissemination of poll numbers has changed as they are reported directly on blogs and aggregation websites rather than by the traditional media. Journalists are no longer the formal gatekeepers determining if a given poll is of sufficient quality and interest to warrant public attention (Hilygus, 2011). The platform offered by internet (social media) which is a prevalent channel of communication amongst the youth, is a hallmark of information, communication, and technological revolution. Given that 67 percent of the voters were youth, like elsewhere in the world, internet is in vogue with them. Internet use through various social media platform in

accessing presidential opinion polls survey outcomes was 17.7 percent as a majority of the voters relied on traditional media that is radio, television, newspaper, and discussion with families and friends.

Figure 4.5 How Undecided Voters Knew of Public Opinion Polls



Source: Field survey, 2018

The findings in Figure 4.5 show that, a majority of the undecided voters preferred channel of communication was television, social media and discussion with family and friends as a source of information on public opinion polls outcomes. The popularity of television amongst voters could be attributed to the two constituencies being in an urban area thus enjoying higher living standards and having enhanced access to television resources. A lower count of voters mentioned the

newspapers and radio. The findings contradict Carlson (2018), suggestion that most voting decisions are influenced by what voters are told by friends and associates, the study has established that among the decided voters, discussion with family and friends was minimal but somewhat relatively high among undecided voters.

Table 4.8b shows that when voters were asked if successive opinion polls surveys confirmed presidential elections results, 44.1 agreed while 52.0 percent did not. On whether the surveys reflected, what voters believed was the true nature of the presidential race, 32.3 percent were for the affirmative as 63.4 percent were not. The voters were further asked if they had confidence on the surveys done on popularity ratings of presidential candidates, 33.9 percent agreed as 63.4 percent did not and finally whether they trusted outcomes from the surveys, 33.1 percent said yes as 65.4 percent disagreed. The voters who stated that public opinion polls are objective cited that they were informative, saw them as being free and fair while others regarded them as being scientific since they give the same outcome as election results. For majority voters, opinion polls were not objective given that ethnicity, the partiality in sample population/ location, which is the sampling, cannot give the real issues about the public and carried out in areas that are considered strongholds to the political divides thus not giving out the true picture of things, and they could be compromised by ownership interest. The disparity in feedback in Table 4.8 can be attributed to opinion polls undercurrents such as inconsistencies in predictions (poll outcomes) of one pollster to another when polling the same presidential candidate over the same period.

Informant B argued that, we are living in a post truth era and meaning is manipulated as per ones suitability where the truth is contested. Adding that opinion pollsters are all over the place making it hard to distinguish what is fake or not fake at face value and the kind of outcomes released have not neared the truth as some are out rightly obnoxious. The lack of laws regulating opinion polls in Kenya, the opaqueness of who is supposed to be a pollster, the methodology, where do

they register, ethical issues were some of the issues that affect objectivity of local opinion polls weighing down their believability.

Table 4.8 Respondents Thoughts on Opinion Polls

	Have successive opinion polls survey outcomes confirmed presidential elections results		Have opinion polls surveys reflected what you believed was the true nature of the presidential race		Do you have confidence on opinion pollster’s popularity ratings of presidential candidates?		Do you trust opinion polls surveys results?	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Not Stated	10	3.9	11	4.3	7	2.8	4	1.6
Yes	112	44.1	82	32.3	86	33.9	84	33.1
No	132	52.0	161	63.4	161	63.4	166	65.4
Total	254	100.0	254	100.0	254	100.0	254	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

Informant E argues that whether actual polling results match opinion pollster predictions or not, is a question of the integrity of the pollster, their methodology, the samples they had and how they carried out the survey. Opinion pollsters ought to have sufficient disclosure on how scientific they carried out their polls so that people would appreciate them. In Kenya, in instances where the pre-election survey outcomes does not support a particular political inclination, both the politicians and their supporters feel the opinion polls were flawed, manipulative and even a biased exercise. Majority of politicians drawn from the ‘losing’ side as reported by the

Pollsters often take every opportunity they get at public gatherings to discredit the poll results and the reputation of the firms that carried them out (Wambua, Ndeti, Muthini, & Siringi, 2016). Evidently, 63.4 percent of the voters lack confidence on opinion pollsters' popularity ratings of presidential candidates and 65.4 percent do not trust opinion polls results something that can be attributed to the country's history of mistrusting opinion polls as Noted by Informant F.

“...Even for those who think the elections were flawed, they are unlikely to point to a survey that their candidate was doing well and say that the pre-election survey was right....It is very difficult for Kenyans to say that pre-election surveys are correct even if they support their preferred candidate, it is difficult”

(7th, September 2018)

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the summary of the findings in chapter four, conclusions, and the recommendations of the study whose main objective was to assess public opinion polls influence on swing voters' behaviour in presidential elections in Kibra and Dagoretti South constituencies of Nairobi County.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The study sought to assess opinion polls influence on voter behaviour in 8th, August 2017 Presidential elections in Kenya. The main objective of the study being to assess public opinion polls influence on voter behaviour in presidential elections by finding out the factors that influencing voters' pre-election public perception on opinion polls on presidential candidates, establishing the extent opinion polls sway swing voters and investigating consistency in voter behaviour in Kibra and Dagoretti South constituencies.

Crossley in his 1937 exposition wrote that, "The greatest difficulty of all is the fact that the election itself is not a census, but an application of the sampling principle. Every poll is therefore a sample of a sample". Different elections have dissimilar impact on different cross-sections of voters as highlighted in 2008 when an extraordinarily large section of minorities and young people turned out to vote for Barack Obama (Hillygus , 2011). Every surveying firm has its own method of defining who is likely voters, which rely on self-reported measures of voter registration or vote history. The models used in measuring rarely engage the most updated scholarly research on political participation that is pollsters use a single likely-voter model for the entire country, but

political science `research has shown that state-level factors such as registration requirements and competitiveness can affect an individual's likelihood of voting. While it is widely recognised that undecided voters contribute to polling error, there is still no consensus about what ought to be done with them.

5.2 Factors Influencing Public Perception of Opinion Polls on Presidential Candidates

The study found out that a presidential candidate (*the who*) contesting in an election, the kind of questions asked by the polling firm, and a voters political belonging in terms of affiliation influenced their public perception of opinion polls (69.7, 52.8 and 52.4 percent respectively). Amongst the Key Informant, the pollsters' reputation and profile with regard to the past pre-election surveys the polling firm conducted and a voter's ethnic belonging (identity) to be the main factors that informed voters' public perception of opinion polls in presidential contests. Both sampled voters and the Key Informant concurred that the above factors influenced voters but the degree of agreement with regard to influence varied. In spite of equal measures in terms of voters (35.4 percent) stating that the manner in which the sampled locations are arrived at did or did not influence them, experts interviewed agree that regional blocs which are ethnic in composition are used as political yardstick to some extent to influence public perception on opinion polls. Generally, the kind of questions asked by the pollster, a voter's political party of affiliation and a voter has preferred presidential candidate influenced perception of public opinion polls as revealed by the voters. The timing when opinion polls are done, the pollsters reputation, ethnicity of the presidential candidate and the voter's ,and sample location too influence but to less than 44 percent of the respondents. The findings highlighted that 80.3 percent of the voters saw opinion polls, as a tool used in testing public opinion but interesting enough close to 60.0 percent of the voters thought they are not correct if they do not interview equal number of voters across the political divides (strongholds).

5.3 Extent Opinion Polls Sway Swing Voters

The researcher found out that a majority of voters were early deciders (54.3 percent) and a half (51.6 percent) of the same voters voted in the same presidential candidate in both 4th, March 2013 and 8th August general elections. The early voters had made the decision on which presidential candidate to vote for before the Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) officially announcing the campaigns period, together with their tribal belonging and political party of affiliation were mainly the factors that influenced their early decision. Voters in the two constituencies have had a tendency of voting in the two leading presidential contenders in the 4th, March 2013 and 8th, August 2018 elections; most of the voters apparently draw similar ethnic identities as Dagoretti South constituency is presumed a pro-establishment stronghold, same to NASA in Kibra Constituency. The fact that some voters (21.3 percent) decided on whom to vote for during the three months official campaign period of 30th, May 2017 to 5th, August 2017, is a clear indicator that ascriptive notions such as ethnicity that has been prevalent during general elections have a toll on voter/s final choice of a presidential candidate. On the other hand, late deciders (9.8 percent) attributed their last minute decision of a presidential candidate to their political party affiliation, social stratification, and opinion polls. Experts interviewed pointed out that Kenya has swing regions that are weighty compared to swing voters given the national politics is regional and ethnic based. The swing regions in the 2017 elections were areas that did not have a coethnic presidential candidate. They also suggested that if opinion polls were done two to three days into the elections, the pre-election survey outcome could be more accurate as voters become more decided nearer the elections day. The electoral choices for voters from communities/regions without a “serious” presidential candidate are less constrained in presidential contest, and just like voter registration and voter turnout, undecided voters can determine the outcome in closely contested election in Kenya like elsewhere in the world.

5.4 Consistency in Voter Behaviour in Kibra and Dagoretti South Constituencies

The study further established that there was consistency on the choice of presidential candidates given that in fourth, March 2013 and 8th, August 2017 three presidential candidates Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga, and Abduba Dida contested in both general elections. For Odinga and Kenyatta, they vied on different party tickets in March 2013 and August 2017 general elections. Majority of the voter, more than half (51.6 percent) voted in the same presidential candidate compared to who voted in new presidential candidates (44.9 percent) and Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga, and Abduba Dida shared in the 51.6 percent vote distribution. Amongst the youthful population, voters between the ages of 25 and 34 years voted mostly to the same presidential candidate and occurrence noted on voters from both gender. The youthful population of voters comprise of voters who were voting for either their first, second, third and fourth time. It can therefore be concluded that the voters who voted in the same presidential candidates found the candidate's age, their campaign manifesto, level of education attainment, and their associations as reasonable informing factors. Given that political parties in Kenya are ethnically informed right from their formation to membership, ethnicity has remained the one major factor that influences voters across the board. Subsequently, the two constituencies of Dagoretti South and Kibra are political strongholds to the two leading presidential protagonist that is Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga. The three consistent presidential candidates Uhuru Kenyatta, Raila Odinga, and Abduba Dida cumulatively garnered more than a half (51.6 percent) of votes cast in the two constituencies obtained from the study. The remaining voters' (44.9 percent), votes were divided amongst the entire eight presidential contestants, meaning the three presidential candidates had a head start as they went to the general elections on 8th, August 2017.

5.5 Conclusions

After analysing collected data, the researcher reached the conclusions that, opinion polls have influence on voters but could have an even greater influence on voters if presidential elections are free and fair. In instances where presidential election outcome/s conducted by Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission are violently contested like the 27th, December 2007 and on 8th, August 2017 that was the first to be nullified by The Supreme Court in the history of elective politics in Kenya, public opinion polls cannot be used in informing voters choice of a presidential candidate. There is need for objectivity by public opinion pollsters and perceived credibility on IEBC's part for opinion polls forecasts to be meaningful. More than a third (33.5 percent) of the voters found opinion polls objective as more than a third of the voters (33.9 percent) had confidence on the popularity ratings of presidential candidates and 44.1 percent admitted that successive opinion polls predictions had confirmed election results. The voters are influenced by opinion polls mainly at perception and presidential levels. At perception level, a voter's view of pre-election survey predictions as being objective or not, coupled with the opinion polling firm's reputation have a greater impact and with regards to the presidential level, the choice of a presidential candidate together with the party ticket a candidate is vying on, influence the ultimate choice of the voter. Voters who monitor pollsters have come to associate opinion polls with either favouring or being anti-particular to certain political establishment. Voters that either belong to a political party by being registered members or through regional bloc association, will perceive any opinion poll that is pro them, to be true and polls against them to be false. Lastly, the factors that influence voter behaviour are the same across the three voter categories discussed and regardless of the time, a voter decision on whom to vote for was informed by their political party of affiliation, pre-election survey forecast, their social stratification and vote

buying. The undecided/ swing voters tend not to be informed along ethnic identity or persuaded by material favours offered by a candidate during the electioneering period.

5.6 Recommendations

The study endeavoured to assess public opinion polls influence on swing voter/s behaviour in presidential elections and the findings indicate the influence opinion polls has on voters is pronounced amongst undecided voters (campaign and late deciders), while it is minimal amongst early deciders (decided voters) who hardly shift their loyalty. The choice of a presidential candidate, political party of affiliation, and the profile of the opinion-polling firm with regard to its previous pre-election surveys done by the respective firms were given significant consideration by voters as evidenced by preceding results, summaries, and conclusions. Recommendations made here are derived from the key findings of this research in light of the above-mentioned summary and conclusions. Consequently, a number of recommendations suffice:

5.6.1 Factors Influencing Public Perception of Opinion Polls on Presidential Candidates

The choice of a presidential candidate, political party affiliation, and the reputation of the polling firm influenced public perception of opinion polls at presidential contest, therefore there is need for neutrality of opinion polling firms. The autonomy and impartiality of pre-election surveys during general elections can be guaranteed by the respective polling firms not undertaking polling that are sponsored in any way by special interest groups such as the political parties. Analysts and voters in general have come to associate those opinion polling firms with either favouring or anti particular to a given political establishment.

5.6.2 Extent Opinion Polls Sway Swing Voters

The fact that a third of the voting population was undecided as revealed by the study during and after the official campaign period closing, calls for amendment of the current regulations that limit public opinion polling to a week before elections. By allowing opinion polling to be carried closer to the elections day, accurate forecast as the ones witnessed in the of 21st, November 2005 and 4th, August 2010 constitutional referendums, and 2002 presidential elections could be replicated as voters become more decided a day or two to elections. There is also need for care with the criteria used when judging whether a particular poll is accurate or not, accuracy is always a question of degree.

5.6.3 Consistency in Voter Behaviour in Kibra and Dagoretti South Constituencies

The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) should make deliberate and definite efforts to abate the pervasive influence of ethnicity and ethnic networks manifesting themselves in the choice of a presidential candidate and political party of affiliation that tend to be regional. The weakening of ethnicised communes can be realised through civic education aimed at empowering citizens' civic competence and sense of civic consciousness. The content of the civic education should emphasise on appreciation for national unity, ever-glaring ethnic difference witnessed during elections, and consciousness. The researcher recommends that leadership and governance content stressing on merit and performance needs to be incorporated into formal education from an early stage of schooling. For those who are past school going age, communication through voters preferred channel of communication like the television, social media and newspapers would be ideal.

5.7 Further Research

The findings of the study indicate that the influence of opinion polls on voter behaviour is more on voter turnout compared to the minimal influence it has on the choice of a presidential candidate. The fact that the credibility/accuracy of opinion polling is secured on Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) conducting free and fair elections, further studies should be carried out in establishing opinion polls authenticity.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire

I am Maureen Obare, a student at The University of Nairobi, School of Journalism. As part of my course assessment, I am undertaking a research project on “Opinion Polls and Voter Behaviour: An Critical Assessment of Presidential Elections” amongst registered voters. During this study, I will interview you as one of the sampled voter in your constituency. All data and information collected will be treated with confidentiality and used for research purposes only. Your support in this study will be highly appreciated.

Constituency: a. Kibra b. Dagoretti South Date.....

SECTION A: Check *only one* (1) in every question.

1. Are you a registered voter?

- a. Yes b. No

2. Your Gender

- a. Male
b. Female

3. Age Bracket

- a. 18– 24 Years
b. 25 – 34 Years
c. 35 – 44 Years
d. 45 – 54 Years
e. ≥55 Years

4. Highest level of Education

- a. Primary Education
b. Secondary Education
c. University(First degree)
d. University(Post graduate)
e. Tertiary Education
f. Other, please specify
.....

SECTION B

5. Do you know of public opinion poll/s?

- a. Yes b. No

If yes, please name the pollster/s that you know of

.....
.....

6. Which of the following factors(*If any*) influenced your understanding of opinion polls surveys (Check *only one* between Yes, No & Don't know)

		Yes	No	Don't Know
a.	Presidential candidate			
b.	Timing when opinion polls surveys are done and released			
c.	Pollster reputation			
d.	Questions asked			
e.	Political affiliation			
f.	Ethnicity			
g.	Sample location			
h.	Others, please specify			

7. Which of the following statement is true/ false about opinion polls surveys? (*Check only one between True & False*)

		<i>True</i>	<i>False</i>
a.	Opinion polls are scientific		
b.	They aren't correct if they don't interview equal numbers of voters across the political divide		
c.	They give the public an independent voice		
d.	It is a tool for testing public opinion on an issue or a topic		
e.	Opinion polls surveys are reliable i.e. informative		

SECTION C

8. Did you vote in 8th August 2017 general election?

- a. Yes b. No

9. Are you a registered member of a political party?

- a. Yes b. No

10. Kindly *Check* the year/s you voted in the past general election/s

Election Year	2002	2007	2013	August 2017
Yes				
No				

11. At what period did you decide for whom to vote in as your preferred presidential candidate? (*Check only one*)

- a. Early decider (*Before IEBC announced the official campaigns period*)
- b. Campaign decider (*During the 3 months campaign period i.e. 30th May 2017 -5th August 2017*)
- c. Late decider (*After IEBC closed the campaign period i.e. after 5th August 2017*)
- d. Others please specify.....

12. Did you vote for the same presidential candidate in the last two (2) elections i.e. 2013 & 2017?

- a. Yes
- b. No

13. Is there a time you were undecided on which presidential candidate to vote for in lead to 8th August 2017 general election?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. What informed your choice of a preferred presidential candidate? (*Check only one*)

- a. Political affiliation
- b. Material favour offered by the candidate during campaigns
- c. Opinion polls surveys outcomes
- d. Ethnicity
- e. Social stratification e.g. Religion
- f. Voter Buying
- g. If others, please specify.....

SECTION D

15. Did opinion polls surveys influence how you view a presidential candidate?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, how?

.....

.....

16. How do you get to know about opinion polls surveys outcomes? (*Check only one*)

- a. Television
- b. Radio
- c. Newspapers
- d. Discussion with family/friends
- e. Social media
- f. Others please specify.....

17. Do you **Agree/Disagree** with the following statements?

	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
a. Opinion polls surveys influence voter turn out		
b. I vote in a candidate who appeals to me		
c. I vote depending on who my preferred candidates' competitors are.		
d. I vote for a candidate from my co-ethnic		
e. I vote a candidate with a clear manifesto		

18. To what extent did the following factors influence your choice of your preferred president candidate?

	Very Much	Much	A Little	Very little	Never
a. Age					
b. Gender					
c. Candidate's ethnicity					
d. Education					
e. Associates/Friends					
f. Opinion polls surveys					
g. Political party					
h. Others (specify)					

SECTION E

19. Do you view opinion pollster as objective (Impartial/Independent)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Please explain your answer

.....

.....

20. Do you view opinion pollster as biased?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Explain your answer

.....

.....

21. Have successive opinion polls surveys outcomes confirmed presidential elections results?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. Have opinion polls surveys reflected what you believed was the true nature of the presidential race i.e. who is leading, not leading?

- a. Yes
- b. No

23. Do you have confidence on opinion polls popularity rating of presidential candidates?

- a. Yes
- b. No

24. Do you trust opinion polls surveys results?

- a. Yes
- b. No

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND INPUT INTO MY STUDY.

Appendix II: Political Parties

1. As a political party, did you commission your own presidential pre-election surveys? If yes, at what time of the campaign period i.e. Benchmark, Track, or Exit polls?
2. In the lead to 8th August presidential elections, both Ipsos and Infotrak indicated that the Rift Valley, Coast, and Western regions had the highest number of undecided voters. Did the outcome of the opinion polls inform some of your campaign strategies
3. Did opinion polls outcomes released in the lead to August 2017 elections represent your party's presidential candidate popularity?
4. As a political party, what is your party's post-election trust perception of opinion polls and why? In addition, what exactly could have informed your party understanding?
5. According to Ipsos Synovate and Infotrak Harris, their existed around 5% to 8% of undecided voters a week to the 8th August General Elections, which translates to around 1.5 to 1.8 million undecided voters? Are the percentages within acceptable ranges given that Kenyans are often decided before IEBC announces campaigns?

Appendix III: Academicians

1. What factors influence public perception on opinion polls surveys?
2. To what extent do opinion polls surveys sway a swing voter?
3. What are some of the factors that inform a voters choice of a preferred presidential candidate and why?
4. In your opinion, what can you say is the post-election trust perception of opinion polls amongst voters and why?

Appendix IV: IEBC

1. In 2002 presidential elections, opinion pollsters had correctly projected the final presidential results. In your opinion, what can you attribute to the “failure” of subsequent opinion polls surveys inaccurate projections?
2. When pollsters regard a presidential contest as a two horse race, does influence voter turnout and the level of the election competitiveness?
3. Do swing voters exist in the percentages (5 to 8) that were projected by opinion pollsters had projected in the run to August presidential elections?
4. As an institution, what is your post-election trust perception of opinion polls surveys generally?

Appendix V: Pollsters

1. Who are undecided voters? In addition, what are the characteristics of undecided voters?
2. Why have past presidential opinion polls surveys outcomes been termed as not being accurate projecting of the final elections?
3. What can you attribute to the lack of validation of presidential pre-election survey outcomes (projections) to?
4. What kind of influence can you say; you as the pollster have on the voter especially to a presidential candidate?
5. What do you think/feel is the post-election trust perception of you opinion pollsters amongst voters and why?

Appendix VII: Introduction Letter

MAUREEN A. OBARE

P.O. BOX 30259-00100

NAIROBI - KENYA

CONTACT: +254 726 644 227

E-MAIL: maureen.a.obare@gmail.com

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I am Maureen Obare, a student at The University of Nairobi, School of Journalism, and Mass Communication. As part of senate requirement, I am obligated to submit my course work assessment, a research project report of my choice on “Opinion Polls and Voter Behaviour: An Critical Assessment of Swing Voters in Presidential Elections in Dagoretti South and Kibra Constituencies”.

During this study, I will interview you as one of the sampled respondent. All data and information collected will be treated with confidentiality and used for research purposes only.

Your support in this study will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Maureen Obare

Maureen Obare.

Appendix VIII: Certificate of Fieldwork



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Title: OPINION POLLS AND VOTER BEHAVIOUR: A CRITICAL

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